Collaboration needed to fight terror

This past week the world played witness to the unfolding of a series of horrific events in the southern part of Russia.

The story began with the announcement that terrorists had taken over a school in the small divided region of North Ossetia and ended last Friday with the storming of the campus facilities by the Russian military after the terrorists set off explosives.

As pictures of the children, victims of the event and estimates of dead came in from major media outlets, the world, and Americans in particular, began to question the advances in world security following 9/11.

Terrorism has been a major source of world violence since before the attacks on the Twin Towers. Bombings at federal buildings and embassies, both domestic and foreign, have dotted the news throughout the last decade.

But it was only after the tragedies in New York that the U.S. and other nations around the world began to consider terrorism as a serious threat to the safety of our world.

Early action on the part of the White House led to the exile of the Taliban from parts of Afghanistan and later to the occupation of Iraq.

But the events of both 9/11 and North Ossetia reveal a more serious and complicated threat than the guerrilla-style warfare that Americans have come to expect in a post-Vietnam era.

Capitalist and individualistic forces around the world have conspired to empower people like never before and provide them with the means by which to “voice” their opinions.

Groups and organizations now find themselves at a disadvantage when adapting to this new world dynamic.

Warfare is no longer an acceptable term to be used when describing these conflicts.

The idea of individual organizations projecting themselves from this kind of force is impossible.

Every day millions of people, pounds of mail and cargo containers, driven by the international markets, move throughout the world. This plays into the simplest principle of terrorism: get close enough for them to see you, just outside their reach, and blow something up.

No amount of law enforcement could ever be employed to search everything; nor would it be allowed. The amount of money, waiting time and money spent to employ such policy would be too large for any company or nation to bear.

That is why today America faces the largest deficit in a generation after having a surplus only four years ago.

The other side to this is the depth to which these terrorists are willing to go in an effort to “voice” their cause.

The events in Ossetia underscore this, as children were the main targets and victims in a conflict that did not involve them. The group of children, completely innocent, were held by only a few ignorant people.

The answer for this problem is, at best, not clear. But what is certain is the direction in which it points: the beginnings of new international law.

Most law today exists in the form of international treaties and accords. This new frontier of law asks for an international body with the power to pass judgment on the actions of individuals in a world scope and the ability to enforce punishment.

The need for international support in future world action was the driving force behind the creation of the United Nations. A new governing body of this magnitude would be the next step in that direction.

Without support from at least three of the group of France, Great Britain, Russia, China and the U.S., any world policy of this level can expect significant resistance and imminent failure.

This is a dangerous and difficult path to take, wrought with mistrust and back stabbing that has characterized conflicting interests between nations in the last decade.

Thousands of stunned, sad and angry Russians held a demonstration in Moscow Tuesday, protesting and mourning the massacre of hostages in the events of North Ossetia.

Even though Chechen rebels believed to be behind the school tragedy, Russian authorities believe the hostage-takers were part of an international band. Officials have said 10 of the terrorists were from Arab countries.

"We couldn't adequately react," Putin told the nation in a televised address. "We showed weakness, and weak people are beaten."
Water slide brings out Tech's best qualities

The first time I did it, I must admit that I was nervous. I didn't want the emotion to show on my face though, because my friends probably would have made fun of me. After all, I was getting jumpy a mere 15 feet in the air, about to take my first ride on a benign plastic half-tube. As I whizzed down the Campus Recreation Center’s (CRC) recently completed water slide, I found myself thinking, "Wow, this is Georgia Tech?"

That first Saturday of the semester, when we were on our own as a water recreation area, the slide was busy. We had to wait in line for our turn to zoom through the rushing water and earn a forceful wedge upon splashing into the pool. My roommate and I felt like we were at a resort in Florida, that a man dressed in black overlaid with an oversized mouse's head and large white gloves was going to emerge from the locker room to scold us for our turn to zoom through the campus rec. While Atlanta did not feel the brunt of Hurricane Frances' strike. Hitting closer to home, we were at a resort in Florida, that a man dressed in black overlaid with an oversized mouse's head and large white gloves was going to emerge from the locker room to scold us for our turn to zoom through the campus rec.

This style of recreation is for the young, for the energetic, for the fun. It is not meant for the young of heart. I don't think Ms. Phuong's focus is in the right place by assuming students will seek out SGA. The biggest opportunity for SGA year after year is to take its leadership and communication from the Student Center Commons out to the entire campus. In accordance with the Student Conduct Rules, I would encourage any representative that voted “Yea” to reconsider this bill at the next meeting and reverse your decision on this bill.

Corey Rockwell, IE '98
Former SGA Executive Vice President, Senior Class Pres.
corey.rockwell@clorox.com

Ad-Private Eye

Finally, in the wake of increased crime on campus, a culprit has been caught. Earlier this week a member of ADPs' somnambolism reported a car break-in outside of the GTPD, leading to the police apprehending the criminal. Maybe starting 3 campus neighborhood watch wouldn't be such a bad idea after all.

Where's Buzz?

Most campus maps visitors know where they are. But Tech has taken a different approach. On the new campus maps, Buzz is supposed to show your current location. Instead we ended up playing a hopeless game of "Where's Buzz" when Buzz was nowhere to be found. What's wrong with a little direction?

Let's Submissions Information

The Technique welcomes letters on the editor and will print letters on a timely and space available basis. Letters must be no longer than 400 words and mailed to: The Technique, Georgia Institute of Technology, Student Media Center, Mailstop No. 159, 884-2891. Monday through Friday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Advertising space cannot be reserved over the phone. The Technique reserves the right to edit any letters or not run a letter. Letters not used to exceed 400 words and should be submitted by noon on Wednesdays in order to be printed in the following Friday's issue. Any letters not meeting these criteria or not considered by the Editorial Board of the Technique to be of valid interest will not be printed. The Technique welcomes letters to the editor and will post them online. A $3,000 sign lessens SGA's credibility and sets a bad precedent about what SGA should receive because it is "...not a typical student organization." Before writing this letter, I looked on the SGA's website for minutes from the last meeting or details around this bill (sga.gatech.edu). Neither were posted.

I don't think Ms. Phuong's focus is in the right place by assuming students will seek out SGA. The biggest opportunity for SGA year after year is to take its leadership and communication from the Student Center Commons out to the entire campus. In accordance with the Student Conduct Rules, I would encourage any representative that voted “Yea” to reconsider this bill at the next meeting and reverse your decision on this bill.

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SGA should reconsider sign

As usual do after a Georgia Tech football game, I picked up a copy of the Technique to see what is going on with SGA, an organization I was proud to serve for over four years and loved so much. I was taken aback that SGA had allocated almost $3,000 to itself for a sign that says, in essence, "We Are Here." As elected representatives, SGA should set the example for campus and fiscal leadership. This bill is outrageous and does not set a good example. President Amy Phuong is wrong in saying SGA should be seen as a typical student organization. SGA officers receive special perks, including tuition stipends and individual offices. In my opinion, these are warranted, given the service SGA provides and the time required to provide these services. A $3,000 sign lessens SGA's credibility and sets a bad precedent: May 17, 1998

Kelly Anderson
MGT Second-year

I flew like Superman.

Scott Kim
EE Fourth-year

“The short lines.”

Taylor Narewski
PUB Second-year

“I cried on Monster Plantation.”

David Kessler
ID Second-year

It was FUn! WOO-HOO!

Photos by Michael Kraus/Lauren Griffin

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SciTrek deserves another chance to serve Atlanta

I was saddened to learn the other day that after 16 years in opera-
tion, SciTrek has officially closed its doors.

If you never had the chance to visit it, or if you are new to Atlanta,
SciTrek was a science museum with interactive exhibits geared at teach-
ing children about the basic theories and laws of science.

I remember visiting the museum on a school field trip when I was
younger, and I was fascinated by all the experiments and demonstrations
it contained. Even on a return trip as a teenager, I still found the exhibits
entertaining.

A lack of financial support prompted the decision to suspend
SciTrek’s operations. The science museum was also forced to close for
the same reason two years ago, until the state came through with money
for it to continue operating.

Even with the aid from the city
and state governments (they lease the
building they occupy for $1 a year),
as well as from a few corporations
and patrons, there wasn’t enough to
keep the science museum alive.

The insufficient support surprises
me, because it seems like a worth-
while investment in the future for
companies that employ scientists and
engineers. And we certainly have
companies that employ scientists and
patrons, such as Centennial
Park, which I think would be a
desirable addition to the area.

The number of students interested
in pursuing careers in these areas has
been on the decline in recent years.
It is imperative that we encourage
careers in these areas has
children to explore the world of
science.

The practical, hands-on approach
employed in these facilities is inval-
ual to a scientific education. The
demonstrations really help the ideas
and theories “sink in,” and kids can
have fun while they are learning. It’s
one thing to learn about the refrac-
tion of light and the Doppler effect,
it’s another thing to experience them
first-hand.

Visiting science museums when
I was younger helped to develop my
own interest in science. I lived in the
suburbs of Washington D.C. until
I was eight, so I spent a lot of time
exploring the Smithsonian Muse-
ums as a child. I especially loved
the astronomy section of the Air
and Space Museum. The pictures of
the other planets in our solar system
captivated me.

In high school I interned for a
semester at Fernbank Observatory
here in Atlanta, and in that short time
I learned so much about the planets
and stars in our solar system and the
constellations beyond. These experiences were invaluable in shaping myview of
science as something interesting and
worthy of further exploration.

We don’t want to lose a facility
that has such an opportunity to teach and inspire, especially in a city that is
developing as rapidly as Atlanta
is and that has so many companies
focused on technology.

Fortunately, there are plans to
possibly reopen a similar facility in a
new location and with a new
plan of operation, and I for one
certainly hope that this plan comes
to fruition.

Officials would like to shift the
focus of the facility from that of a
museum to more of an education
center that would be used to train
students and teachers.

In a venture related to this new
plan, a new public charter school,
Tech High, was specifically created
to focus on science and technology.

Not coincidentally, it is cur-
rently leasing space from
SciTrek, though it is
only expect-
ted to stay at
the site until
May 2005.

SciTrek
officials
hope to lo-
cate the future
museum and education
center to a more high traf-
icked area, such as Centennial
Park, which I think would be a
wonderful addition to the area.

I also hope that this new endeavor
will be able to find more volunteer
support and funding from the local
business community — it certainly
deserves it.

It would be nice to see Tech
students and faculty take an inter-
est in the venture and volunteer
to share their knowledge of
science with children. And if you have ideas
for interesting exhibits or teaching
methods, contact SciTrek officials,
as they are looking for public input.
I’m sure they would at least be glad to
know the local community supports
and appreciates their endeavors.

SciTrek was the only museum of
its kind in Georgia, and it will be
missed by those of us who had the
pleasure of visiting it.

But in the meantime, I suggest
exploring some of the educational
places Atlanta still possesses, like the
Fernbank Museum and Science Cen-
ter. Go to a show at the planetarium
and learn about the constellations,
or see what planet might be visible
through the telescope at the
observatory. I know I’ll
be there.

“We don’t want to lose a
facility that has such an
opportunity to teach and
inspire…”

Andrea Thompson
Columnist

Review unfair to young performers

On Aug. 27, the T-Book, Tech’s
on-line student survival guide, put
on comedy open-mic night at Un-
der the Couch to raise funds and
awareness for this growing student
organization.

Min Pantenelli, author of the Tech-
nique review of this event, reported
“Tech’s aspiring comedians got in
their share of laughs...” which was
the goal of this fundraiser.

Having participated in scores of
comey open-mic nights around
Atlanta, I thought this event went
quite well. It was an open-mic event,
and as such there was a diversity of
talent levels.

Despite what I perceived as a
negative review by the Technique, I
was most impressed with the comedi-
talents of our students who are
too often stereotyped as humorless
nerds.

As faculty we constantly push
them to improve their oral presenta-
tion skills and it was uplifting to see
such motivation to take on stand-up
comedy, the most challenging of all
oral presentations.

On Sept. 17 at 7:30 p.m. the top
finishers of this open-mic event
will be performing in a second T-
Book benefit at Under the Couch.
This show will feature other local
comics.

Hopefully you will join us for a
few laughs. Learn about opportuni-
ties to work with T-Book and help
us convince people that nerds are
too funny too.

Pete Ludovice
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