



INFORMATION SERVICE
GEORGE MASON COLLEGE
UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
FAIRFAX
TELEPHONE 591-4600

21 July 1971

FOR RELEASE SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH THE REPORT OF THE VIRGINIA
STATE ADVISORY COMMITTEE OF THE U. S. COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

The report of an investigation of George Mason College by the Virginia State Advisory Committee of the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights was received by Chancellor Lorin A. Thompson of George Mason College. The report was the outgrowth of a hearing held by the Virginia State Advisory Committee at Truro Church in Fairfax on April 13, 1971. The Committee's concern was with certain aspects of the policies and practices of George Mason College.

The rapid growth and development of George Mason College has become well known throughout Northern Virginia and the state. When George Mason moved to its present campus in 1964, it was a junior college with 360 students and 36 faculty members. In 1966, by legislative action, it became a four-year college with authority to

MORE-----

programs at George Mason College complement the open door program of the Northern Virginia Community College for all high school graduates and/or those over 18. The simultaneous growth and development of both institutions has influenced the academic programs in each institution.

Chancellor Thompson made the following comments on the report of the Virginia State Advisory Committee of the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights:

"As a public institution, George Mason welcomes the views of any segment of the population, including the Virginia State Advisory Committee of the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights. It should be made plain however that the Committee has no standing to oversee the activities of the College which is a state chartered institution. The College expects the critics of its administration to be straightforward and to present their views in perspective rather than by innuendo.

"The report condemns by implication only and offers as its principal evidence an indefinable something called "attitude" which is based largely on criticism from a few disenchanted members of the college family and some "concerned citizens".

"In the final analysis, the report essentially urges the College to violate the civil rights of one segment of students and prospective students by discriminating in

MORE-----

favor of another. The report even goes to the extent of citing criticism of the College for not sponsoring a black student union, which would have the effect of encouraging segregation in the student body.

The College again wishes to emphasize that it was organized to provide a quality education for, and to serve, the entire Northern Virginia population. As a public institution, it is deeply committed to providing full participation by all citizens on the same basis. It actively invites all qualified students to seek admission and welcomes all who meet its academic requirements. George Mason will not lower its standards for those who advocate racial preference, or favor the admission of one student over another for any reason. The College cannot, either lawfully or morally, proceed on any other basis."

#

Distribution: I, Ia, II, IIa.