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GEORGE MASON COLLEGE: FOR ALL THE PEOPLE?

**A Report of an Investigation by the
Virginia State Advisory Committee to the
United States Commission on Civil Rights**

JULY 1971

As Nations cannot be rewarded or punished in
the next world, they must be in this. By an
inevitable chain of causes and effects,
Providence punishes national sins by national
calamities.

GEORGE MASON

In a speech against the slave trade,
Constitutional Convention, Philadelphia
1787

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TO THE

UNITED STATES COMMISSION ON CIVIL RIGHTS

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CONTENTS

Preface iii

Introduction. iv

Background, Development and Mission of George
Mason College 1

Issues of Concern 5

 Lack of Minority Representation 5

 Recruitment 8

 Admissions. 11

 Curriculum. 15

 Faculty 17

 Relationship to the University of Virginia. 17

 Relationship of George Mason College to the Community . . . 21

Conclusions 25

Recommendations 29

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PREFACE

The United States Commission on Civil Rights

The United States Commission on Civil Rights is an independent agency of the executive branch of the Federal Government created by the Civil Rights Act of 1957. By the terms of that act, as amended by the Civil Rights Acts of 1960 and 1964, the Commission is charged with the following duties: investigation of individual discriminatory denials of the right to vote; study of legal developments with respect to denials of the equal protection of the law; appraisal of the laws and policies of the United States with respect to denials of equal protection of the law; maintenance of a national clearinghouse for information respecting denials of the equal protection of the law; and investigation of patterns or practices of fraud or discrimination in the conduct of Federal elections. The Commission is also required to submit reports to the President and the Congress at such times as the Commission, the Congress, or the President shall deem desirable.

The State Advisory Committees

An Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights has been established in each of the 50 States and the District of Columbia pursuant to section 105(c) of the Civil Rights Act of 1957 as amended. The Committees are made up of responsible persons who serve without compensation. Their functions under their mandate from the Commission are to: advise the Commission of all relevant information concerning their respective States on matters within the jurisdiction of the Commission; advise the Commission upon matters of mutual concern in the preparation of reports of the Commission to the President and the Congress; receive reports, suggestions, and recommendations from individuals, public and private organizations, and public officials upon matters pertinent to inquiries conducted by the State Committee; initiate and forward advice and recommendations to the Commission in matters in which the Commission shall request the assistance of the State Committee; and attend, as observers, any open hearing or conference which the Commission may hold within the State.

This report was submitted to the United States Commission on Civil Rights by the Virginia State Advisory Committee. The conclusions and recommendations are based upon the Advisory Committee's evaluation of information received at its all-day open meeting on April 13, 1971. This report has been received by the Commission and will be considered by it in making its reports and recommendations to the President and the Congress.

INTRODUCTION

The Virginia State Advisory Committee to the United States Commission on Civil Rights has addressed itself to a variety of problems related to racial exclusion or discrimination in Virginia public education over the past few years. Among the issues were an analysis of the role of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare in assuring the dismantling of the dual school system in Virginia and a study of the perpetuation of the dual system in higher education.

At a conference on higher education, sponsored by the Committee, one of the workshops was devoted to institutional racism in institutions of higher education in Virginia. The definition of institutional racism used there, and subsequently accepted by the Committee, is an operational definition which states: "Racism may be viewed as any attitude, action or institution which subordinates a person or group because of his or their color."

An additional and important characteristic of institutional racism is that it can occur even if the people causing it have no intention of subordinating others because of color, or are totally unaware of doing so. Racism is a matter of result rather than intention. A person may be subordinated or excluded by the operation of normal practices of an institution. This subordination often occurs irrespective of the good intentions of administrators of an institution. Participants in the workshop agreed that racial subordination occurs on an institutional basis in many traditionally white Virginia institutions of higher education.

A Subcommittee of the State Advisory Committee was formed after the conference to sponsor constructive activities which would assist Virginians to combat racism with an initial focus on institutions of higher education.

It seemed appropriate to begin with a situation which had been brought to the Committee's attention in early 1970: the racial policies and practices of George Mason College of the University of Virginia, located in Fairfax, Virginia. In order to obtain a better understanding of race relations at George Mason College, an open meeting was held in Fairfax, Virginia, at the Truro Episcopal Church on April 13, 1971. George Mason College is a virtually all-white school in a predominantly white suburban area.

In this report, the Advisory Committee has set down its perceptions of George Mason College and the characteristics of its operation that would come under the definition of institutional racism cited earlier. The Committee's inquiry was limited to selected areas of college life, including recruitment and admission policies, entrance requirements, student financial aid and placement, curricula, social life, relationships, and residence facilities.

The Committee has concerned itself with what is obvious in terms of the results of the effort made to date by George Mason College to serve the entire Northern Virginia community.

Traditionally, resolutions of allegations of racial discrimination have been approached from a legal point of view. But many facets of life are not covered by law. For example, while Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination in any program receiving Federal funds, it does not require the elimination of hostile attitudes in a student cafeteria, nor does it require specific action with regard to course content. Yet, while relationships within the school community or course content may not be covered by the law, they make up vital and integral elements of the school climate. Likewise, the law does not regulate the acceptable level of test scores, the tests themselves or any other entrance requirement, nor does it require assistance or remedial programs. Yet the existence, style of implementation, and administration of these programs clearly indicate whether an official open policy toward all races is, in fact, actually open.

Whenever and wherever American minorities are excluded from full participation in the benefits of society, then society as a whole is the loser, the white majority as well as the minorities. The ways in which minorities lose have been catalogued innumerable times and do not need to be repeated. The results are the same whether the exclusion is deliberate or totally unintentional.

Continued exclusion of minorities, whether deliberate or inadvertent, perpetuates the tensions which exist between the white majority and black minority. Unfounded and demeaning stereotypes of the minority group held by the majority group are

strengthened and perpetuated. Thus, the majority is less able to deal honestly and effectively with important social and political issues of contemporary life.

Dr. Kenneth B. Clark, in his testimony before the Select Committee on Equal Educational Opportunity of the United States Senate, described this phenomenon with the following remarks:

For these white children, there was profound confusion, conflict, moral cynicism, and disrespect for authority which may arise in a majority of them as a consequence of being taught the moral, the religious, and the democratic principles of the brotherhood of man and the importance of justice and fair play by the very same persons and institutions who in their support of racial segregation and related practices seem to be acting and often are acting in a prejudiced and discriminatory manner.

Segregated schools and cruelty in American ghettos are, I repeat, the institutional and inescapable morality of American racism, and as such are deadening and destroying the ethical and personal effectiveness of American white children, and doing so, much more insidiously than they are destroying the personal and human effectiveness of American black children.

In meeting its responsibilities to collect and disseminate information, the Virginia State Advisory Committee recognizes that it is not sufficient merely to observe and catalog the denials to black citizens. It is equally important to look to those institutions and structures which tend to perpetuate the relationships of the past, and which thereby deprive both white

and black citizens of honest and creative relationships. It is as necessary to correct this for white citizens as it is for black citizens, because, to paraphrase one of the participants at the George Mason College Open Meeting, the real issue is to discover and test our capacity to live together in one Nation. The Committee hopes this report will be a means toward that end.

BACKGROUND, DEVELOPMENT, AND MISSION OF GEORGE MASON COLLEGE

George Mason College was founded in April 1955, and opened in 1957 with 17 students. It was then a part of the School of General Studies of the University of Virginia and became a community college in 1960 named for George Mason, early American statesman who wrote the Declaration of Rights for Virginia on which the American Bill of Rights was based. In 1966, the college was established as a 4-year institution with the authority to grant degrees and to offer graduate study courses. In this connection, the Code of Virginia states:

George Mason College, heretofore, before June 27, 1966/ established in Fairfax County, Virginia is continued. It shall be a division of the University of Virginia. It shall be a 4-year institution with the right to prepare students for the granting of degrees upon graduation. It shall be an integral part of the University of Virginia and be subject to the supervision, management and control of the rector and visitors of the University of Virginia. (Article 8, Section 23-91.14 of the Code of Virginia.)

Since there was no 4-year State-supported college or university in Northern Virginia, the fastest growing area of the State, a degree granting public college was needed. The Northern Virginia area to be served by the college was described by the chancellor as follows:

The boundaries of Northern Virginia are the same as the Virginia part of the Washington Metropolitan Area and of Planning District 8 for the Commonwealth of Virginia. The local political jurisdictions are the counties of Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun and Prince William and the cities of Alexandria, Fairfax and Falls Church. The total population of Northern Virginia in 1970 was 921,237. Whites and Others numbered 859,887 and Negroes 53,024 or 5.75 percent.

During the early years of the college, activities were underway to provide physical facilities in which to house the college. In 1957, a board of control was established for the purpose of acquiring land for the college. Members of this board represented the political subdivisions of Northern Virginia, Arlington County, Fairfax County, and the cities of Alexandria and Falls Church. Land acquisition has proceeded over the years and is continuing. According to Dr. Lorin A. Thompson, chancellor, the college owns a total of 571 acres.

The long-term nature of the development of the physical plant is revealed by the chancellor when he says: "Since under any circumstances the institution must be continuously constructing facilities for the next two decades, the college will find it more expedient and economical to plan and construct a group of buildings at the same time rather than constructing each building separately."

The ultimate goal is a university of approximately 15,000 students in four cluster campuses within the overall campus. Currently, in the initial stages of physical plant development, there are no dormitories. A special committee of the college community has considered some of the pros and cons of dormitories for residential on-campus purposes.

The mission of the college was described by the chancellor as follows:

To be a university with a strong, active college of arts and sciences, substantial graduate and professional programs, and an active research program which is an integral part of the teaching-learning process.

George Mason College will be a regional university offering both undergraduate, graduate, and continuing education programs to meet the needs of Northern Virginia and the Commonwealth. It shall pursue those programs which are peculiar to it and avoid unnecessary duplication of effort by other State institutions.

According to Dr. Robert C. Krug, dean of faculty of the college, a multiinterest approach has been increasingly emphasized in curriculum development which he illustrates by describing ". . . the addition of a general degree requirement of six semester hours of study in a non-Western culture oriented course. Survey of African civilizations, is one example. . . ."

The first baccalaureate degrees were granted by the college in 1968 and the first graduate degrees will be awarded in June 1971. Growth in terms of numbers and degrees awarded are shown in the table below:

<u>Year</u>	<u>Fall Enrollment</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Degrees Awarded</u>
1964-65	361	Jr. College	A.A. 34
1965-66	577	Jr. College	A.A. 66
1966-67	841	4-Yr. College	A.A. 120
1967-68	1142	4-Yr. College	Bacc. 52
1968-69	1470	4-Yr. College	Bacc. 134
1969-70	1936	4-Yr. College	Bacc. 296
1970-71	2456	4-Yr. and Grad. Programs	

The profiles of faculty and students for the 1970-71 academic year are shown in the following tables:

Faculty Profile

Total Faculty:	164
Full-time:	124
Part-time:	28
Nonteaching:	12

Student Profile

Total Enrollment:	2,456
Full-time	2,010
Part-time	446
Out-of-State	207

Blacks:

1 American, Full-time
1 Foreign National, Part-time

Blacks: :

14 American
2 Foreign National

The George Mason Foundation, a private organization, was created early in the developmental process for the purpose of providing the initial impetus to establish endowment and scholarship funds. The foundation has assisted the college to acquire property, as well as accumulate endowment funds. The current total worth of land and funds acquired by the foundation for the college is estimated by Edward A. Pritchard, one of the foundation's original members, at near a half million dollars.

ISSUES OF CONCERN

Concern regarding racial policies and practices at George Mason College has been growing for more than 2 years. Questions about the ability of the college to meet the needs of the community were raised when the Upward Bound proposal failed to be supported by the administration. The general public became aware of the issue at the college when student demonstrations and a confrontation with the chancellor took place in the spring of 1970. The U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare did a Title VI (Civil Rights Act of 1964) compliance review in the fall of 1969, and again in the fall of 1970, making a report to the college in March 1971. The Fairfax County Council on Human Relations performed an independent study and published a report on January 12, 1971. Exchanges of letters between citizens and State officials and university and college officials also provide indication of the concern.

The almost total absence of black students, faculty, or service personnel at the college was observed by concerned students in the 1969-70 school year. Miss Virginia Sanchez told the Committee:

Last year the students became aware of how white an institution George Mason is. There were no black faculty members. There were eight black students at the college, six or seven of which were Nigerians. There were no black custodians, no black secretaries-- they just weren't there. We began to question these things and so did many of the faculty members.

Lack of Minority Representation

The Committee was told that 16 black students were enrolled for the 1970-71 academic year of whom two were reported to be

foreign nationals. This is 0.7 percent of the student body. The black student population of the geographic area served by the school is approximately 6½ percent.

Black faculty in the 1970-71 academic year included one foreign national visiting professor, part-time, who teaches a survey course of African civilizations, and one full-time professor of education.

There is no indication that the college employs any service personnel or administrative officials who represent any segment of the population other than the white majority. Students reported that there is not even a black person in the service functions such as the kitchen, maid, or janitor crews at the bottom of the pay scale.

The Committee recognizes that focusing on numbers and quotas, per se, is not always productive, and the chancellor spoke critically about "engaging in the numbers game". But the number of minority persons in a white institution within a pluralistic, multiracial society, viewed in proportion to the numbers of minority persons in that society, appears to be a reliable index of the efforts of that institution to become truly open.

In response to a question regarding the role of the college in serving black students, Mr. Pritchard, who was close to its development, told the Committee: "We didn't have any conversation among ourselves on this subject."

Mr. Pritchard also told the Committee that there were no black persons involved in any committees at the time the first land was conveyed to the college and that no steps had been taken during the planning to assure that the college would serve the entire Northern Virginia population. The black community was not represented

on the planning committees but the Committee was told that the planners for the college felt the needs of blacks and other minorities were the same as the needs of the white community.

Regarding the relationship between the college and the black community of Northern Virginia, Mr. Pritchard commented: "As far as I know, there is no relationship to the black community as such."

Further, according to the chancellor, there are no blacks on the board of the George Mason Foundation, nor on the advisory board, which is appointed by the president of the University of Virginia.

This appears to be in contrast to his statement that:

In developing a college, it is essential to study and analyze the constituency to be served and reflect from time-to-time the needs of the area served in its programs. The first essential step toward the solution of any problem is to identify the factors and circumstances which not only affect the operation of the institution but how its programs relate to the needs of the broader communities it serves.

Dr. Stephen J. Brown, a former associate dean of the college, described two official reports to the Committee:

One, of the Committee on Education Planning for George Mason College, submitted 3 April 1967, an educational long-range plan for George Mason College.

The second document is the Education Plan of George Mason College of the University of Virginia, dated January 1968, as it came from the Chancellor and from Charlottesville in its final form.

In both of these plans there are projections for undergraduate programs and for graduate programs through the year 1975. You will find no mention in either of these reports of the black community, of the possible programs that might be needed to support a serious interest or concern for the black community. You will find no mention of the black community.

And I am not even talking about a program in black studies or a program in black literature or a program in black history. This was simply not conceived; it was not part of the conception of the college.

Mr. Pritchard's statement to the Committee that: "We all took comfort in our ignorance" describes a situation in which neither exclusion nor inclusion were even a part of the thinking in the development of the college.

Recruitment

The area of recruitment of students is usually the first place to implement programs designed to correct the absence of minorities.

Recruitment of blacks is a policy of George Mason College.

Dr. Thompson stated:

George Mason College welcomes all qualified students without regard to race, sex, national origin or religion Presently, efforts are being made to invite blacks to come to George Mason. A committee of students and faculty are joining in this effort.

In connection with this policy statement, the chancellor appointed a committee on March 3, 1971, known as "The Ad Hoc Committee on Recruiting." The chancellor's charge to the persons he asked to be on this committee, read: "I have asked Dr. Snyder to call the

committee together to discuss ways and means of sending visiting teams to the high schools and arrange for interested students to visit the George Mason College campus." Appointed as chairman to the committee was Dr. James M. Snyder, chairman of the education department. Other members appointed included three faculty members and six student members. At least one of the student members is black, and she told the Committee that the Ad Hoc Committee on Recruitment at the college. . . "was set up approximately 2 months ago and our greatest accomplishment so far is to incorporate parliamentary procedure."

The charge to the Committee does not mention that its intention was to recruit black students, but Dr. Snyder led the Advisory Committee to understand that that is the specific reason for the committee's existence.

One activity of the Ad Hoc Committee has been to try to identify the reasons why black students had not sought admission to the college. Dr. Snyder described the results of a survey to the Committee:

Seventeen schools indicated that some students felt they were not qualified for admission; 11 schools indicated that black students desired to attend college away from home. 7 schools indicated a desire to attend a primarily black college; 4 schools said they didn't feel that GMC welcomed black students; 3 schools said that there was some lack of information concerning the college and its programs; 3 schools cited dormitory facilities. Other reasons cited at least once, was that George Mason College is more expensive than the community college; generally black students do not have the third year of mathematics required; we did not offer a business education major; we had no program in criminology; we did not have a work-study program in engineering; athletic scholarships were not available; and transportation was a problem.

It is not clear whether the schools in the survey were predominantly black or white, or whether black students in those schools provided the responses to the survey themselves, or whether administrators and/or guidance counsellors provided the responses. But even without this information, it is fair to assume that to some degree these answers represent views of black students with regard to attending George Mason College.

The administration was unwilling to accept the responsibility for so few blacks at George Mason College. The admissions director, in response to a question concerning the lack of success of the recruiting efforts he described, stated: "We haven't been overly successful, I think, because. . . not that many meet our requirements."

Half of the reasons reported from the high school survey to the Ad Hoc Committee on Recruitment, place the blame for no blacks at George Mason, on the blacks, and not on the college.

Regarding recruiting, Dr. Thompson stated at the outset:

I would like to make one point quite clear, that as a State college or university we are not expected to recruit. We go on invitation to schools to provide information but we do not recruit anybody as such . . . we have been advised ever since I have been connected with the State university that they are supposed to provide information to high school students and not to solicit or recruit students.

By the end of the meeting, it was conceded by several administrators that George Mason College actually did recruit students.

Louis J. Aebischer, director of admissions, discussed several aspects of recruiting and said in reference to recruiting black students: "I cooperate very closely with Mr. Spuhler [director of athletics] who does a lot of recruiting. We have been able to pick up one athlete for the spring semester, and we have two others who have indicated that they will be coming."

In this connection, the director of admissions further stated that: "I don't consider our efforts, except for the black students . . . as a recruiting effort . . . for the white students, I feel are public relations efforts."

Mrs. Virginia Starkey, a guidance counselor from one of the area high schools with a large percentage of black students, said that visits by the director of admissions were considered as recruiting visits . . . "because we certainly discussed a number of things having to do with recruitment of both races."

Admissions

In the area of admissions, the requirements are basic. These requirements were described to the Committee by the director of admissions:

We look for three areas . . .

One area is the academic program. Four credits in English, two in a foreign language--and this

must be the same foreign language--three in mathematics--and we specify here that this is Algebra I, Geometry, and Algebra II; one in a natural science, and one in a social science. And then the additional four as elective, adding to 15.

The next area that we look at are the Scholastic Aptitude Test scores. Our requirements are that we will go down to 450 in the verbal and generally 450 in the math. So 900 total is the cutoff.

The third area that we look at is the rank in class. This is one of the best indicators of what the youngster might be doing at the present time among his contemporaries or his peers in the classroom.

Mrs. Starkey noted that it is unrealistic to require 2 years of language and 3 years of math for students for entrance to college. "It seems to me if these requirements are not at all relevant to what he plans to do in life, this is almost time wasted." (Current college entrance procedures emphasize increased flexibility, and fewer requirements, and place greater responsibility upon the college itself and the students to guarantee performance after entrance.)

The Scholastic Aptitude Test scores (SAT) and their use at George Mason were also questioned. The Committee was told that a total required minimum score, verbal and math combined, was 1,000 and that this score requirement was stated in correspondence. Guidance counselors made it clear they themselves did not have that understanding. (No cutoff score is published in the catalog.)

Subsequently, the dean of admissions stated unequivocally that the cutoff score was 900. In response to whether any exception to this had been made, the director stated that students had been admitted with lower scores, but this was conditioned on successful work in two courses at summer school.

It was clear that heavy reliance was placed upon SAT scores. However, an area guidance counselor, Delbert Wilson, told the Committee:

The SATs exclude a great number of the black students because it is pretty well-known that the board scores are culturally biased, particularly the verbal section of the college boards, because they do have a tendency to favor the people who have been brought up in a certain kind of cultural environment. We noticed that our black students score significantly lower on the board for cultural reasons.

Until very recently, George Mason College required a photograph of applicants for admission to the college. A small group of students and faculty sought to have this requirement removed and, after 4 years of effort by this group, the requirement was dropped.

Black students from George Mason College reported to the Committee that they found themselves in a hostile atmosphere. Black and white students not attending the college perceived the college in negative terms and did not apply for admission, according to parents speaking to the Committee. One black student who has been accepted for admission has also been accepted for admission in another university

in the metropolitan area, and plans to go there partly because of a larger black enrollment, an atmosphere in which she feels she would be happier.

The black students attending George Mason have found that there is no mechanism or structure through which the few black students on the campus can relate to each other. At one point they requested permission to form a black student union. A conference was arranged with the chancellor, who reported that the formation of "such things" (presumably new organizations) take time. This was in the face of the fact that only 16 black students are involved. The students report that his response in calling the meeting and discussing the issue appeared to be merely a pacification measure. No other action has come of the meeting. Of this same meeting, the chancellor said: "I invited them all to come to my office a couple of months ago to talk about this problem, and to my astonishment they didn't know each other."

White student attitudes are a part of the hostility encountered by black students. One black student reported to the Committee that she ate off-campus for 2 years rather than submit herself to the animosity she encountered in the Ordinary the student dining room. All of the black students reported to the Committee that they had had similar experience regarding hostility.

The dean of students, asked if there were any programs dealing with white students and their attitudes, indicated that there are no programs designed either to deal with white students' attitudes, or with the relationships between black and white students.

Curriculum

The black students felt that the curricular offerings of the college represented another area in which George Mason was not prepared to serve them in the same way it could serve the white students. One told the Committee: "I think there is too much reliance on textbooks because we have experiences which the book just has no reference to. And it talks about things that I would say the white people can respond to, but we couldn't . . ."

Further:

Since I have been taking sociology, I have been under pressure because . . . what they refer to is not relevant to the contemporary black man. . . . The books and many things recommended are obsolete. They tend to project this idea of--well, the stereotyped image of the black man as something like I would say--30 years ago.

The black students have also asked for black studies, and report they feel that request was sloughed off since they have not yet seen any concrete evidence of steps being taken to institute such courses. But others feel that irrespective of requests of black students, there is a need in the college for inclusion of information about and by black people and their culture.

One professor, Dr. Lorraine Brown, reported that an informal group was established several years ago to deal with black literature, feeling that then, even if there were no black students, at least the college community could talk about some of the writing that was going on as a means of interesting white students in that kind of writing.

The group was small, and required extra time of everybody, since it was not an official part of the curriculum. This effort had no official support and in time disappeared.

A former student in the education department, George Whelpley, now teaching in Fairfax County, commented that he feels the college prepares teachers to teach only in Fairfax County . . . "which is all right in itself, but you get the feeling that Fairfax County or white suburbia or whatever, is all there is in the whole world." He suggested that neither he nor any other student, prepared by George Mason to be teachers, is really equipped to handle vital and urgent social issues. Neither are they prepared to teach black students.

Dr. Snyder made it clear that students in his department do find themselves in interracial situations in the public schools where they do their student teaching. But the questions as to whether George Mason is preparing its teachers to deal effectively with black students or with interracial situations, were not answered.

The remarks to the Committee by Dr. Snyder assume that mere exposure to black students is adequate preparation for dealing with racial issues. This assumption ignores the fact that black and white students have had fundamental differences in their experiences and therefore in their perceptions. Furthermore, there was an assumption in much of what was told the Committee by the college officials that one need not be concerned with racial matters if one is in an all-white situation. For example, it was regarded as acceptable to ignore racial

issues while training a student to teach in all-white suburbia because that teacher will encounter very few blacks.

Faculty

The lack of black faculty members was also reported to the Committee as a reason for black students feeling less secure than they should. There was no evidence given the Committee that either part-time foreign national or the full-time professor of education, who are both black, are called upon by black students in terms of providing a black faculty person to whom the students can relate, and in whom the black students can confide.

The black professor of education reported to the Committee that he has one black student assigned to him officially as an advisee, but other than this, none of the black students come to him on an informal basis.

Relationship to the University of Virginia

Some citizens of Fairfax County recommended to the Committee that the college should be separated from its parent institution, the University of Virginia, in order to insure that the college become directly responsible to its constituency in Northern Virginia. George Mason was made a part of the university to begin with, so that the college could develop with direction and guidance from the university.

The relationship between the college and the university was clearly established by the chancellor: "We are a division of the

University of Virginia. I report to the president of the university and to the board; and the president, of course, reports to the board of visitors . . ."

Bearing on the relationship between the university and George Mason, especially with regard to the present inquiry, is the Rotch Report, named for William Rotch, Chairman of the President's Committee on Education and Employment Opportunities, Obligations and Rights. The report, made to President Edgar F. Shannon in August of 1969, is a substantial document which resulted from an indepth study of the Charlottesville operations of the university with regard to the inclusion of minority students and affairs.

While the Rotch Report deals with Charlottesville, its basic findings and recommendations could be generally applicable to George Mason College as well. In its introduction the report reads:

The commitment that we believe is required now is for a willingness to consider change, to act and lead instead of reacting and following . . . Evidence of the desired commitment would appear when the University shows itself willing to seek actively to reflect the advancing needs of the people it serves.

The Rotch Report asks:

Why, commitment to meet the needs of black students? . . . One is the long neglect of the educational needs of this segment of our population. A deficiency exists that needs particular effort to correct. The other reason is that the nature of these needs is often sufficiently unique to deserve special analysis. The University of Virginia has resources and skills that can help do the job. (p. 2.)

The Report then states that:

The recommendations are based on two fundamental premises: the University of Virginia as a state university should be available to all citizens of the state; all students and faculty members would profit from involvement in a community with broader social economic and racial representation than is now available.
(p. 3.)

The findings and recommendations of the report cover the following subjects: the need for making the welcome to black students unequivocally known to the black community; full-time coordination from the president's Office of Affairs relating to the black students; black studies; recruitment (including a detailed plan), admissions, and matters related to the transitional period of a student who is new to a college campus.

In a letter to Mr. Rotch, President Shannon reiterated his commitment and the commitment of the university to the attention of young men and women who are able to take advantage of the academic opportunities of the university from all social and economic backgrounds, racial origins and geographical areas within the State. The president also took action which led to the appointment of a coordinator for minority group affairs and led to the hiring of a black person to recruit black students for the Charlottesville campus.

There is no evidence that these important steps have been taken on the George Mason campus or that there has been any real incentive for them to be taken.

A Fairfax citizen who had addressed his concern in this matter to the Governor, reports that the Governor addressed a letter to President Shannon on February 17, 1971 saying in part:

I am extremely concerned, however, that they /black students/ are in fact welcome is well publicized so that potential black students will be aware of that welcome. I am very confident that you share my views and I assume that the fine efforts you have made in Charlottesville to achieve this goal for black students are being made at George Mason College.

President Shannon's reply of March 4, 1971, reiterated compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the increase in the number of black students, and the hiring of black faculty. He concluded:

A summary of our efforts in Charlottesville has been prepared by our dean of admissions for distribution to his counterparts at George Mason and Mary Washington. Some of our efforts may prove useful to them, and of course we want them to share their ideas with our Office of Admissions. We wish to give able black students every opportunity to attend and will continue to make our wishes known.

The generous attitude of "sharing" information between the two campuses of activities regarding an issue as crucial as assuring that these campuses in fact make themselves open to black citizens, does not appear to have had any significant result in assisting George Mason to develop a fully open educational institution in fact as well as in policy.

Relationship of George Mason College to the Community

A primary reason for the establishment of George Mason College was the need in Northern Virginia for a State-supported institution of higher education, accessible to the fastest growing community in the State. Yet, the Committee was told by Mr. Pritchard that no steps were taken to assure in the planning that this college would serve the entire community, including the blacks, ". . . with the exception that we did have an understanding that we were not going to wipe out the Negro community which was next door by changes of zoning."

However, it appears that even this early understanding may not now be secure. The dean of students discussed the possibilities of dormitories and a committee at the college has been considering whether or not to have dormitories. Apparently the master plan for physical development, according to Dean Robert Turner, provides "for on-campus housing for students to a limited extent, and authority has been received to construct student housing." Turner mentioned that consideration is being given to the possibility of private housing to be constructed for students near the campus. He told the Committee: "The question of the possibility of rezoning land adjacent to the college for private housing construction purposes" has been raised. The Committee then asked him about "rezoning":

Q: The land you have in mind for rezoning to build dormitories--is this the black residential area?

A: Sir, this is not land that the college has. This is privately-owned land adjacent to college property.

Q: But it is not the black community?

A: This would be in Fairfax County, whatever the codes and housing requirements are.

Q: But is this black residential?

A: I think it is unoccupied land. I think it is mostly open. I am not certain of that but I think it is mostly open.

Later in the meeting the Committee was told by Mrs. Jean Packard, former president of the Fairfax County Federation of Citizens' Associations, that "the land considered for the dormitories is primarily black residential at this time," and that there is concern in the black community about the intentions of the college.

The apparent reluctance of the college to relate to the educational needs of the black community is illustrated by its failure to support its own proposal to the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare for an Upward Bound program. The Committee was told by several citizens and members of the college community, that only with great effort after the second attempt at putting together an Upward Bound proposal, did the administration agree to approve and forward the proposal to HEW. However, it was later discovered that the chancellor had forwarded the proposal with a covering letter which instead of supporting the proposal, described problems in implementing the program. The cover letter reads:

Enclosed is the application of George Mason College for an Upward Bound project. There are a number of requirements set forth by Upward Bound that we might have some difficulty in meeting. George Mason is a comparatively new division of the University of Virginia. Our student body at present is about 1900. Our present facilities were designed

for two-thirds this number. The Upward Bound program must be housed in a temporary facility if we are able to procure one. This involves budget authorization from the State, which we are presently seeking but we do not have. We will not know how we stand on this matter until the middle of March.

The second matter of concern is the way in which the college is to provide the 20 percent matching funds. This will of necessity have to be in the form of services in kind which will need to be priced. Our tight budget has no funds for authorized projects. The Committee has worked diligently and their interest is keen. Their lack of experience in managing projects such as Upward Bound, however, means George Mason will need to find experienced and competent leadership for this project if it is to undertake it. Due to our space limitations, classroom limitation, lack of dormitories and a student center, the time required to accomplish this project will be greater than in an institution that has greater facilities than George Mason at this time.

I am in favor of this project but would be less than candid if I did not point out the limitations of George Mason as a sponsor at this time.

If further information is needed, let me know.

The Upward Bound Proposal Committee at George Mason was informed, according to information provided this Committee, that the proposal had been turned down by HEW, when some days later it was discovered that no action had been taken by HEW. An area guidance counselor described the "great service to our black students" that would be provided by George Mason through the Upward Bound program:

Two requirements of the program are that you must live within a 50-mile radius and it must be a residential school. We have absolutely no school that can serve our students. Now,

are there any kinds of strings that can be pulled--maybe you can rent a building and call it a quasi-residential place--that we can have this program? Because it will give us a great service. Virginia students are not eligible in D.C. or Maryland. But there are none within 50 miles except George Mason.

Finally, with regard to the relationship of the college to the community, the Advisory Committee was told that the college has made no response to an earlier report regarding these same issues prepared by the Fairfax County Council on Human Relations. The council is a private citizens organization interested in promoting healthy human relations in Fairfax County.

After carefully reviewing the situation at George Mason College, the council published a report making certain recommendations on January 12, 1971. On January 20, 1971, the council held a public meeting in order to discuss the contents of the report. The George Mason College administration was specifically invited to this meeting, and had earlier been visited by members of the council regarding these issues. The administration did not attend the meeting and, to date, the administration of the college has not officially responded to this report.

CONCLUSIONS

The Virginia State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights concludes that, from the information it has obtained, it is clear that the George Mason College has chosen a neutral role with regard to making its services available to black and other minority citizens of Northern Virginia. It has taken very little affirmative action to demonstrate its concern with the needs of the black community, nor has it done anything to suggest that the college sees the black community as a population it should serve.

At the close of the open meeting, Dr. Elias Blake, director of the Institute for Services to Education, a psychologist and educator, shared with the Committee his analysis of the statements he had heard during the meeting. His first comment coincides with the Committee's general conclusion. He said:

Decisionmakers in George Mason College are not willing to give the issue of racial isolation of George Mason College . . . that kind of sense of priority that one has when . . . one assumes that racial isolation and misunderstandings threaten the entire American social order in a way that few other issues do.

Dr. Blake continued:

Any educational institution, as George Mason is, has to . . . deal with this as a major component of its educational program.

The Committee concludes that the planners, developers, and administrators of George Mason College were unable to see the black citizens of Northern Virginia as a legitimate part of the constituency to be served by the college. Dr. Blake saw this as an attempt to assume a posture of color blindness:

To be neutral and to just have a system that supposedly treats everyone who comes, equally, is, generally, to be on the side of continuing injustice, because injustice feeds on itself.

Color blindness, has been found to be inappropriate as a point of view in solving the kinds of problems that we have been talking about today. Color blindness in colleges has been found to contribute to failure and a continuing of the problems.

The state of affairs that George Mason is trying to overcome was not created by color blindness or neutrality. The state of affairs was created by a conscious attention to color.

Men of goodwill then have to move away from a concern for a kind of fairness, into something which has to be akin to the active negative efforts of the past. Special efforts have to be taken to break up the after-effects of the old system that was based on really very active efforts; a great deal of legal decision-making machinery put that system together. Neutrality and color blindness will not break down that particular system.

In this same vein, William Durland, an attorney, told the Committee:

When we look at this situation and look at the 18-year-old black who is told that perhaps it is a very uncomfortable situation at George Mason College, what we need to do is more than a legal handshake, more than an open door policy. We've got to make up for the slavery of the past, the segregation of the past, and the exclusion of the present, whether intentional or not.

Several programs are now in operation at colleges from South Carolina to Rhode Island which recognize that affirmative action is necessary in order to break the negative patterns and deliberate exclusions of the past. The example of the parent school, the

University of Virginia, could be followed at George Mason even without a directive from the authorities in Charlottesville.

The Committee concludes that the basic problem at George Mason College is its failure to achieve a clear and realistic perception of its role in the Northern Virginia community. The college apparently views itself as promoting traditional values of higher education for a "traditional" population. Presumably, this neither excludes nor includes blacks or other minorities, but, instead, the college assumes a neutral position. This position, however, ignores the fact that the traditional values and standards being promoted are those of an all-white society which traditionally excluded blacks. The civil rights effort, nationally, is attempting to open all the institutions of society to full participation by all citizens. The issue at George Mason College is the same: to open the college in all aspects to full participation by all the citizens of Northern Virginia.

The Committee further concludes that the absence of significant numbers of minority group members within the George Mason College community is not surprising in light of the perception of the college and its mission held by those who were closely related to its establishment and development. Essentially, George Mason College was conceived of, by, and for the white community of Northern Virginia and not for the entire Northern Virginia population.

Even if the faculty, staff, and student body of the college were to remain virtually all-white, this problem could at least be overcome in course content and self-consciousness. But the task will be far easier if George Mason College actively seeks to include in its community and life, members of other races and cultures. According to Dr. Blake:

There is a need of blacks in policy and decisionmaking positions in colleges One has to again be color conscious and go out and try to find consciously, with intent aforethought, not only a good person but a good black person, because that person brings with him certain experiences, certain sensitivities, which are a part of his competency to do the job It is much less probable that one would find the sensitivities and the experiences in a white person.

The Ad Hoc Committee on Recruitment is part of an effort, Dr. Thompson told the Committee, "to invite blacks to come to George Mason." However, the chancellor did not specifically tell the ad hoc committee that this was its purpose. He apparently set a policy of racial inclusion, but failed to mention race when establishing the implementing mechanism.

The Committee notes that George Mason is a division of the University of Virginia, but it appears that the university assumes a laissez-faire attitude toward the college, except for such matters as budget and finance. There appears to be no effort being made by the university to implement the Rotch Report on the George Mason College campus.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Virginia State Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights believes that there are certain steps which must be taken by George Mason College if it is to serve the entire multiracial population of Northern Virginia. Some of these steps can be taken by the college with a great deal more ease if the parent authority, the rector, and the board of visitors of the University of Virginia, take specific actions to direct them. The following recommendations, therefore, suggest those ways in which George Mason College can begin to fulfill its mission more fully than it has in the past. The order of the recommendations in no way implies a sense of priority, but the Committee feels these recommendations are the barest minimum which should be implemented in order to effect useful and permanent change in opening the college to all.

1. The rector and the board of visitors of the University of Virginia should urge George Mason College to establish as a first priority the development of a fully open educational institution in result as well as in policy, since it is generally agreed that the task of building a relevant and responsible educational program for all the citizens of Northern Virginia is the most immediate goal of the college. Toward this end, the rector and the board of visitors of the University of Virginia, in keeping with their duties described in the Code of Virginia, should direct the chancellor of George Mason College to establish a committee charged with adapting the Rotch Report recommendations for application to George Mason College.

2. In recognition of the fact, as noted in the Introduction, that racial "subordination often occurs irrespective of the good intentions of administrators . . .", George Mason College should conduct workshops or training sessions for its administrative staff with the purpose of increasing each staff member's awareness and understanding of the means by which racial subordination occurs, and to discover ways of eliminating the effects of racial subordination.

3. The rector and the board of visitors of the University of Virginia should appoint a black resident of Virginia to the George Mason College board of advisors when the next vacancy occurs. This person should have the following qualifications: his job should permit him to be present at meetings, as well as to participate fully in nonofficial activities and conversations which often underlie decisions of such boards; he should be sensitive to the needs of his own and other minorities in the State; he should be well-versed in the traditional roles played by institutions of higher learning. A board member lacking these qualifications would most likely turn out to be a token for the sake of color, and not have a genuine and significant contribution to make to the board's program.

4. The rector and the board of visitors of the University of Virginia should require that the George Mason College administration establish performance standards relative to serving the black community of Northern Virginia in the areas of recruitment, admissions, financial aid, ancillary programs and opportunities, and

curriculum content; such standards should be designed to insure immediately more successful results from the open policy of the college, and to include a system of reporting timetables for accomplishment and inspection by qualified outside consultants.

5. George Mason College should immediately hire a coordinator of minority affairs. The coordinator should be a member of a minority group in order to monitor adequately the sensitive operations of the rest of the administration in regard to minority affairs, and in order to provide the special quality of sensitivity in racial matters.

6. George Mason College should immediately hire an admissions officer who is a minority group member. This person would be responsible for establishing, implementing, and directing programs and activities related to recruitment, public relations, and admissions procedures of potential candidates for admission who are members of a minority group.

7. Because admissions policies are made in consultation with the president and provost of the University of Virginia, the provost and the president of the University of Virginia should provide whatever assistance is necessary to the admissions director of George Mason College in order to identify successful recruitment, admissions, and financial aid programs in other colleges and to institute those programs at George Mason.

8. George Mason College should establish as a primary goal, the inclusion in the curriculum of courses of study which fully represent the racial and ethnic plurality of American culture, and history, as well as of the Northern Virginia population. This should be in addition to the current course on African Civilizations and to

the plans to establish a course in "Latin American Affairs". The recommended courses would be relevant to both black and white students at George Mason.

9. To reduce the economic barrier faced by many blacks, George Mason College should establish a tuition remission policy and should pursue additional sources of scholarship aid for minority students, from Federal, State, and private sources.

10. George Mason College should immediately and vigorously pursue the establishment of an Upward Bound program.

11. George Mason College should take immediate steps to establish an officially college-sponsored and approved student organization in which black students can find the opportunity to relate directly and freely to each other for the purpose of strengthening their participation in the other aspects of their life as a part of the college community.

12. Since the lack of residence halls has constituted a deterrent to potential black students, George Mason College should immediately implement plans for the construction of dormitory facilities.

