

# Campus Communicator

George Alexander Heard

The man President Nixon has chosen as his adviser on campus problems for the next two months is regarded as especially adept at opening channels of communication among students, school administrators and public officials.

In his seven years as Chancellor of Vanderbilt University in Nashville, G. Alexander Heard has spearheaded moves to give students more of a voice in campus affairs. Vanderbilt has been unmarred by major disturbances.

Like most university heads, he has thought and spoken often about student ferment on campuses. And he appears to see it as a cause for optimism as well as for alarm.

Last year, addressing a parents' weekend convocation at Vanderbilt, the youthful-looking, 53-year-old educator said: "I used to teach courses in government and politics, and am myself especially aware of the difficulties and importance of stimulating citizens to take an informed, compassionate and effective part in the affairs of their communities. I therefore view with satisfaction students' turning attention to public matters."

His concern was also expressed recently in a report by the Special Committee on Campus Tension, a private study group set up by the American Council on Education, which warned that campus unrest this year could surpass that of previous years.

Chancellor Heard served on the committee, which also deplored "repressive and provocative pronouncements" by public officials.

It was his reputation as a communicator, a political liberal, an advocate of integration and an exceptional administrator that led Columbia University to offer him its presidency last summer.



United Press International

*Adept at bridging gaps*

After five weeks of deliberation, Dr. Heard declined the offer. He said one of the reasons was that he believed he could do more by remaining at Vanderbilt to help solve "the uniquely important and tenacious problems of our biracial society."

In 1967, when riots broke out on nearby black college campuses following speeches there and at Vanderbilt by Stokely Carmichael, Dr. Heard was criticized by some for allowing his students to invite the black militant.

The chancellor replied that

the university existed "not to protect students from ideas but rather to expose them to ideas."

Although he has been attacked by some Vanderbilt radicals as a tool of the Establishment, he is generally popular with the student body.

George Alexander Heard (he does not use his first name) was born in Savannah, Ga., on March 14, 1917, and he tells friends he returns to Savannah annually to refresh his soft Tidewater accent.

He graduated from the University of North Carolina in 1938, majoring in political service, including a tour in the Pacific during World War II, he received a master's degree and a doctorate, both in political science, from Columbia.

Before coming to Vanderbilt in 1963 he held posts at the Universities of Alabama and North Carolina.

In 1949, he married Laura Jean Keller. They have four children, Stephen, 19, Christopher, 18, Francis, 16, and Cornelia, 14.

A lifelong Democrat, Dr. Heard is the author of several books including "A Two Party South?" and "The Costs of Democracy." The latter is widely considered the definitive work on campaign costs. He headed President John F. Kennedy's commission on campaign spending.

Chancellor Heard says he views his new role as that of the representative of the campuses to President Nixon, not the President's representative on the campuses. "The President demonstrated to me his willingness to listen," he told students Friday. "I will do my best to help him hear."