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REMARKS BY
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CHRISTOPHER NEWPORT COLLEGE DEDICATION
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Virginia today is experiencing a vast awakening. To an even greater extent than the nation as a whole, we are undergoing a gigantic population increase. We are finding ourselves more and more an urban and industrial society. The shift from a simple, rural, agrarian society must be evident to all.

With these changes have come new needs, new challenges. Undoubtedly, the greatest of these has been in the area of education. For we realize that a first rate education is basic to the cultural, social, political and economic well-being of our State.

In the past decade we have come far toward improving the quality and quantity of formal education in Virginia. Much still needs to be done, but I feel we are making great progress in our efforts to give our Virginia young people the finest in educational opportunities.

This college is tangible evidence of our progress. It indicates our willingness to adopt new ideas and move into new areas in finding solutions to our education dilemmas.

Christopher Newport and the other 12 community colleges in Virginia are playing a most vital role in our overall educational program. They are enabling thousands of well-qualified young people to continue their formal education beyond the high school level.

The community college concept was introduced in 1960 as a partial solution to one of the most pressing problems of our time: How to accommodate the many deserving graduates of our schools who could not gain acceptance at our four-year State institutions.

The General Assembly authorized that year the building and opening of 12 junior or two-year colleges. At the last session of the Legislature, another was authorized, so that we now have 13 community colleges across the State. Undoubtedly, there will be others.

We consider these colleges a vital link in our publicly

supported education program. They do not compete with the established colleges or the technical colleges we are committed to build. We do not think of them as satellites of the four-year institutions. They fill two special needs that the other schools cannot. And they do it most economically. They are the stepping stones to degrees for students who could not get initially into residential colleges but who can transfer to such schools upon completion of the two-year program. Too, they provide tailor-made post high school learning opportunities for the young folks who do not want to pursue a degree but who feel the need of college training.

Sociologically and technologically, our society has become vastly more complicated in the past generation. A high school education is not adequate preparation for a young man or woman who must compete in today's world. Each year more and more of our public high school graduates are becoming aware of this fact of life, and an ever-increasing percentage of them are going on to college. The percentage has increased more than one-third in the past decade.

Now nearly one-half of our high school graduates continue their formal education. All of this is good for Virginia.

To realize what the new community colleges mean in our total education program, I ask you to consider Christopher Newport. It opened its doors--or rather the doors of a borrowed building--in September, 1961 with an enrollment of 187 students.

This term, 1965-66, more than 2,000 students will be enrolled in the day, evening and summer programs at the college. I have no doubt that this phenomenal growth will continue until it reaches an estimated enrollment of perhaps 10,000 by 1980. This college is located in an area that has undergone one of the largest population explosions in the country, and which is expected to experience an unprecedented population increase in the years just ahead.

But Christopher Newport serves not only the young people of the Lower Peninsula--those from York, Newport News and Hampton. It has students also who come across the York from Gloucester and Mathews and others who cross the James from the Suffolk and

Smithfield areas.

Many of these young men and women could not have attended college if the college had not come to them. They have found the cost to be about one-fourth to one-fifth of what it would have been at a residential college.

Without such an opportunity, many may have been handicapped all their lives. Who knows how much added earning power, how much added enjoyment of life, a college such as this can bring to the youngsters it serves and to the area in which it is located.

If you will pardon a personal reference, I can relate my own testimonial. I know what such a college means to those who are privileged to attend it. During the depression in the early 1930's when I had two older sisters in college I attended Old Dominion, then known as the Norfolk Division of the College of William and Mary, before going on to Williamsburg. I--and my parents--were quite grateful that such an institution was close at hand. Without this opportunity my education would have been delayed if not

discontinued.

Already Christopher Newport has sent its students on to our four-year colleges and to other colleges all over the country. Hopefully, many of them will return to this area to enrich the cultural and economic life of the Lower Peninsula. Certainly they, and all of Virginia, are indebted to the generous people of Newport News for the contributions they have made to this institution. From the outset they have guaranteed the success of this school. They provided the first building--formerly an elementary school--for the fledgling Christopher Newport. They made a gift of \$125,000 to help get the venture off to a good start. They purchased for \$360,000 and gave to the college this beautiful 75-acre tract, and spent another \$100,000 on roadways, parking lot and other improvements. This represents an investment close to three-quarters of a million dollars. It is a very strong vote of confidence, I would say, in the future of this school.

But for this cooperation, Christopher Newport could never have

come so far so quickly.

The completion of Christopher Newport Hall and the move to the campus last September began a new era for this college. Now Gosnold Hall, appropriately named for the Number Two man in the Jamestown Expedition, is providing badly needed space for science classes.

Governor Harrison's speed-up program has enabled the college to take another giant step considerably ahead of schedule. Plans are now being drawn for a physical education building, and I feel sure that the necessary funds for the construction of this building will be granted at the next regular session of the Legislature. The effort to obtain them will have my active support.

Thereafter, I trust it will not be too long before we will see the fine library, classroom buildings and student center that exist now only on the master site plan and in Dean Cunningham's dreams.

Important as they are, building stones and mortar do not make an educational institution. It will be the human beings entrusted

with the affairs of the institution that set the tone and spirit and really, after all, make the college what it is and what it will be.

Dean Cunningham is giving Christopher Newport enthusiastic leadership of the highest calibre. He has assembled here a fine faculty of dedicated individuals who have given unstintingly of themselves. They have performed their duties under conditions that I know have sometimes been very trying during the formative years of this college. At times they must have felt a real kinship to Captain Newport himself, who endured some hardships of a different sort back in 1607.

I am certain that the day is not too far off, however, when you will see your endeavors reaping rich rewards. For surely Christopher Newport College is well on its way to becoming the educational and cultural center of this vital area of our Commonwealth.