

# Student to Keep 9/76 U.Va. Dorm Post

## Gay Student To Keep Post At U. Va.

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*Times-Dispatch State Staff*

CHARLOTTESVILLE — A professed homosexual whose suitability as a University of Virginia dormitory resident adviser was challenged will be permitted to continue in the job, university officials said Thursday.

A committee appointed to study whether Bob Elkins, a second-year student from Silver Spring, Md., should be permitted to retain his dormitory post recommended to university President Frank L.

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Hereford Jr. that Elkins not be removed.

Hereford concurred with the recommendation and, in a meeting with Elkins, announced that the student could keep his job. Hereford also made public a letter he sent to Ernest H. Ern, vice president for student affairs, about the decision.

### Potential for Conflict

The focus of the committee's inquiry was whether there was a potential for conflict between Elkins' positions as president of the Gay Student Union and as resident assistant in Hancock dormitory, a first-year men's dorm.

During the committee's six-day study, Elkins announced his resignation from the Gay Student Union post.

In his letter to Ern, Hereford said the committee agreed "that the potential for conflict does exist."

Hereford's letter continued, "However . . . the committee found no evidence that such conflict has occurred."

Hereford cited letters written by students in Elkins' hall as evidence that "they consider him to be 'an excellent

resident adviser.'"

Hereford also said he is "aware of no reports to the contrary."

Citing the committee's report, which recommended continued "close scrutiny" of the matter and a review by an "appraisal board," Hereford called for continuing review.

After the Thursday afternoon meeting, which also involved Elkins' attorney, John C. Lowe; Hereford, Ern and the university legal adviser, George Grattan, Elkins said he is "very, very happy."

"I want to go back to being 'Joe Average.' I've got to start studying again."

Elkins said Hereford apologized for any family difficulties caused by the publicity. Elkins said his father had been unaware of his homosexuality before the incident.

Elkins was chosen for the dormitory post last spring after a long screening process in which his homosexuality was discussed.

The question of a conflict of interest was raised by Hereford earlier in September, and he appointed an eight-member committee to study the situation.