A special meeting of the Board of Visitors was held on Thursday, April 20, 1978, at 9:00 a.m. in the Sanger Hall Board Room.

Present were Drs. Blanton, Gayle and Gwathmey; Messrs. Bliley, Dabney, Grey, Obenshain, Scott, Seaborn and Shumate; Mesdames Satterfield and Thalhimer. Absent were Messrs. McGehee and Norris and Mrs. Stone. Also present were Drs. Ackell, Brooke and Willett; Mr. Ross; Miss Cosby; and Mrs. Price.

Dr. Blanton called the meeting to order and announced that there would be a Council of Visitors' meeting on April 23 and 24 in Blacksburg, Virginia. Dr. Blanton indicated that a good agenda had been prepared, and he would like as many members of our Board attend as possible.

Dr. Ackell presented the Affirmative Action Plan for the State. He also distributed three additional charts which had been the subject of a great deal of discussion between VCU and the Secretary of Education. The percentage of first-time, full-time blacks in the freshman class was very high. Dr. Ackell indicated that Dr. Gilley had stated that VCU could also include first-time, part-time and first-time, transfer students in its figures. A lengthy discussion followed.

Several questions were raised concerning the $1,000 incentive grants to be awarded to first-time minority students. It is understood that these grants will be available to students for all four years at $1,000 per year. Dr. Ackell indicated that he does not know if any of this money can be used for part-time or transfer minorities. This question will need to be clarified.
Mrs. Satterfield asked what would be the reaction of the members of the General Assembly to this plan. Dr. Ackell reported that many members of the Assembly had asked the Governor to develop a plan that would be suitable to HEW rather than have a court battle. This plan is in response to that request so the Governor should have strong support in both houses.

Mr. Grey stated that this plan is to remedy the problem of having traditionally black and traditionally white institutions. In Norfolk and in Petersburg, there are traditionally black and white institutions adjacent to each other. Dr. Ackell reported that the presidents of the two black institutions were concerned about their identity and the loss of black students. With each institution having $1,000 scholarships to recruit black students, the enrollment of the predominantly black institutions would probably suffer. Dr. Ackell also reported that the State Council will be looking harder at proposed degree programs of the basically white institutions to see if there are programs that could be offered productively at one of the predominantly black institutions.

Mr. Scott suggested that a marketing survey be done to see if there are indeed 1,600 black students (the total number of first-time, full-time black students) available to recruit. If the survey finds that there are not enough black students to recruit, this will certainly hurt enrollments at the private institutions.

Mr. Shumate asked if VCU would have to lower its standards in order to increase its black enrollment. Dr. Ackell indicated that he did not plan on lowering standards but increasing standards and that we would have to recruit good students. He stated that we do have a special services program for minority students who would have difficulty in entering college via any other route.
Dr. Ackell reported that we would have to work very hard in recruiting good black senior faculty members, especially on the MCV Campus. In addition, it will be necessary to keep very accurate records of recruitment activities. We need to be able to show HEW that we are making a good faith effort.

Dr. Blanton indicated that he would like to appoint an ad hoc committee to prepare a resolution on the affirmative action plan for the May Board meeting. The committee is composed of the following members: Mr. S. Buford Scott, Chairman; Mr. Thomas J. Bliley, Jr.; and Mr. Robert J. Grey.

On majority vote of the Board, an executive session was held.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

Richard D. Obenshain, Secretary

Approved:

Wyndham B. Blanton, Jr., M.D., Rector