

An open letter to the president

Dear Dr. Brandt:

The first meeting of the University Assembly Monday afternoon was a fiasco for two reasons: one, the orderly requests by six representative students for more student representation on the body were denied; two, the editors of the student newspaper were told they could not remain in the meeting room to report the events—with no reason for either action made public.

Dr. Brandt, no member of the university community, be he faculty, student, or administrator will deny that this newspaper has consistently advocated an attitude of student responsibility, a stand which sometimes has brought us into disfavor with the more vocal and activist elements of the student body. This year the shoe is on the other foot. We now feel compelled to call on the Administration to adopt a less adamant attitude, to see the other side, to grant the students a voice.

We feel that you have done an injustice both to the principle of a responsible student government and to the principle of a responsible student press.

Whereas we once supported token student representation on the new body as a "step forward," we now feel that in view of your attitude Monday that the assembly meeting in secret is less than representative and is in fact manipulated by the words of one or two specific administrators.

Freedom of the press was violated by your personal decision not to allow the two editors of The Times to sit in on this first, historic, organizational meeting of the "most important decision-making body to be instituted here in decades (your words)." You told us that this first meeting was to be a preparatory one, and indicated that the board must decide whether to allow

reporters to attend future meetings.

After you had already issued your personal decree, the group did decide --negatively. A precedent was set at this first meeting—one which violated the principles upon which the assembly supposedly was founded.

By a vote of 18 to 14, it was decided not to increase student membership on the board, not even by one additional member. Six students representing several factions, age groups, and political persuasions, delivered responsible and mannerly addresses telling why more students are needed on such a board.

Unfortunately, by hearsay we understand that the council listened with several changes of expression. Then a vote was taken—all in secrecy. If only we could have been there to record the discussion. We do not wish to condemn those faculty members and administrators who voted in favor of students' resolution. But, how do we—the students—know who these responsible members are?

Administrators fearing for their jobs must have felt led by your admonition, expressed often at earlier meetings with students, that six members on a body like this one is a gain over the student representation at other universities. So many voted with you. But what courage it must have taken for others to oppose your iron will.

Such secrecy is alien to the democratic way, Dr. Brandt, and violates your earlier declarations that student thought and opinion will play a larger role in decision-making here.

We are proud of those students who did not take their seats on the assembly: SGA President Randy Eley, House Speaker Fred Shorter and Senior Class President Mary Skudlarek. We are proud

of our own reporters who stood their ground outside the corridor and gleaned what facts they could from the participants as they left the meeting room in Rhoads Hall.

It is hard to believe that you told a Times reporter, in attempting to justify your action in excluding the editors from the meeting, "We're not trying to hide anything from them. It's just that the meetings will be a lot freer without them."

A lot freer? The press historically has acted as a guardian of free speech, Dr. Brandt. A free student press can be a responsible student press and this in turn can help bring about a responsible and informed student body.

Without more student representation on the University Assembly, its decisions will be meaningless as we see it. Certainly you should not continue this farce with only three students sitting in, two from the Health Sciences Division (who are unfamiliar with student needs here) and one arbitrarily chosen graduate student from the Academic Division.

We strongly recommend equal representation of students, faculty and administrators so that we may have the equal treatment we were promised in your earlier speeches.

We wish to make clear that we do not expect students to have an equal voice in the governance of this university, but we do feel entitled to equal representation on this important advisory body which helps determine decisions made by those who lawfully govern.

Please don't turn your back on the students.

Sincerely,
Co-Editors of The Commonwealth Times

COMMONWEALTH TIMES

VIRGINIA COMMONWEALTH UNIVERSITY

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Equal seating rejected; SGA threatens to dissolve

By David Kirby and Larry Clark
Times SGA Reporters

The joint House and Senate, in response to the rejection of their petition for equal representation for students on the University Assembly, passed a motion Monday night stating they should "inform Dr. Brandt that we wish equal representation on government bodies and that if we are not allotted such representation, we may dissolve all governing bodies." This would include the SGA House, Senate, executive branch and Student Court.

An amendment added this clause to the motion: "And we will slow down all work done by students (employed) at this university."

The motion was passed unanimously.

The motion was presented by Rik Davis, Eng2, who also offered a motion for a committee, delegated to present student demands to President Warren W. Brandt, to be established.

This committee is headed by SGA President Randy Eley and consists of a group of students representative of all university factions.

A strategy committee, headed by Freshman class President Dennis Easter, was also appointed. This latter committee held a meeting following termination of the joint House and Senate meeting Monday night in which they formed three sub-committees dealing with communications, editorial

comment and the proposed slowdown.

All of this action followed as an aftermath of the University Assembly's decision not to honor student requests for equal representation on the Assembly.

When this question was brought before the University Assembly on Monday afternoon, there were only three students' names on the Assembly roster, two of whom were from the Health Center. When voted on by the Assembly, it was defeated by a margin of 18 to 14.

After the meeting of the Assembly, Dr. Brandt was asked to comment on

(Continued on Page 4)



Staff Photo by Peter Hoehne

SGA President Randy Eley Addresses Students Friday
Meeting Was Held to Plan Protest Strategy

Meeting disrupted by local residents

An attempt by four representatives of the Oregon Hill Street Union Monday night to gain SGA support of their group's efforts to stop VCU expansion into Oregon Hill ended with SGA House members and the delegates at loggerheads and the House meeting disrupted.

Al Ogden, one of the delegates, said the group hoped to persuade the House to "declare where it stands in relationship to the faculty and administration position" on the "halting of current VCU expansion into the Oregon Hill community."

Nina Ogden, chief spokesman for the four—all of whom said they were residents of Oregon Hill—addressed the House for 15 minutes.

After considerable debate and discussion of the request, House member John Norcutt moved that "members of the House of Representatives that are interested meet with this party in a university room and with whatever other parties they care to and discuss this issue at another time this week, when we can devote full attention to their plans."

Norcutt's motion passed by a large majority, and the woman began shouting her displeasure at the delay.

"No, I will not be quiet," she cried when asked by SGA leaders to stop shouting. "I don't respect this assembly because they don't respect 1,000-no, 3,000—peoples lives. So I'm supposed to

respect the fact that you tell me to shut up? Uh, uh, she asserted emphatically.

House Speaker Fred Shorter recessed the meeting as members began discussing the events among themselves.

Two members of the VCU police force summoned by the House showed up a few minutes later, but left after talking with House members. The Oregon Hill delegation remained quietly for the joint session of the House and Senate which followed the disorder.

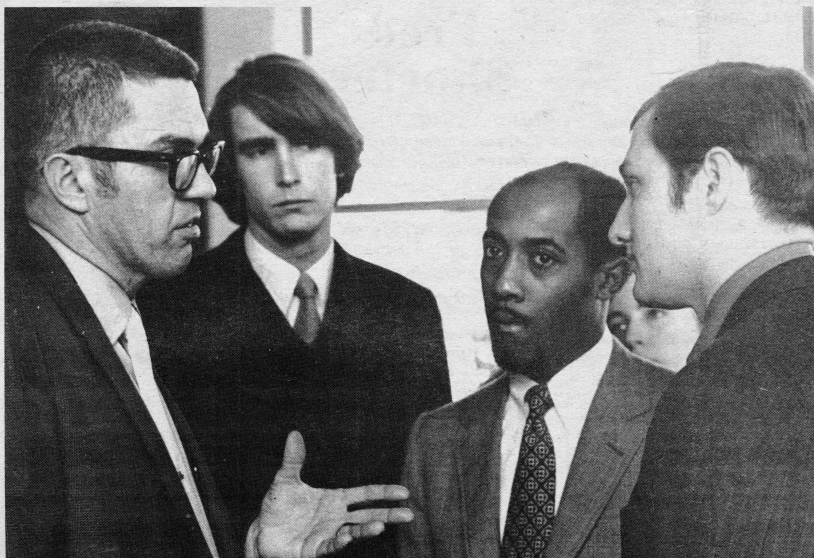
Representatives of the Union had presented to VCU President Dr. Warren W. Brandt a petition three weeks ago demanding a vacant lot at the corner of

Cherry and Cumberland sts. now being used as a parking lot for VCU students be declared by the university "a free area to be used for whatever purpose" the people of Oregon Hill want.

The lot had been cleared of buildings by the Richmond Metropolitan Authority to make room for the planned Downtown Expressway.

The petition also demanded "that VCU declare publicly that no further expansion plans will destroy even one house or remove more families."

One reason given by the spokesman against VCU expansion into the area was "a lot of people couldn't live anywhere else." She said many of those living on social security or welfare payments wouldn't be able to afford rents in other areas of the city.



Staff Photo by Peter Hoehne

Dr. Brandt Talks with Members of Student Delegation Before Entering University Assembly Meeting
Jim Forkin, Left, Bill Patterson and Randy Eley Presented Position Papers With Three Others

...like voices in the wilderness

Jim Forkin:

We as students are here today, because it is felt that an issue, one of sufficient magnitude, is being forced upon us. Students did not ask this issue to be forced, just as students were not consulted as to the constitution of this body. We came today to resolve this situation in a posture evoking good will and honesty.

It is the opinion of students that the representation given is a best token. We who are here to learn, after having looked at what is being offered, question indeed in what light do our educators hold us? Do they feel that equality is just a lesson for the classroom and not a function to be practiced in the day to day living experience?

What is being demonstrated, in fact, is that there are two camps of people in conflict at VCU, as opposed to the ideal unified urban university. If this is true, then our position is clear. If the actions taken by Dr. Brandt reflect reality on this campus, then we cannot accept anything less

than 50 per cent participation on a governing body that would perpetuate this condition. However, we as students will do all within our power to reject this definition. Herein lies our appeal—for we feel that knowledge can only be acquired with the help of teachers, but a third element, that of the Administration, is required, if the real experience of teaching and learning is to take place. Therefore, it is the judgment of the student body that the latter is indeed the reality on this campus.

The opinion of the faculty-administration or the opinions of the community of faculty and of the community of administrators, as well as the community of students will be revealed to the public by your actions taken today.

I urge you on behalf of students to consider this carefully and in good faith, with the ultimate objective of fairness and equality pervading all discussion.

Bill Oliver:

The vice presidential cabinet and the interfraternal founding council comprised of representatives from all campus organizations, reflecting the views of their constituents, have unanimously voted in opposition to the present concept of a university assembly as proposed by Dr. Warren W. Brandt.

The proposed assembly permeates a gross lack of confidence of the students to inject the abilities learned in the classroom into university governance. The proposed appointees to this assembly cannot truly reflect the various facets of student life. A voice is needed to correspond to the 11,000 students in attendance at the

Academic Center. A balanced assembly can obviously develop a more accurate picture of university and student problems than the present proposed assembly. The method of implementation of this proposed assembly has successfully alienated students, faculty, and administrators from the upper echelon of the administration. This, in itself, has served a useful purpose. And I repeat a useful purpose, although not intended! Factions which compose the university are united in opposition to the issue. The proposed assembly is inconsistent to the stated goals of the concept of the university assembly.

David Henley:

We are here as a delegation not to confront, nor to polarize—but to resolve an issue. In a community of rational men and women, the resolution of issues can only come through dialogue among equals.

The function of this assembly (in so far as rumors and heresay can be trusted) is to serve as a decision making and/or advisory body (depending upon the source of the information). The very fact that much of our information about this assembly is based on heresay and rumors gives testimony to the need to build up channels of communication on this campus, and not walls of suspicion, distrust, and misunderstanding which has resulted from the whole episode surrounding the university assembly issue, of the two models (that is—decision-making vs advisory) if the former is, in fact, the purpose of this assembly, the rationale given by some in that a policymaking assembly should be apportioned on the basis of inherent responsibility of any given element of the institution involved, would suggest that the present make-up of this body is not in agreement with this standard.

For this model to be consistent with its stated purpose of policy-making, an assembly of this

type would, of course, reflect a structure of descending hierarchy including the administration, faculty, and students—in that order. In fact, if the faculty and administration in this room conclude that they in fact have equal responsibility in the academic community, then a decisionmaking assembly would quite properly be made up of an equal number of administrators and faculty, but since students have no legal authority they would have no place sitting on a governance body based on this premise and, in reality, neither would the faculty—for that matter—for they have no legal responsibility.

Some of you have raised the question of experience. All of the delegates before you represent voting citizens of our society. Two of us have family responsibilities, three have met our military obligations and we represent an average of 23. Such a diversity makes up a student body at an urban university.

Our presence here is to state the position of the student body on the academic campus. The six appearing before you today have been selected by a student delegation composed of the House of Representatives and Senate of the SGA, the Student Court, and organization presidents from this campus to offer testimony on behalf of the student body.

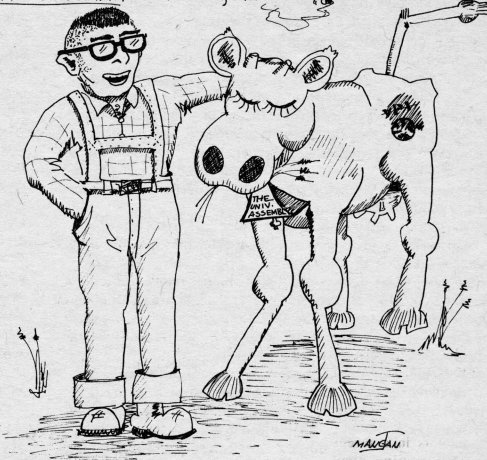
Bill Patterson:

As it has been stated, we are here as a united front. Our fight is not numbers, nor percentage, but is based on reality.

On the other hand.....we realize that any decision-making and/or advisory body must consist of responsible individuals. We are asking for a chance to assume that position. As I look around the room, I see that I am in the minority of one. I wonder—can this body truly mirror the attitudes and aspirations of the entire University community, can you as individuals, realizing the aggregate problem facing this community, maintain the position that change is not indicated in this assembly as it is presently constituted?

Students have proven that they can assume responsibility. This has been done in the areas of black studies, urban development, fraternities and sororities and tutorial programs. Every one of these programs is rooted in the student body and not where they should have been.

WAL, SHE'S KINDA THE SCIENTIFIC APPROACH....
AGRICULTURALLY SPEAKING, THAT IS.



Randy Eley:

Our presence here is to state the position of the student body on the academic campus. The six appearing before you today have been selected by a student delegation composed of the House of Representatives and Senate of the SGA, the Student Court, and organization presidents from this campus to offer testimony on behalf of the student body.

The issue on which we stand united is that the proposed Assembly as it is presently constituted, is not acceptable to the students on this campus.

The students of the Academic Center have made their decision. We now put the question before you.

Indeed, if the student voice is to have any meaning, and if there is confidence in our ability, you will resolve this issue and allow VCU to be a forerunner in

combining its efforts equally to achieve the best for all concerned.

We are serious about involvement, and are asking that we be involved not in part, but without reservations and in a responsible manner.

We have met you half way by appearing to state our position—we hope you will by the same token respect this position as we leave you to resolve the issue. We are by no means ignoring the Assembly, but will and are by our immediate action, taking positive steps for recognition of our viewpoint. Our entire position and viewpoint has been expressed to the faculty; if you have further questions, I am sure they will be able to answer them.

In conclusion, your action today will determine the future route and actions of the students and this university.

Mary Skudlarek:

I represent the interests of a dorm as a resident assistant, the seniors as class president, female undergraduate students on campus, and myself—as being selected a candidate to the University Assembly.

I am honored to be selected to the Assembly and am willing to serve, advise and in any way possible to promote the ultimate goals of this Assembly.

In order to do this, I feel that a wider scope of the students must be taken into account. I support the joint resolution of the House and Senate without relinquishing my faith and my service to this Assembly.

As an advisory and decision-making body, I believe it would be to the Assembly's advantage to take into consideration a wider swath of the student

Fred Shorter:

(Fred Shorter, Speaker of the House of Representatives, was one of six students named to the University Assembly. Although Shorter accepted his seat, he did so with reservations and expressed his thoughts in this letter mailed to President Brandt.)

I accept my appointment to the University Assembly. Because I take my duty as a representative of all Academic Center students seriously, I cannot participate in the business of the Assembly until it is reasonably apportioned. It is the over-whelming consensus of the student body that the Assembly, as you have formed it, far from adequately represents students. I would be negligent in my duties if I dignified or recognized such a body by my participation in it. When I first proposed that the Assembly's student members boycott the Assembly, I did not know I was in line for membership. I am glad now to be able to act in accordance with the way I have been talking.



Staff Photo

Mary Skudlarek
Senior Class President

Commonwealth Times

901 West Franklin st., Richmond, Virginia 23220

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Brian McDermott Rows His Single Scull on the James River
The Oarsman Represented VCU at a Boston Regatta

Staff Photo by Larry Haake

Sculler enters rowing regatta

By Tim Warren
Times Assistant Sports Editor

Brian McDermott, Bus 3 Newport News, finished eleventh of 18 contestants in a recent Novice Single Sculled rowing event in Boston, Massachusetts.

McDermott represented VCU in the Head of the Charles Regatta in which 45

other colleges, clubs, and universities entered. He competed in the Novice Single Sculled class, as he had never rowed a single sculled shell in

competition, finishing 2:24 off the winning time of 1:45.

"The more you row, the more you learn," said McDermott, stroke of the VCU junior varsity eight last year. "Besides, they say every sweep oarsman (those who row with just one oar) should learn how to scull (row with two oars), because it makes a better oarsman," he added.

Brian explained that he wasn't disappointed because "some of those who finished first, second and third were experienced, double-sculled oarsmen. They already knew how to row in a scull."

Brian is completely self-taught, and had only two and one half months of training for the event. He purchased a second hand competition shell from a Virginia Beach man early this year and began part time practice. Later in the year he journeyed to a Canadian regatta to observe the single sculled oarsmen. In viewing that competition he discovered that he was holding the oars incorrectly.

"Since I am self-taught," he commented, "I had no one to tell what I was doing right or wrong." Since the oarsman's back is to the direction in which he is rowing, McDermott explained that he also had difficulty in steering and maintaining keel in the shell. He solved the problem of pacing himself by using a stopwatch.

Brian feels that his rowing in the single scull will improve his efforts on VCU's Crew. Although he does not plan to row in single sculled events in Crew meets, he hopes to enter in other single sculled competition. He may possibly enter the New Year's Eve Regatta in New York.

Rowing Coach Donald H. Bowles praised Brian and his "extra-curricular" activities. "Brian is an excellent oarsman," he commented, "and certainly a very dedicated one."

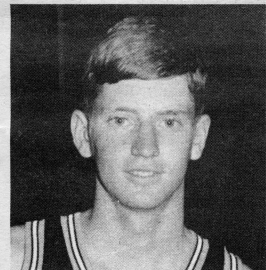
RAM REVIEW

Ed. Note: Ram Review is a new column appearing weekly on the sport's pages, with profiles of VCU basketball players

By Fred Jeter
Times Sports Writer

The art of shooting has long been and still looms as the greatest individual skill a player can possess. It is this art that Barry Sudduth does so well.

Barry, a 20 year old sophomore, is a sharpshooter from all ranges and has the prettiest, if not the most accurate, shot



Sudduth

of any Ram. He has a velvet-soft touch, and a fluid follow-through which usually precedes the swish of the cords.

Sudduth is a History Education major who comes from Culpepper. While performing for Culpepper High School, Barry accumulated in excess of 950 career points in varsity competition and averaged 19.3 points per contest as a senior. He was an All-Battlefield District player in his junior and senior years and was honored with being picked to the third All-State team in his senior year. Barry was also named to the All-Northern Virginia all star squad. Ram center, Mike Fling, was also selected to this prestigious team.

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Pre-season scrimmage

Rams defeat VU

Odell Pack banked in a layup at the buzzer to give VCU an exciting 101-100 victory over Virginia Union in a scrimmage game played Saturday morning.

Pack's bucket climaxed a strong comeback which saw the Rams wipe out an eight point deficit in the final minute and a half.

Despite the high score, the game was ruggedly played and lacked good ball handling and defense. Coach Dees said, "I'm very disappointed. We played the poorest defense of any team I've ever coached. So far we haven't absorbed the defensive philosophy the coaching staff has been teaching and if this continues, we are going to get the hell beat out of us. We threw the ball away as bad as any third grade team. There were a few bright spots but not enough to change the overall picture."

Two bright spots were Charlie Booker who hauled in 26 rebounds in addition to scoring 20 points, and a fantastic 45 point scoring spree by Jabo Wilkens. Jabo got most of his 19 field goals on medium and short range jumpers in the middle of the Union defense. Jabo also grabbed 15 rebounds. Jabo said, "I believe we should have beaten them worse than we did. The offense was clicking but the defense wasn't. I'm looking forward to the next time we play them and I think we'll win by much more. It was one of those games when I couldn't do anything wrong, offensively, but my defense was lacking."

A tentative scrimmage is scheduled for tonight again with Virginia Union, at the Franklin st. gym. A scrimmage is definitely set with Bluefield State, Friday night at Benedictine High School.

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Student Assembly members told by SGA not to take seats

(Continued from Page 1)

what had happened. "The decision was to stay with the group as originally composed," he replied. He had no further comment on that issue.

The Assembly also voted to close all its sessions to reporters from the VCU press, conceding only, according to Dr. Brandt, that "What goes on in Assembly meetings will be made available to the press afterwards."

The reaction to the Assembly's decision produced a feeling of general indignation among all students close to the issue. "This promotes again the lack of confidence given to us," said Bill Oliver, executive assistant to the SGA president.

Bill Patterson, Bus3 and a member of the House, at the joint meeting of the House and Senate presented a proposal in which he accused the Assembly, in its form, to be racist. He based his accusation on the fact that in an urban university within a city with 55 per cent of its population black, there was not one black member appointed to the Assembly.

"I move that the SGA contact the U.S. Civil Rights Commission and the Virginia American Civil Liberties Union for legal advice in order to report a case of blatant racial discrimination by the University governing body at VCU (the University Assembly) in violation of federal and state laws."

This motion also passed unanimously.

The majority of the House and Senate members were first informed of the Monday Assembly meeting at a joint House and Senate meeting Friday of last week. An earlier strategy meeting had been held Thursday with select House and Senate members and the SGA executive officers. This strategy committee was delegated by Randy Eley to present a proposal to the House and Senate Friday.

From conclusions drawn at the Thursday meeting, Jim Elam, acting for Eley, presented a motion at the Friday meeting stating that the SGA wanted equal representation on the University Assembly.

There was some doubt among the students, the motion stated about what equal representation for the student body would entail. The motion left to the University Assembly the choice of whether equal student representation should be 50 per cent representation of the body, or whether it should be one-third representation. If the Assembly did not vote to give students one-third of the Assembly seats, the House and Senate decided that this

would show that there were only two distinct groups on campus, the students, and the administration and faculty. If this were the case, stated the motion, students would demand 50 per cent of the seats in the Assembly. (The Academic Senate was to have met yesterday afternoon to discuss the students' position.)

Speaker of the House Fred Shorter was one of the students in favor of demanding the higher student representation. He said that "Those of us who are supporting a 50 per cent representation have already moderated our views." Two strong supporters of this viewpoint were Randy Bragg and Charles McLeod.

Oliver called for a "unified effort of students" in urging passage of the motion. A vote was taken and the motion passed 26 to 1 with 2 abstentions.

It was also decided that the undergraduate student representatives from the Academic Center would not take their seats on the Assembly. In place of this, Eley appointed a committee to accompany him to the meeting to present student demands. This committee consisted of Eley, Shorter, Oliver, Patterson, Jim Forkin, Student Court chairman, and Mary Scudlarek, Senior class president and a student representative to the Assembly.

Monday afternoon at 4 p.m., the University Assembly met in the multi-purpose room of Rhoads Hall. Eley's committee, along with several Commonwealth Times reporters and other interested students, gathered in the lounge.

Dr. Brandt had informed the Times forty minutes earlier that the press would not be admitted to the meeting.

Eley's committee was later allowed to address the Assembly. Each member of the committee read a prepared statement, and the entire committee then left the meeting. According to Forkin, the only reaction from the Assembly was that they were "just coldly sitting there and thinking."

After a House meeting Monday afternoon, the joint House and Senate meeting was reconvened. Various proposals that students could follow were suggested, including one by House member Lou Weissman that the student seek the aid of Governor Mills E. Godwin Jr. and Governor-elect Linwood Holton.

This suggestion was not officially considered by the House and Senate since it was decided, as John Norcutt put it, that "the problem is with Dr. Brandt."

House and Senate membership opinion seemed to be directed against Brandt personally. Patterson called the Assembly "racist," and Bruce Ryder accused Brandt of having only two ways to view any problem—"Dr. Brandt's way and the wrong way." Forkin said that "it is time for quick, positive, short-run action."

"The student body is, as a whole, for once in the lifetime of VCU, unified behind one issue," said Sam Wilcox, SGA treasurer. Students were observed in the Rotunda, the Hibbs quadrangle, and the various dorms discussing the University Assembly.

On Tuesday morning at 9 a.m., a special committee known as the Concerned Students Association (CSA) confronted Dr. Brandt with a renewal of the original student appeal.

The CSA consisted of Eley, Rik Davis, Shayne Racker, Bill Oliver, Lou Weissman, David Kirby, Margo Coleman and Sue Francesco.

After their meeting with Dr. Brandt, Eley consented to an interview with reporters from the Times.

"I said," commented Eley, who had presented the appeal, "that we were making an appeal to him to consider changing representation on the assembly. He reiterated that we could not do this because of the vote of the assembly."

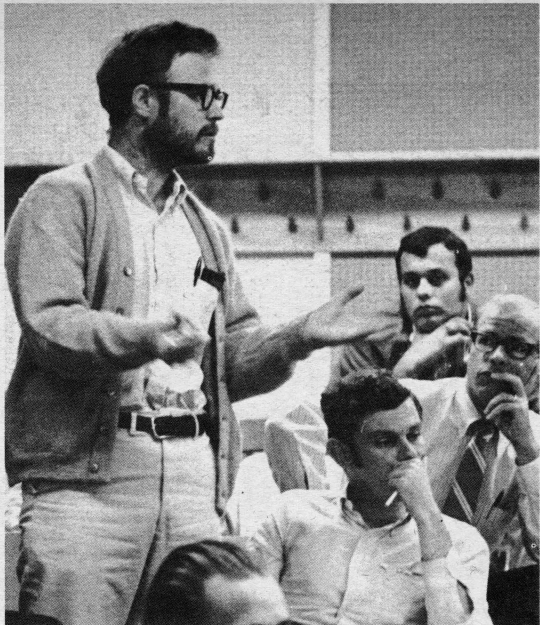
Eley then went on to explain that it was pointed out to Dr. Brandt that since

three student members of the assembly were absent, and their vote would have made the final tally 18-17, that is seemed unreasonable for the VCU President not at least to consider changing the decision or calling for another vote on some later date.

"He did not give any firm commitment on whether the assembly would meet again," Eley stated.

"We finally invited him to address the SGA in order to explain the decision to the students."

Dr. Brandt accepted the invitation and was scheduled to address the student governing body at 5:30 p.m. yesterday.



Staff Photo by Peter Hoshne

"Ask for all or nothing"

Carwile hits growth of VCU in Oregon Hill

Richmond City Councilman Howard Carwile blasted expansion movements in the city which he charged were "bull-dozing people out of their homes," in an address Friday night in the Coffee House of the First Unitarian Church.

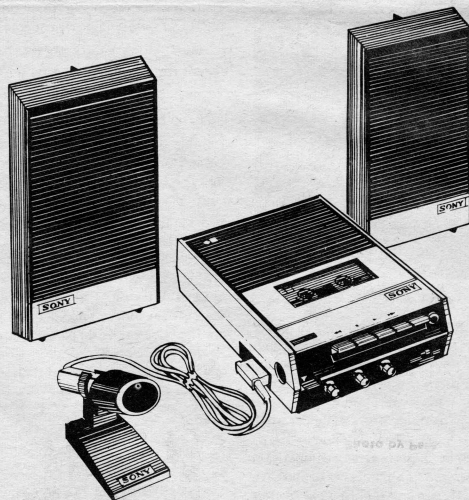
One of the targets in his address was the VCU administration and its expansion movement into that area of the city known as Oregon Hill.

"It (the expansion) is the most

ridiculous thing," commented Carwile after the meeting.

He made allowance for the argument that the growth of VCU is a goal that has merit. However, "They should certainly have built it in the suburbs somewhere," he said.

"There is no progress when you tear down people's homes," he said in defense of his stand. "When this has happened in the past, any efforts to reimburse them were less than it was worth."



Works All Day, Plays All Night

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