

CARTER O. LOWANCE

When he came to William and Mary in 1970 as executive vice-president Carter Lowance already had served in various capacities in state government for over twenty years, and in 1974 he left the college to return to Richmond as executive secretary to Governor Godwin. In the course of his career Mr. Lowance has earned a reputation as an excellent administrator with a calm, low-key manner. A member of the committee that set up the oral history project at William and Mary, Mr. Lowance was a very cooperative participant in the program.

Changes on the transcript in printing are the interviewee's; those in writing are Mr. Lowance's.

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Carter O. Lowance

July 23, 1976

Williamsburg, Virginia

Williams: When you came to William and Mary in 1970, you were already known for your work in state government. Could you describe you your duties with the various governors, beginning with Governor Tuck, I believe?

Lowance: That's right. I often think that my career has been a happenstance sort of career. I was a professional newspaperman; that was presumably my long-term career. I was with the Associated Press before World War II and came back from World War II to the Associated Press in Richmond. Governor Tuck, who was then in the second year of his administration, asked me to come and discuss the possibility of finishing out his term as executive <sup>and</sup> ~~or~~ press secretary, and after a short deliberation I agreed to do that because I felt it would be an interesting experience. Time moved on, and one governor succeeded another, and each for reasons peculiar to ~~the~~ <sup>his</sup> own thinking asked me to remain on, and I did for six of seven governors. That was the beginning of <sup>my state service.</sup> ~~it.~~ When ~~I~~ I came to William and Mary I had been commissioner of administration during Governor Godwin's first term (1966-1970). As you know, there was a change of administrations at the beginning of 1970. I had supported the winning candidate's opponent in the election and was not sure that

my political philosophies were altogether consistent with the new governor's philosophies, and I therefore made plans to move to other fields. ~~was~~ <sup>#</sup> Coming back to William and Mary, a reorganization of the top administration had been discussed with us in the Governor's Office prior to any thought on my part of ever winding up at William and Mary. As a matter of fact, I had no such plan in my mind at all .

In the course of ~~after~~ the election, and in the course of my deliberations <sup>as to</sup> where I might go, actually I was more seriously thinking of remaining in Richmond with a banking institution, and Dr. Paschall, who then of course was president, approached me with reference to the possibility of my coming to William and Mary. I at that time was uncertain whether it would be <sup>an</sup> appropriate for an official of the College in the light of my more extensive experience in governmental administration. But after deliberation it was agreed that I would come, and I did come in January 1970.

Williams: Had you in your various state jobs had any responsibility for educational institutions?

Lowance: Yes, and I really skipped over your question as to what my duties were in Richmond. As ~~executive~~ <sup>secretary</sup> to the governor during the prior administrations and particularly as Commissioner of Administration under Governor Godwin,

I did have general contact with all phases of State agency and departmental operations, including education. No specific responsibilities with respect to education, but almost day-to-day contact with the problems in all the areas, and certainly in <sup>public</sup> Education and Higher Education. The period I was with State Government was interrupted at one stage <sup>for three to four</sup> years <sup>when as</sup> ~~I was the~~ <sup>assistant</sup> President of the Medical College of Virginia. I had that immediate experience in <sup>HIGHER</sup> education, and that was general administrative responsibility. I had, you might say, a general knowledge of the field without the specific experience at William and Mary <sup>or</sup> a liberal arts educational institution. So in that sense, I suppose, it was not foreign to the thinking of the Board of Visitors that I might be a suitable candidate. My other experience, of course, in administration was more or less as the Chief of Staff to the Governor on the general operations of the State Government.

Williams:

You spoke of the reorganization plan for the administration here at William and Mary. <sup>apart from the person to fill the post,</sup> why was it that the post was suggested? I think that the State Council of Higher Education suggested the post of executive Vice President.

Lowance:

I think that it was really developed, according to my recollection, within the Board of Visitors of the college and reviewed with the staff of <sup>the</sup> State Council of Higher Education,

with the state personnel office, and with governor's office to a degree. The general concept of the reorganization, as you undoubtedly recall or have found in your work here, called for an executive vice-president and three vice-presidents; one for academic affairs, one for business affairs, and one for student affairs. I think it came about primarily because of the growth of the institution over the preceding ten to fifteen years, [growth] which had been concentrated primarily, I would say, on <sup>the physical</sup> ~~fiscal~~ upbuilding of the institution--not that the faculty <sup>for</sup> the academic sides were neglected, but that <sup>was</sup> the area of major development during the <sup>preceding</sup> ~~previous~~ decade, I would say. Of course, the administrative responsibility grew, the student body grew, the faculty numbers grew. The president up to that time, with the help of the dean of the college (or the vice-president later), Dr. Jones, was the administration, plus of course the business manager or comptroller. The volume of business and the volume of decision-making was such that I think the Board of Visitors correctly came to the conclusion that some broader distribution of administrative work and responsibility was in order. That I think was the genesis of the plan, and then once approved it came down to finding the right <sup>people</sup> --at least in the minds of the Board of Visitors--to implement it.

When I was first approached ~~in regard to it~~ I had one or two, not extensive, but fairly comprehensive conferences with Dr. Paschall, Dr. Jones, and the Rector of the Board of Visitors, Mr. Goodrich, and others to get a more detailed knowledge of what was expected of the reorganization and how I might contribute or fit into it. Of course I was satisfied in my own mind before I made the ultimate decision that by reason of my experience and prior knowledge of the College I might be of some reasonable help.

Williams:

The Board of Visitors bylaws' description of your job speaks of it in terms of coordination. Would you say that the liason aspects both within and without the College were the most important part of your job?

Lowance:

I would say it was a very high priority, Yes! And I think in that sense it was very similar <sup>to the</sup> type of work that I did in Richmond, because there, as much as anything else, the coordination, the liason with departments and agencies, with department heads, and with presidents of the Colleges and so on, was really a facet of my duties that was not specifically assigned but which in the course of time became obvious as an integral part of the responsibility. Of course <sup>[that]</sup> relieved the governor of many time-consuming conferences, contacts, and visits. Here at the College it was not dissimilar because the president, of course, can't look after every detail in the administration.

To maintain good communications, <sup>there have to be</sup> frequent conversations and conferences and even visits to other institutions which an assistant, such as an <sup>executive vice-president,</sup> ~~vice-pres.~~ can do in part. So that portion of my work here was quite natural and also very enjoyable.

Williams: What was envisioned as the Executive Vice-president's role vis-a-vis the Board of Visitors? Was that also as an adjunct of the President?

Lowance: Yes. Of course, as <sup>in</sup> any organizational structure the ultimate responsibility rests with the head of the institution or the agency. An executive vice-president, while he was assigned certain specific roles by the by <sup>laws</sup> of the charter organization under the Board of Visitors; any authority he exercised really was <sup>[exercised]</sup> jointly with the president of the institution. ~~I think that~~ that was certainly a major factor in my judgement in coming to William and Mary. I <sup>had</sup> had the good fortune of <sup>knowing</sup> Dr. Paschall for fifteen <sup>to</sup> eighteen years while he was <sup>superintendent</sup> of public instruction and while he was here at William and Mary. I felt that I knew him well enough to know that I could work compatibly with him, and that whatever contribution I could make would be as a <sup>member</sup> team member rather than as a dissident member of the administration. Both he and I were comfortable in that respect. I'm certain he would not have asked me in the first place



if he had not been convinced of that.

In my several years here, I ~~was~~ never had any problem whatever in feeling that my actions or decisions <sup>did not</sup> represented the philosophy and policy of the Board of Visitors and the president of this institution.

*you are right - COL*  
I'm sure this was what you meant.

Williams: There was no problem with the new appointees appointed by the new Governor?

Lowance: On the Board of Visitors?

Williams: Yes. You mentioned that you had supported the new Governor's opponent.

Lowance: Yes. No, no problem at all; I believe with one or two exceptions, I knew all of the new members of the Board of Visitors, and I like to think -- I hope not erroneously-- that my role in Richmond, although it was ~~under~~-through that period of time <sup>of</sup> Democratic Governors, was not political but was administrative; and even though the political party out of power, so to speak, had differences of political philosophy there <sup>were</sup> never any administrative differences with me or really with any of the Democratic governors, so although I had that background of serving under Democratic administrations. I don't think I was regarded as a political "hack," so to speak.

The members of the Board of Visitors (the ones I had known prior to the appointment) were individuals who had

known me before and I them, so there was no lack of understanding or disagreement in that respect. Perhaps that was of some value to the college in bridging the political change-over in the state, which of course, was the first time in a hundred years that a political party had changed in so far as the gubernatorial reins were concerned. <sup>As a</sup> Matter of fact, I should add this to cover a question that might otherwise be left open in this interview: I had known Gov. <sup>Francis</sup> Holton casually before his election, we were very friendly as individuals one to the other; he asked me to continue on with him in his administration. In the meantime, of course, I had entered into several conversations related to William and Mary and other potential positions. I told him frankly I had some reservations about how effective I could be with him in a new political setting when my background had been with prior Democratic administrations.

Such things as appointments (which sometimes do have political ramifications) -- many of the people that were in state government I had been a party to their appointment, maybe influenced some of the appointments on the part of the governor -- and it might really be an embarrassment to him [Holton] rather than an aid in some instances. He was very understanding; while that was understood <sup>I</sup> didn't want the record to show

that there was any lack of <sup>consideration</sup> opportunity or kindness on the part of Governor Holton.

Williams: I'm glad you included that. Yes, that was something of an unanswered question. Here at the College, I think it was while you were here, the administrative council was set up. How did this come into being?

Lowance: The administrative council ~~was~~ (my memory is a little uncertain-- it may have had a different title ) was in existence when I joined the College. It was an advisory committee to the ~~president~~ president. It served and does still, I believe, a very important role. During the period of Dr. Paschall's <sup>or</sup> ten~~eleven~~ years as president, without the broader administrative structure that then came into being in 1970, I think the advisory group (administrative council, if you will) served perhaps an even more important role to the president than it could at any other juncture of the college's life. It did give the president the opportunity for input from a broad-gauge, perhaps representative, group of the college operations: ~~administrators,~~ administrators, deans, the business office, the graduate school, and so on. It was the one <sup>and still is</sup> ~~main~~ formal channel, and ~~still is~~, I'm sure, that is an open funnel of information, of impressions, of recommendations to the administration. I think that we

might all agree that's vital to a viable operation. I found it to be extremely valuable to me because it was an open forum for discussions on any subject. While we had a formal agenda--specific problems on which recommendations were to be made-- there was no inhibition to bringing in other subject matter that oftentimes those of us in administration had not thought about or considered in the total sense at all. So it was a very constructive agency. It serves, I'm satisfied, today - as an important arm of the administration.

Williams: Could you give an example that by virtue of having the executive Vice-president's position a problem was ironed out before it reached the president-- just to give an idea?

Lowance: I won't be too specific, but as you recall when I came in 1970, it was a period of campus unrest nationally, and William and Mary, while not so actively involved, was not immune to the influences of the day. There was a degree of student unrest, certainly student questions of administrative policies and national policies, of course of war-time policies. I won't attempt to redescribe the questions that were national in scope in those days and particularly noticeable on campuses. Here at William and Mary there were obvious manifestations of those attitudes and it was reflected in a few incidents of not particularly destructive nature but of the unrest. There was a sit-in at one

time in James Blair Hall and little episodes that reflected these attitudes.

With the vice-president for student affairs and of course and with the president, and with the advice <sup>and</sup> counsel of many oftentimes, in the administration, it was possible for the executive vice-president to help keep communications open with students Leaders and with groups that I believe (on reflection (and perhaps Mr. Lambert would agree) tended to tone down the tendencies toward more disruptive incidents. <sup>[We were able to]</sup> perhaps bring about some better understanding of the administrative attitude, which was of course to provide educational opportunities and free discussion <sup>[on subjects]</sup> including Vietnam questions and anything else that was pertinent, without in any sense trying <sup>to</sup> abridge freedom of expression, or student rights. Hopefully, that was one area where we did work together to some advantage. <sup>Looking back,</sup> certainly with some degree of satisfaction <sup>we</sup> avoided more troublesome times. Now that's a general statement.

There <sup>were</sup> many specific situations where my office, just by virtue of the duties assigned to it, recognized a problem arising and could take steps on our own initiative to reach toward a solution before it grew into a critical problem. That relates to administrative matters, such as some aspects of funding, particularly with legislative authorities in Richmond, and that type of thing. Of course I don't say this

with any boastfulness at all, but anyone with my <sup>prior</sup> experience with the legislature and with the educational authorities in Richmond naturally was in a position to recognize trends and problems as far as funding is concerned, maybe before ~~it~~ <sup>they</sup> became apparent generally. That, I hope, was another part of what I was able to contribute. Unfortunately we didn't always get the money that we asked for, and nobody has ever done that as far as I know in the history of Virginia. But at least we were prepared better to accept ~~what~~ the final results ~~was~~ <sup>we been</sup> than we might have been had <sup>we been</sup> less familiar with the procedures.

Williams: I was going to ask you if you could give an example of where your state service was a help here in your job at William and Mary?

Lowance: I think perhaps more than anything else ~~it was~~ <sup>(elaborating</sup> on what I've just stated <sup>it</sup> was recognizing the limitations on the probabilities of what the legislature could do for William and Mary or any other public<sup>ly</sup> supported institution and then trying to help build our requests within the parameters of that recognized limitation with sufficient facts, figures, and just genuine information <sup>so</sup> that our case would be perhaps looked upon with favor. I think <sup>so</sup>, of course, <sup>that</sup> that is always true; ~~that~~ if you have your case well founded, your chances are much improved. ~~Of course,~~ Dr. Paschall was

a widely experienced man in requests to the General Assembly, so he was <sup>too,</sup> ~~tee~~ on very familiar ground, and perhaps, we had a fairly effective team.

Williams: Your job here at William and Mary was a new one. Did you find any reluctance on the part of others to proceed through the executive vice-president's office? I'm sure there were people who must have thought this was just another layer of talk.

Lowance: They did. That was a concern of mine in coming down. I was particularly concerned about, first of all, student attitudes, because I had not had contact with the younger generation <sup>per-</sup> <sub>se</sub> for a number of years. I remember particularly a very early interview with staff members of the Flat Hat when I came. Among other things there had been rumors that Dr. Paschall was going to retire. One of the first questions I was confronted with was "Are you coming down with the expectation of succeeding <sup>a</sup> Dr. Paschall?" Of course, that had not entered my mind at all. I would have ruled it out entirely had it even been suggested. So I discounted that promptly. I was concerned too about <sup>the</sup> the attitude of <sub>a</sub> faculty. I was not a <sup>a</sup> scholar in the sense of <sub>a</sub> multi-degreed researcher or historian or otherwise equipped in the sense of academic background. I must say, though, that I was <sup>a</sup> encouraged even before I came to a final judgment by my experience at the

Medical College of Virginia, where I did have real serious reservations about joining a speciality-type institution without having any prior experience directly in that area. I found much to my pleasure, of course, that I was accepted with friendly hands and regarded, I think, and ultimately evaluated, not so much by my background but by what I could contribute in judgment and good sense to <sup>the</sup> administration. Happily that was the case down here. But I did have some concern on that score, and I suppose it was a month or two before I began to feel I was accepted and not a foreigner injected for any ulterior purposes.

Williams:

Is it more difficult for an "outsider" to come into a post like this than to bring someone up from the ranks? *Or is there some advantage?*

Lowance:

Well, I think <sup>there</sup> <sup>is it some advantage?</sup> is some advantage (you anticipated my response) because anyone in an organization for any given period of time who has to make decisions, ~~he~~ makes friends by virtue of favorable decisions; he makes <sup>enemies</sup> on the unfavorable ones. I would say that's inevitable. And so, I think anyone in an organization who is promoted to greater responsibility always has that problem: it may be small, it may be great, depending on what the background is. But ~~obviously~~ <sup>not</sup> having disappointed groups or individuals in his prior experience, anyone coming in from the outside obviously has no record to attack at the institution. He may have an outside record



that's in question but not <sup>within</sup> ~~in~~ the sphere of his new responsibility. So I think that's an advantage, and people then have to judge you on what their own impression or experience with you is. It gives the newcomer an opportunity to build his own reputation on its merits or lack of it. I think that is a distinct advantage. <sup>#</sup> However, in the reorganization here at the time I came fortunately there was a staff of experienced people who just were naturals for the other major appointments, such as the vice-president for business affairs.

Bob English had been here; he had done a good job, and he was made vice-president for business affairs. Mel Jones, of course, who is widely known as "Mr. William and Mary," was made academic vice president, <sup>and</sup> [he] had been dean of the college, <sup>and</sup> was widely respected in the community. Dean Lambert, of course, was another major part of the institution and a natural for vice-president for student affairs. So I think William and Mary was exceptionally fortunate in having in place, so to speak, ready for the reorganization additional team members who couldn't have been surpassed really at the moment.

I would add this: since that time of course, the presidents of the college has changed: Dr. Graves came in with an excellent background from his academic career. The organization of college has been modified substantially since I have left,

but it again reflects some experience with the total organization in the previous five years or so and also reflects the mode of operation of a new president as compared with Dr. Paschall's administration. That's not only natural but I think necessary to adjust organizations to the character and mode of operation of any chief administrative officer.

As a matter of fact, <sup>at first</sup> (and I hesitated to say this) I'd said to Dr. Graves long before I left that really what he needed more than an executive vice-president was a good executive assistant because he, perhaps more than his predecessor, kept a direct hand on the major policies and operations of the college. An executive vice-president, while he served the same general purpose, was not nearly as essential perhaps in his administration as he might have been in the preceding one. In effect, I believe that is what the college has done: they have eliminated the position of executive vice-president, and the president has an additional executive assistant, as compared to <sup>the</sup> time when I was here.

Williams: While your post did exist part of your duty was as coordinator of the branch colleges. Dr. Paschall used to talk about the importance of the stewardship of the branch colleges; what as coordinator did you see as the importance of William and Mary stewardship of the branch colleges?

Lowance: Well, actually <sup>while</sup> my overall responsibility did include the branch colleges, we did have liaison officers with the

branches who reported through the vice-president for academic affairs, so in my period of time Dr. Jones <sup>or Dr. Healy</sup> had the more direct responsibility for the branches. However, I think whether it was through my office or the president's office it was a matter of trying to integrate their services to the Commonwealth of Virginia in a fashion that would not only reflect the calibre and character of William and Mary but provide a broader service in their respective areas than William and Mary was prepared to do from its home base campus.

Richard Bland has an unusual history of its own; it was created by the General Assembly, which in effect asked William and Mary to be the parent institution. William and Mary very willingly undertook it back in the early '60s as a two-year institution of entirely new character to serve a regional need. That was also the beginning of the community college development in Virginia, and there was some debate then and subsequently as to Richard Bland's role with respect to the community college system. That has been a factor ever since in the future outlook of Richard Bland; now it's surrounded by community colleges (Southside Virginia, John Tyler near Richmond). It has, I think, a continuing important role to play, primarily as a regional institution. It has not been fully defined in the long range terms because of these many complications that have been so evident, including some litigation pertaining to its future. Incidentally, there's

a current study again of its status and role, which I hope will be helpful. But it is surrounded with <sup>an</sup> unusual history and exceptional questions that most other institutions have managed to escape in their early lives.

In the case of Christopher Newport, of course, you are undoubtedly <sup>ed</sup> familiar with this story: William and Mary at one time was classified statutorily as a system of William and Mary colleges, which included Christopher Newport. They had a chancellor of the system and a president of William and Mary. That I think was predicated on a different concept of <sup>the college</sup> <sub>^</sub> than we have now certainly, and perhaps, <sup>was</sup> an erroneous concept that William and Mary might become even more extensively developed as a multiple institution. In any event, Christopher Newport was a part of that picture at that time and ultimately became a four-year institution, as it is now, <sup>[will be]</sup> And an independent institution shortly.

William and Mary in the earlier days had an extensive extension (off-campus) program. Christopher Newport, as we visualized it (and I think it has proved true) has served a good purpose in providing educational opportunity for the peninsula, which <sup>former</sup> has in some ways supplanted the <sub>^</sub> extension service of the college here. Also, the Virginia Associated Research Center is filling an important role in that regard, too. <sup>Ⓢ</sup> Trying to come back to your question, I think the coordination role has been primarily directed toward building both of the branch institutions into self-contained and viable

institutions that could stand on their own, but with a reflection of the William and Mary heritage, you might say calibre of the institution, as well as support facilities, such as the library, some faculty support, and certainly support in the legislature for funding and for building up the academic potential. I've rambled considerably.

Williams:

You've answered the question within it. While you were here something called the Shaner Report came out and recommended abolition of Christopher Newport. How was this averted?

Lowance:

I'll respond with this qualification: My response is not directed as a criticism to the staff people who made the study; my criticism <sup>applies</sup> ~~is~~ as to the results of the study.

I think the finding was not firmly based on fact or even on speculative questions as to the future. Having said that, there's no practical prospect within the next fifty years <sup>in my mind</sup> of Christopher Newport College being either abolished or restrained. It obviously has grown rapidly, it has served a very fine purpose for commuter students who otherwise perhaps would not have had the opportunity that it has provided. It has a growing support as far as the peninsula is concerned -- wide spread support. In other words, the pride in the institution has corresponded to its rapid growth, and the community is a hundred per cent behind Christopher Newport -- as well as, I would say, a majority of the General Assembly, certainly the current

one. I think the recommendation fell of its own weight. It was just totally impractical.

Williams: You mentioned a minute ago the litigation involving Richard Bland. Had it not been for the escalation <sup>of Richard Bland,</sup> plans would H.E.W. have sued the College of William and Mary? Was it wholly on the Richard Bland case, in other words?

Lowance: I think that certainly triggered the litigation, no doubt about that. <sup>proximity to Virginia State College --</sup>  
 I think that question might have been raised <sup>in the course of time</sup> regardless of the escalation, ~~in the course of time~~ primarily on the theory that there may have been <sup>or</sup> is duplication of offerings or opportunities that Virginia State might have fully accommodated. Again I think there are so many intangibles in that total picture that it has been a difficult thing to answer in a total sense. At the same time those who are familiar with the story from the beginning recognize the merit of having Richard Bland <sup>at its</sup> ~~in the~~ location that ~~it is~~ <sup>is</sup> as well as Virginia State <sup>where</sup> ~~on the location~~ <sup>it is</sup> ~~it is~~ <sup>the</sup> It is still <sup>the</sup> objective of William and Mary, as far as Richard Bland is concerned, to make Richard Bland distinctive enough in its offerings that it is not a competitor with Virginia State or vice versa. Of course, Virginia State has many graduate offerings, as well as a four-year program. I think time is going to solve that

problem without any complications; there is now an excellent relationship between Richard Bland and Virginia State as far as academic and administrative leaders are concerned.

there is encouragement for joint special programs and there is some frequent interchange of instructional help from one institution to the other. <sup>The so-called "problem"</sup> ~~But that of course~~ is more of a political or social question that Richard Bland just happens to fall into rather than anything generated by Richard Bland or William and Mary itself.

Williams: What could the administration of William and Mary have done to have averted that suit? I'm sure that you must have thought of this at the time.

Lowance: Well, of course, litigation might have been deferred had the escalation not been undertaken. I don't think it would have cancelled it out--that is the litigation-- I think it'd have been just a deferral. So I think the question was one <sup>that</sup> in the climate of the day was almost bound to arise by initiation of some individual or group of individuals, once <sup>it was</sup> ~~having~~ been raised and litigated, I think the future might be freer of legal problems for some time to come. Of course, the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare is still sensitive to the issues raised in that suit, and we have no assurance that it might not come out again in some form, but I would not anticipate it.

Williams: Would having Richard Bland made into a community college have been an acceptable solution to William and Mary? <sup>in</sup> 1970,

I think it was.

Lowance:

I think William and Mary would have accepted whatever decision ~~had~~ <sup>that might have</sup> materialized. ~~I think~~ having handled Richard Bland as a responsibility or <sup>as</sup> a part of its family for the period of years, <sup>Wm and Mary</sup> that ~~it already had~~ it would have regretted ~~to have seen~~ <sup>seeing</sup> the college (that is, Richard Bland) removed on a legal technicality and not for any academic reason.

At the same time, looking back to the time that Richard Bland was established, some people would have said ~~at that time~~ it would have been preferable ~~had~~ Richard Bland been included ~~into~~ the community college system then instead of becoming a separate two-year liberal arts-type of institution. It's hard to ~~necessarily~~ <sup>necessarily</sup> conclude that that would have been better because you can't always predict what the situation would have been had the other course been followed. I am reminded, though, that over in Martinsville there was a two-year ~~insti-~~ <sup>branch</sup> ~~tution~~ of the University of Virginia, when the community colleges were established and the community was very strongly opposed to the two-year branch of the university becoming part of the community college system, and by legislative action, it was excluded, as was the branch on the eastern shore; subsequently, by community demand really, they became a part of the community college system and have been well accepted and



enthusiastically supported as community colleges because they serve a broader spectrum of educational needs as community colleges than they did as liberal arts branches. I've wondered if that might not have been true of Richard Bland, but there's no way of really answering that question.

Williams: No, that's purely speculation. If William and Mary had in any way lost Richard Bland, would this have worked to its disadvantage when its budget came <sup>in of</sup> front of the Appropriations Committee of the General Assembly?

Lowance: Well, of course the community sentiment in Petersburg and south-side Virginia at that time was very strong in support of Richard Bland, and many of the leaders of the General Assembly, particularly on funding committees, <sup>were</sup> very, very strong for Richard Bland; it might well have worked to the disadvantage, at least temporarily, of William and Mary had such happened. But since 1970 I think there has been broader acceptance of the role -- I hope the long-term role -- of Richard Bland as a part of William and Mary than there could have been at that particular moment. I am, of course, speculating, too.

Williams: Yes. That's another "if" question. Definitely.

Lowance: Yes. The new president of Richard Bland, who seems to be a very well-informed and a very alert type of gentleman, (I don't, by saying that, imply that his predecessor was not) has some innovative ideas that may hold considerable potential for the future of Richard Bland. That involves later

decisions by the Board of Visitors as well as the General Assembly, but some of them might be realized.

Williams: Moving on to another case, let me ask you, how was it your office became involved in the Greene case?

Lowance: I'll stick more or less to the record in that respect.

the College of William and Mary was under pressure, I think is a fair word, from Federal authorities to increase or enlarge its minority participation in <sup>the</sup> faculty and student body and <sup>every aspect of</sup> its operations. The law school faculty, as well as the overall college faculty, was sensitive to these pressures and the possibilities of adverse decisions in Washington that might affect the institution generally if some progress should not be shown. The College generally was sensitive to the situation as far as Federal pressures were concerned, and also ~~they~~ wanted to do what was proper in affording blacks and other minorities every opportunity at William and Mary from the standpoint of administration, faculty, and student enrollment; so it was only natural that the law school faculty, as well as the administration generally, <sup>should</sup> look maybe more carefully and maybe harder at prospects <sup>ive</sup> of black candidates for faculty positions. I'm sure this was the primary factor in the several candidates who were interviewed and considered for the law school faculty, including Mr. Greene. <sup>#</sup> Being more specific, I've never met Mr. Greene, but I knew him by reputation by having been in Richmond

through the <sup>preceding</sup> years and by the publicity that ensued from time to time concerning his law practice, his court ap-  
<sup>and</sup>pearances, his citations for contempt by several courts.

I was not aware that he was under consideration for the law school <sup>post</sup> until just a routine memo came over from the law school with his name, along with another name that I had inquired about, on the memo indicating that he was being recommended for appointment. Knowing the public background as I did concerning him I immediately raised a question whether this was fully known to the committee of the law school and to the president, who was out of town <sup>at</sup> incidently at that time. Anyhow, the matter was held up until it could be reviewed further by the law school and by the Board of Visitors. As you know, ultimately the <sup>proposed</sup> appointment was rejected.

I must say that I think it was well advised because however capable Mr. Greene may be as an instructor, as a lawyer, he was by reputation highly controversial and per-  
<sup>subject to question</sup>haps <sup>questionable</sup> as far as <sup>ethical</sup> <sup>normal</sup> procedures are concerned in the practice of law.

To my mind, <sup>such a member of the law faculty</sup> that would not be an asset to William and Mary, or any other institution, <sup>for</sup> as a member of the law faculty. That's my personal judgment, and others of course may have different views.

In any event the Board of Visitors did decide not to offer

him the position. That of course led to other legal complications, which subsequently were resolved.

Williams: Was this the most difficult issue you faced in the four years that you were here, or what would you say was the most difficult issue that you faced?

Lowance: I would say that it was the most unwelcome issue that we faced because it portrayed the college to those who questioned its so-called "lilly-white" character as resisting integration, which <sup>was</sup> not the case at all. As I said in my first conversation about Mr. Greene when the matter became known on the campus, ~~My~~ attitude would have been the same, had he been white or any other color, because of <sup>his</sup> ~~the~~ background and, ~~it~~ <sup>according to</sup> ~~was~~ my judgement, ~~as to~~ <sup>was</sup> his <sup>own</sup> suitability. The question of integration--black or white--really shouldn't have entered into the minds of anybody because it wasn't the basis for the consideration. It was the other factors. So in that sense I think it was difficult for the college to portray its real purpose in the decision that ~~was~~ ultimately made without having the appearance of having acted because the gentleman was black. ~~that~~ <sup>that</sup> was a handicap that was extremely difficult to overcome, and yet I think in retrospect <sup>many of</sup> the law faculty, -- (at least those who were participants in that recommendation <sup>originally</sup> -- ~~many~~ of them ~~I'm sure~~ feel that the ultimate decision was the

right one. And if they had ~~perhaps~~ <sup>had</sup> more detailed information and time to reflect more seriously they might not have made the same recommendation in the first instance. I don't mean to <sup>try to</sup> speak for them, but two or three <sup>with whom I</sup> ~~who I~~ have discussed it <sup>that point of view.</sup> ~~with~~ many months later ~~have~~ reflected, It was one of those very awkward public relations problems that I guess you couldn't win, whatever you did. But I think the college did win by taking the right action in <sup>the interest of</sup> the long range benefit to the school and student body, and, hopefully, the Commonwealth.

Williams: Of all the problems, issues, challenges, whatever you would like to call them that you faced in the four years that you were here, what would you say was the most important one? Do you want to take a moment to reflect on that?

Lowance: Well, of course I had no voice in the decision <sup>[but]</sup>, I think the most important decision <sup>^</sup> during my time was the selection of the successor to Dr. Paschall. Certainly the calibre of the president of an institution is the key to ~~the~~ much of its <sup>success</sup> in any field. <sup>^</sup> In that respect (as I say I had no voice and sought none) I think the selection committee <sup>appointed by</sup> from the Board of Visitors of the college, which included several members of the Board of Visitors, acted with great deliberation and real care in screening a substantial number of prospects and making the selection of Dr. Graves. Of course, I think <sup>it</sup> ~~that~~ is obvious that that was a vital judgement. As far as my participation in the <sup>problem solving in the</sup> ~~four~~ <sup>to</sup> five

years that I was here, I would go back perhaps to the earlier days of student unrest, which was perhaps the

situation in which I was more or less directly involved.

~~And which~~ I feel we were very fortunate in not having more serious problems, ~~to deal with~~. On the light side, I guess the more ~~of the~~ frolicsome problems we had to deal with were during perhaps the "streaking" season.

Williams: I had forgotten the streaking.

Lowance: I often think of Dean Lambert *remark* ~~saying~~ during the course of the early campus unrest days and the streaking, *later* "Oh, for the days of the panty raids!"

Williams: It seemed tame by comparison.

Lowance: As you know, he lived across the street from one of the girls' dormitories, and he had keen recollections of some of the earlier, more interesting pranks of the college students.

Williams: You have spoken of the reorganization that took place here at the college. When you came did you know that Dr. Paschall was going to retire shortly thereafter?

Lowance: No, I did not, and I said to him (as to others) later had I known he was going to retire any time within the next several years I might not have come. **Not** solely, of course on

my knowledge of him, but having known him as well as I did and knowing the happy relationship we had enjoyed through the years, it was a factor in my consideration. Had I had any information that he might retire within a short period thereafter. I doubt that I <sup>would</sup> have come, but again that's speculation because the Board of Visitors and the others with whom I <sup>was</sup> acquainted were so generous and hospitable in their attitude about my coming that I felt real good about it, aside from Dr. Paschall's relationship. But obviously I had contemplated his being here perhaps until I retired, if I stayed that long.

Williams: When did you first know that he was going to retire?

Lowance: Well, he was not really in the best of health, which I learned I guess shortly after I came, and I'm sure <sup>it</sup> is generally known now. I expect it was within six <sup>or</sup> eight months that I really realized that there might be some possibility of his retiring. <sup>events</sup> you know the schedule of <sup>1</sup> that transpired when it was publicly announced that he contemplated retirement. ~~To go back to~~ my first statement about his retirement, he broached the subject of my coming to William and Mary; that was the first thought on my part of even considering William and Mary. He took such an active role in the subsequent conversations dealing with my coming that obviously he had a persuasive role in the decision on my part because I had almost made a decision to go elsewhere; <sup>h</sup> so this was almost an afterthought <sup>1</sup>

as far as my consideration was concerned, <sup>of course,</sup> it didn't take a great deal of persuasion because I was a great admirer of William and Mary and recognized that it was the fine institution it is. It was just foreign to my thinking at that particular time <sup>[to take a college post]</sup>.

Williams: Did you similarly try to persuade Dr. Paschall not to retire then?

Lowance: No, I did not. While the Board of Visitors basically took the same position, they felt that <sup>if</sup> it was a matter of safeguarding his health or in his best personal interest to go ahead and retire. None of us <sup>should</sup> would try to influence his judgment in that respect. He obviously was acting under some medical advice at the time. I think, too, that strain and stress of some of the student problem days had contributed to his discomfiture—and I can understand it.

Williams: I have wondered if, when there was Dr. Paschall retiring, Dr. Jones <sup>the</sup> same year, Dean Lambert was to retire shortly after, Mr. English retired I believe <sup>at</sup> the same time Dr. Paschall and Dean Jones did, Did you consider retiring like a cabinet minister when the new administration was to come in?

Lowance: No, on that score my attitude is very much like it was when governors changed: I was always prepared to step aside when the new administration came in because I think to have an effective administration you have to have not only compatible people, but people with similar philosophy and outlook on whatever their area of responsibilities are. So I am informed



Dr. Graves very promptly (in fact the day of his selection by the Board of Visitors) that if he had any individual or prospective individual in mind for my position all he need do was let me know and he would have an opening to place <sup>him.</sup> <sub>^</sub>

I'm happy to say that he knew something about me obviously before he made the response. He said, "No, I hope very much that you will stay," and of course I did. We had a very pleasant relationship during the remaining four years before I left the college. No, I think anyone in a position such as executive vice-president or even vice-president should afford a new administration the opportunity to make their own selection without any qualms whatever, because otherwise you could have awkward situations administratively--awkward to the incoming president, awkward to the existing vice-presidents. I recognize it doesn't always happen in every institution, but I think it's the way it should happen.

Williams: How then was your office able to smooth the continuity from one administration to the other?

Lowance: Of course having had the benefit of <sup>approximately</sup> two years here ~~approximately~~ before the change I was reasonably familiar with the overall operation of the college, of some of the problem areas, and some of the opportunity areas, so I think in that sense just having at least one person or one office where these things can be discussed without any reservation

and without any complications was helpful to the new <sup>President,</sup> ~~adminis-~~  
~~tration,~~ perhaps saving him considerable time and hopefully  
~~overcame~~ <sup>overcoming</sup> some bumps and hurdles <sup>by</sup> just knowing the lay of the  
land, so to speak, without having to wait for actual experience  
and time to discover some of those areas. <sup>In</sup> <sup>sense</sup> <sup>that</sup> anyone  
who had been in my position would have been the same help,  
~~But it's~~ just by virtue of having been here and <sup>being</sup>  
familiar with the operations to the extent that <sup>the</sup> ~~they~~ could  
pass along to the new administration areas that needed prompt  
attention or perhaps <sup>those that</sup> could be deferred until the needed things  
were resolved. That type of advice or counseling was the pri-  
mary value, as far as the incumbent was concerned. <sup>#</sup> I suspect  
I've overrun my time and yours, too.

Williams: Could I just ask you what advice or counsel you would have  
given if you had had a successor in 1974 for your position?

Lowance: As executive vice-president?

Williams: Yes.

Lowance: I'm trying to relate my response to events that were fairly  
recent in 1974. I'm thinking about the self-study under the  
southern association and the long range future of the College.  
I think perhaps my first recommendation would have been -- and  
I think it's in the process of being carried out, irrespective  
of the position-- <sup>that</sup> greater attention be given to long range  
planning as to the college's future, as well as its branches,  
<sup>[also]</sup> and a better assurance of good communications up and down  
the line as far as the administration is concerned. At  
William and Mary as well as in state government I have found

that the greatest generator of problems is lack of understanding of policies and then intent of whomever is responsible for the policies. So often the story gets down to one level but doesn't get down to the individual, whatever the organizational structure is. I think that was true here at William and Mary to some degree, and I guess it's true in every insitution to some degree. Even in student affairs it's not easy to get the message as to what the policy is to every student in clear and succinct terms so there is no misunderstanding. That is necessary in employee relations. Employers are more sensitive now than they have been <sup>before</sup> not only because of equality questions among the races, but also because of [questions] of voice in affairs of the employing agency, whomever it may be: the college, state government, or what have you. There is a greater feeling--and not improperly so--that an individual needs to know or should know not only his responsibilities but his oppourtunities for self-improvement, for moving up the ladder, or understanding at least what the rules of the game are as far as compensation, working conditions, etc. I think while it <sup>was</sup> ~~is~~ not consciously <sup>so</sup> ~~true~~, just by virtue of so many things of urgent character coming along in a hurry, communications maybe were a little slow in catching up with the times. I would say that would have been an area of concern to be passed along to the next executive vice-president. I do think that ~~situ~~ situation is much improved, from all I know now.

Williams: Well, I want to thank you. I know you are a busy man, and I really do appreciate your contribution.

Lowance: Well, as I recognized before I your invitation, my contribution to this story is relatively insignificant, but if it fills in a little gap I'm happy to do it.