

Joseph M. Spivey, IV

October 22, 2024

Mr. John D. Adams, President
V.M.I. Board of Visitors
Virginia Military Institute
P.O. Box 932
Lexington, VA 24450

Re: Board of Visitors Meeting October 23, 2024

Mr. Adams, Members of the Board,

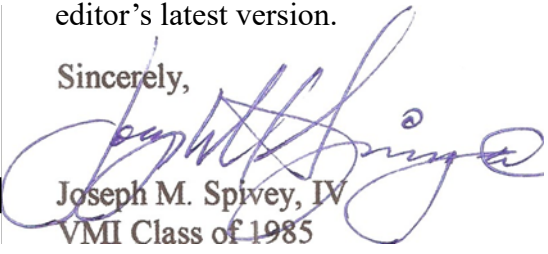
Despite the Institute's bluster, "VMI maintained its reputation as one of the nation's best colleges, according to the 2025 Best Colleges rankings released Sept. 24 by U.S. News and World Report,"¹ neither the Board nor the administration are performing in a manner consistent with a "nation's best" college. Paragraph 4 of the Virginia Military Institute Statement of Governance states "The Board is ultimately responsible for the academic quality and *integrity* of the Institute." (*emphasis mine*) Sadly, the administration lacks integrity since it has been unwilling to resolve the needless impasse regarding issuance of a permit to the cadets who write for The Cadet newspaper. Unfortunately, the Board also fails the integrity litmus test by allowing the gridlock to continue for multiple, consecutive years in spite of membership turnover and change in leadership.

Worse, the Board has enabled administration efforts to delay, defer, and dawdle on this matter. Both bodies have provided a range of excuses why The Cadet newspaper's cadets do not have a permit. Excuses vary from administration demands for unlawful concessions by The Cadet staff, to ingenuous explanations why the Board doesn't address the matter during public meetings. Moreover, neither body has explained to these cadets why they, from among all the other Corps' clubs and activities, must conduct their business as exiles. This conduct is quibbling, and it is dreadful and loathsome behavior. Despite the administration's actions and the Board's lack of action, the Corps accepts, embraces, and supports The Cadet newspaper. They appreciate their newspaper.

The administration's and Board's actions to date plainly contradict the Corps' position on the newspaper. Therefore, it is clear the Board, with exceptions, those members who have favorably spoken about The Cadet during Board meetings, doesn't care about the newspaper's cadets nor about the Corps. As stated in earlier correspondence, the administration controls and is the final arbiter of the Corps' permit process. As long as the Board fails to act, to intervene and direct the administration to issue a permit to The Cadet newspaper's cadets, it disparages the Corps and burdens itself with greater culpability for why the matter remains unresolved.

To conclude the matter appropriately, the Board of Visitors must immediately direct the administration to Approve and Issue a permit without edits or conditions to The Cadet newspaper staff based on the editor's latest version.

Sincerely,


Joseph M. Spivey, IV
VMI Class of 1985

¹ <https://www.vmi.edu/news/headlines/2024-2025:U.S.News.Rankings:VMI.Climbs.in.National.Liberal.Arts.Colleges,Placed.in.Top.Third>