

Dear Sir:

On Monday, October 27, 1969, the front page of the Beverly Times carried an article in which Senator Kevin B. Harrington, to whom the College is greatly indebted, deplored the action of "the emotionally and intellectually shallow few" student and faculty as contributory to the announced early retirement of Dr. Frederick A. Meier, President of Salem State College. It is hardly the intention of the undersigned to weigh all factors involved in Dr. Meier's retirement or to engage in polemics and a fractious dispute with the "shallow few." Rather we wish to address ourselves to the just recognition of a brilliant, dynamic, and vibrant career of leadership in a public education and to say well-done, and to say it with genuine gratitude. Borrowing from a new history of Salem State College - one which is to appear shortly - the College should be seen in three dimensions: a man, an institution, a time in history; in short, "the Meier Years."

The stewardship of Frederick A. Meier is one of extraordinary leadership and vitality with resultant accomplishments and the necessary pangs of growth. Numerically, the College has expanded from 500 students and 40 faculty members to 3700 students and 210 faculty members, from two buildings to fourteen. Its prospects are brilliant, its standing is sound. The academic programs are varied and vibrant representing cultural, professional and scholarly breadth. These are not effects without causes. While many have combined to produce these achievements, the breadth, the vision, the total view and subsequent leadership rest not with a committee, but with the leader. The overall development, indeed, of an institution is in areas where most faculty and students do not tread and it is here that energy, determination, judgment, the emergence of the man takes place. Dr. Meier has initiated, supported, challenged the state colleges and in particular, Salem State, to be different, a stimulus, and a model. It has an experimental character and style and yet has solid, traditional values. In short, under his stewardship it has become increasingly truer to its motto of "Progredi" - progress.

We the undersigned, therefore, place before you this statement of our recognition of, and esteem for, our President, Dr. Frederick A. Meier. The actions of a minority must not be allowed to represent the views and considered judgments of the reasonable and responsible members of this college community. We seek space in your paper to demonstrate to you our solidarity of support for the Meier years and the magnificent accomplishments therein.

SEN. HARRINGTON CHIDES COLLEGE'S 'SHALLOW FEW'

Beverly Times Monday, 10-27-69

SALEM - In a carefully worded public statement today, State Senator Kevin B. Harrington chided "the shallow few" at Salem State College for driving President Frederick A. Meier into a premature resignation.

The 58-year-old Meier, head of Salem State for 15 years, announced his retirement Friday.

Sen. Harrington today called Dr. Meier "brilliant and dynamic" and said that if it weren't for "Fred Meier's vision and determination in the face of staggering odds, the entire 11 institutions in the state college system would still be in the dark ages of education."

And then Sen. Harrington blasted the "shallow few", the members of the faculty and student body who battled last week with Meier over the publication of controversial matter in the student newspaper, "The Log".

Meier halted the weekly publication on the grounds of poor taste and conflict with Salem State policy. The students went ahead with the publication with private funds.

Sen. Harrington had this comment on the fight and subsequent resignation of Dr. Meier:

"I somehow feel if he had been understood by more people and supported by the large majority of fine faculty and students who are at Salem State and not have been abused by the emotionally and intellectually shallow few who exist on both the faculty and student body, I think Dr. Meier would have remained as President a few more years."

Sen. Harrington, a leader in educational advancements in Massachusetts, said Dr. Fred Meier was one of a few state college presidents who still taught in the classroom in addition to administrative duties.

Harrington also pointed out that when Meier came to Salem State, there were 500 day students. When he leaves as president Aug. 29, there will be nearly 3,800 full-time day students enrolled.

Harrington said the faculty of all 11 state colleges in general, and the faculty and alumni of the past 15 years of Salem State in particular, "all owe in my judgment this educator a responding vote of thanks."

"I have never personally met anyone who has performed as brilliantly against such staggering odds at times on behalf of the thousands of young people who are seeking higher education in this state."

Sen. Harrington said he had no idea who might succeed Dr. Meier in the \$25,000 a-year post. Harrington said the new man will be chosen by the 11 member Board of Trustees of State Colleges.

He said they generally select a person with a Ph.D. degree, thus ending speculation Harrington might be in line for the post.

Harrington also said he believes Dr. Meier will remain at Salem State as a member of the faculty.