

Xavier School at 570 Old Road to Nine Acre Corner on Route 2 in Concord, Massachusetts opened with 147 first-year students in 1962 and closed in June, 1971, when only a senior class of ninety-three was in attendance during its final year (1970-71).

During four of its nine years (1964-1968), the present writer, serving as province director of secondary education, visited the school annually and thus saw it at close range and as first rate. He also taught two sections in a junior-senior history elective from January through May 1970. This was just after the traumatic announcement that Jesuits were to withdraw from the school. As province director of special studies (1957-1968) he aided two provincials in preparing and recommending Jesuits for Xavier. All these tasks gave him a knowledge of the regular and special features of the Xavier curricular and extracurricular setup.

Perhaps this personal exposition will explain some warmth as well as conviction about an excellent school which came to an early end. This end, it will be seen, came from a dwindling number of applicants, higher tuition needed to maintain both standards and financial stability, fewer vocations to the Society for school or other work, as well as unusual numbers of losses of those accepted into the Society and initially or completely trained.

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The first reference in the minutes of the province consultors to a school in Concord is found under the date of July 12, 1960. Listed among some observations of Fr. General was a reference to Cardinal Cushing's offer of a secondary school at Concord. In the minutes of August 9, 1960, it was recorded that Fr. General had approved the acceptance of this school as a gift. By January 10, 1961, a reference appeared to changes made in the school building plans. By February 28, there was approval of the project to purchase some adjoining land. By May 16, the need of someone to arrange for the opening of this school in 1961 was observed. On August 8, the appointment of Fr. John P. Foley for this task was announced. He took up residence at Weston. On September 12 he was asked to prepare articles of incorporation, a charter and by-laws. At the October 19, 1961 consultors' meeting, a terna was prepared. It was announced at the November 14 meeting that Fr. Foley was rector of the Concord establishment, still unopened and without a community. Such are

the, jejune details found in the minutes of the Province Consultors •

Fr. Foley came to this office with previous secondary school experience. He had been Prefect of Studies at Boston College High School (1951-55), Rector of Cheverus High School (1955-61). Prior to 1951 he had taught Greek as a regent at Holy Cross (1930-33), and Greek at Boston College (1937-39). He was Dean of Freshmen at Boston College (1939-42), then served with the United States Navy as a wartime chaplain (1942-46). On his return to Boston College he was again Dean of Freshmen and Director of Admissions. Earlier as a philosopher (1927-30), he had studied at Heythrop. In ~11 of these tasks, Fr. Poley had enjoyed success from his detailed and regular application to duty, and to his genial and (in view of his Scottish birth) bonny manner of conducting his relations.

There are, however, other sources of information available on the beginnings of Xavier in addition to the jejune minutes already catalogued. The Jesuits were not Cardinal Cushing's first choice to conduct this Concord school for which he was preparing both a school structure and a fully equipped faculty residence. A group of brothers (Xaverian) had found the project more than it could handle. The Congregation of St. Joseph in the Boston Archdiocese had likewise declined this offer. In fairly recent times, it had assumed teaching and administrative functions at Matignon on the Cambridge:-Arlington line, Arlington Catholic and Marian in Framingham. So the presentation of a total gift of school and residence was made to the New England Province.

Although Fr. General had approved its acceptance, Fr. Coleran told the writer that, shortly thereafter, the general had sent a miramur type letter to Fr. Coleran. Fr. General was displeased at being called on to sanction even such a gift from a princely benefactor for a school in the Greater Boston area. He would have preferred expansion elsewhere in New England. He would have known of other possible, but usually not feasible, offers or hopes in other parts of the province.

During Fr. William E. FitzGerald's provincialate (1950-56) a request had come from Bishop Bernard J. Flanagan of Norwich to inaugurate a boy's high school in New London where a school structure with some residence facilities was already available. There did not appear a sufficient clientele in the lower Thames area for a Jesuit school. Later a school for girls

was begun in that location by the Holy Ghost Sisters. In time it became a coeducational diocesan school in Westportville, Connecticut. Moreover, Bishop (later Cardinal) John J. Wright of Worcester (1950-59) had proposed the possibility of a high school on the Ellis estate along Salisbury Street in Worcester. Holy Cross authorities did not enthuse over what might seem a reinauguration of a Holy Cross prep school, which had been discontinued in 1914. Thus, the field for a Catholic secondary school for boys in the Worcester area was left to the Xaverian brothers at St. John's in downtown Worcester, which later became independent of diocesan control at Shrewsbury, where Fr. (later Bishop) Joseph Dinand, S.J., is reputed to

That was the area

J., is reputed to

have considered establishing a separate prep school when Holy Cross College gave up its secondary division. The declining also of Bishop Wright's offer enabled the Congregation of Notre Dame to establish a day school for girls on the Ellis estate •

Also, Fr. General would have known of one project long and in varying forms under consideration -- the project of a secondary school in Springfield or its environs. This project in one form or another had been considered from 1951 to 1962. While discussion would begin about a high school and be favorably XAVIER 272

considered at that level, it was made clear that Bishop Christopher J. Jeldon of Springfield (1950-77) wanted at the earliest date a college. A collegiate expansion did not seem feasible with a province having three colleges, all of which were expanding in numbers and functions. There were times when sites were selected, including the old Westfield State Teaching College until local feeling made this politically unwise, and an unused portion of the property of the Dominican Sisters in West Springfield. Finally, on the issue of starting a college as soon as possible, the project was abandoned.

Another possible venture concerned the efforts of a lay group to have a Jesuit school in or near Waterbury, Connecticut. The final upshot was the establishment of a school conducted by the Brothers of the Congregation of the Holy Cross. There was always some hope of a school in the Hartford Archdiocese but, when three archdiocesan schools were simultaneously established, they were coeducational and comprehensive and divided among a variety of religious sisterhoods.

When Bishop (later Cardinal) Lawrence J. Shehan of

Bridgeport (1953-61) was planning a school in Norwalk, Connecticut, he invited the Society to manage it. Its close proximity to Fairfield Prep meant that both schools would be drawing in part on the same group of students. Perhaps, but only perhaps, an arrangement could have been made to have this school become a newly-located Fairfield Prep and thus leave all the land and buildings at Fairfield to the college and university. Presumably, the Norwalk school was erected to be comprehensive

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and coeducational rather than a Jesuit type school for young men • Finally, Fr. General was presumably pleased when a request could be made in 1962 to establish a school outside of Boston at Fall River, Massachusetts, where Bishop James L. Connolly (1951-70) had procured land and was building, at diocesan expense, a school and residence. Unlike the situation at Concord, this property remained in the ownership of the Fall River Diocese.

After a consideration of the other possible openings, this narrative now returns to Fr. Foley's projects. In keeping with his instructions to initiate legal groundwork for the school, a first meeting of the original trustees took place at Weston College, referred to legally as 319 Concord Road, on October 3, 1961. The original incorporators were the college's staff members with the exception of Fr. Foley, and none of them was later allied with the Concord school. They were Fathers J. Thomas Hamel, John v. O'Connor, Edward R. Callahan, Thomas F. McDermott, Philip J. Donnelly and James L. Monks.

On November 6, 1971, Kevin H. White, as Secretary of State for the Commonwealth, certified the school as a corporation under the name of St. Francis Xavier High School of the Society of Jesus. This was a change in name from the one originally planned when the school was to be conducted by some other group. The original name had commemorated Isaac T. Hecker (1819-88), founder of the Paulists, who had boarded at one time at Henry David Thoreau's home in Concord. Cardinal Cushing, in view of his many years as Archdiocesan Director of the Propagation of the

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Faith, was agreeable to the name of Francis Xavier who was one of the two principal patrons of missions. Only on December 14, 1961 did Mr. Kevin White affix the great seal of the Commonwealth and, by a waiver, considered the corporation meeting of October 3 as

its official first meeting.

By a letter of March 15, 1962, the cardinal wrote that he was handing over the land and the school plus residence to the Society as soon as the deed was recorded. The property involved was valued at three million dollars and consisted of seventeen acres making possible, in addition to school and residence, a soccer field, hockey rink, space for other sports, parking plus roads.

In the school there should especially be noted an auditorium for 1000, a cafeteria for 685, a moderate-sized chapel, a language lab for thirty students at a time, in addition to the usual classrooms, laboratories, library and office space. All these elements came furnished except for the library books. On the complete third floor were the faculty quarters, all completely equipped except for air-conditioning which proved an unexpected but genuine need. The faculty kitchen and dining room were on the second floor at the end of the building closer to Boston. In this same faculty area on the first floor were porter's offices, parlors, treasurer's office, garage and the student chapel.

In his March 15, 1962, letter the cardinal affirmed that the property thus given to the Jesuits -- though it was received by the legal corporation -- would be hopefully a

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tremendous asset to education in the archdiocese and a source of vocations. For the limited time of its existence, it was such an educational asset. Vocations were few.

At the time, students, partly on their own initiative and partly by indoctrination, waited for college experience before choosing a clerical vocation. Directly from the first graduating class in 1966, however, Edward Barron entered the Society. In 1968, Stephen White entered but left un vowed after some three years. In 1972, Paul D. Holland of the class of 1967, later a Harvard graduate and a one-year student at St. John Seminary, became a Jesuit novice. Charles F. Kelley, as a member of the Xavier class of 1972, had to transfer to Boston College High School when his class was not continued at Xavier. After graduating from Boston College High School in 1972 and spending two years at Fordham, he entered the novitiate in 1974. In 1975, a second man from the original graduating class of 1966 entered -- Michael Carlton McFarland. He was then a B. S. in Physics from Cornell, and had performed some years of apostolic service

in the American southwest. On completing his noviceship, he began a doctoral program in computer science with a generous grant at Carnegie Tech in Pittsburgh. The one diocesan vocation was David J. Chandonnet who was ordained in 1974 for the Archdiocese of Boston.

An early liaison man with the cardinal and his business staff on Xavier must be mentioned • His work concerned supervising building and furnishings. Fr. James J. Kelley, as Rector of Boston College High School (1944-51), had many dealings  
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with the cardinal who generously gave a million and a half dollars for two structures built at Dorchester when Fr. Kelly was rector residence.

the Cushing classroom building and the Loyola Fr. Kelley had been Dean of the B. c. School of Business Administration (1937-44), minister at old St. Mary's (1951-53), and was minister at Loyola House at the time of the liaison work. Especially in his capacity as B. c. High Rector, he had rapport on financial and building matters with the cardinal and his business team. One of Fr. Kelley's contributions was the elimination of a proposed walkway outside the windows of the third-floor faculty residence, and the consequent increase in the size of these rooms. Other facilities more suited to a sisterhood were also modified.

As has been briefly noted, one of Fr. Foley's tasks after incorporation was the drawing up of publicity literature and the arrangement of a curriculum. On this latter, he worked in conjunction with the province prefect for secondary schools, Fr. Joseph D. FitzGerald, Fr. Foley's predecessor (1937-39) as dean of freshmen at Boston College. Fr. FitzGerald was the Dean of Holy Cross College (1939-48), an assistant province prefect (1948-51), Rector of Fairfield University (1951-58), province prefect of secondary schools (1958-1964) and superior at St. Andrew House (1962-68).

The curriculum was a standard Jesuit one but with the options which were becoming more common. Latin was prescribed for two years and was elective thereafter. Greek was possible

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for one, two or three years, or optional in a science sequence • Roth English and mathematics were prescribed for four years as was theology. Modern language was a three-year affair.

Provision was made to have some science for all in the upper classes and a fuller science sequence was available. The setup called for a selecting or winnowing of those with a scientific bent by prescribing a special form of general science for all in the first year. With this prescribed introductory course in first year, Xavier differed from those schools which normally made three sciences (physics, chemistry, biology) available in the three upper years.

It might be broadly observed that, although with modifications to meet contemporary times and views, in the subjects taught and, especially, in its efforts at growth and coordination, Xavier walked with a modern shoe in a philosophy of education stemming from the Georgetown curriculum once the school, located in the District of Columbia, was fully under the direction of the restored Society of Jesus. Hence, it bore the imprint of Fr. John Grassi, Fr. John Early and Fr. Bernard Flaherty. It was their curriculum and thrust that influenced all Jesuit schools along the Atlantic seaboard and which was continued in the modifications made in the early twentieth century down to 1923 by Maryland-New York Province regulations. All this phase of Jesuit continuity with its gradual changes had been excellently and luminously expounded by Fr. Michael A. Bernard in an unpublished dissertation for his Ph.D. degree in education at Yale in 1951. It deserves wide and

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thorough reading. The document, in excellent bindery, is now part of the education collection which Boston College, under the aegis of Fr. Charles F. Donovan and Fr. Paul A. FitzGerald, has been gathering on higher education. This same collection has luckily obtained the files of the Jesuit Education Association so long directed by Fr. Edward B. Rooney. In later years he had as assistant director Fr. Paul FitzGerald. Since colleges in other days and even into the twentieth century conjoined in one institution what is both a college and a secondary school, this work of Fr. Bernard, although in a higher education collection, is most useful on Jesuit secondary school education from the time of Fr. Grassi at Georgetown down to 1923.

In addition to publicity and curriculum, Fr. Foley recruited the opening class. Some unspecified number took the Xavier-made entrance examination. Some unspecified number was accepted and 147 enrolled. This was the largest of Xavier's entering classes and in Xavier documentation it is rated, correctly or not, as generally poor. Yet, this first class was

to have national science foundation awards and general mentions. If Xavier could have conjoined with its academic quality a similar high number of entering students in later years, it might not have been in so precarious a position in 1970. But this is hindsight. The initial tuition for this initial class was \$400.00 at a time when the tuition at Boston College High School was \$330.00.

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The narrative now passes to the first faculty. The principal selected was Fr. John R. Vigneau who had just concluded a one-year task as assistant academic principal at Cheverus High School, Portland, when such an officer does not seem to have been needed or wanted in that position. Prior to this Cheverus assignment, Fr. Vigneau had studied a year at Fordham University acquiring a degree in education and having the benefit of the instruction and expertise in secondary school education of Fr. Lorenzo K. Reed, prefect of high schools in the New York Province from 1949-67 •

The house minister was Fr. Francis J. Donovan with similar experience at 761 Harrison Avenue (church and school) and at Cheverus (1958-62) where he was principal (1945-51) •

The treasurer was Fr. Edward J. Whalen, former treasurer at Weston College and Roston College, superior at old St. Mary's, minister at Boston College (1931-32) and Fairfield (1942-43) and a missionary in Jamaica (1933-1942).

Fr. Felix Talbot, who engaged in retreat work, was in residence for a year as spiritual father of the community •

Two experienced teachers were assigned from Boston College High School: Fr. Philip D. Moriarty, Latin and English, and Fr. William J. Doyle, mathematics •

From special studies at Boston College came Fr. James T. Sheehan, initially for general science and later for chemistry along with theology and counselling •

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Fr. John P. Kerdieus with a St. Louis master's degree in physics also taught physical science and was the original dean of men. Later, he added physics to general science.

After a brief internship in the Weston College library under Fr. William J. Connolly, Fr. Richard J. Olson was appointed librarian.

Stability was the key characteristic about these first

teaching fathers as well as for those who came in subsequent years down to 1968. These subsequent priests from 1963 to 1968 were Joseph E. ~ullen, Francis J. ~urphy, James c. O'Brien (1963), Thomas F. Lyons, Louis f., St.Onge (1964), Harry J. cain, James L. Greenler, Richard T. Griffin, Francis P. Sullivan, John H. L. Collins (1966), Francis Ennis and Leo J. Fahey (1967). Fr. William J. Sheehan, who returned in poor health from Baghdad mission, lived at Xavier for two years with a light teaching load in one year. After assignment to Weston, he died in the Glover Hospital on October 8, 1970.

After 1968 some less stability was seen in newly assigned priests. Fr. Edward x. canning taught theology for one year (1968-69). In 1969, Fr. Edward F. Boyle came for one year. But with greater stability, Fr. Raymond J. Callahan, who was originally in 1969 the director of guidance, became the academic head of the school in its last year and one half, and kept the school on as even a keel as possible. Even after the closing, he kept his eye on the mail especially library subscriptions which were being phased out. In the final year (1970-71), to its

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• skeleton crew that opted to remain, was added Fr. Thomas J. Gallagher as a counsellor.

Stability was less evident in the treasurer's office.

• Fr. t~halen left in 1964 to serve in Jamaica as fiscal officer for the Diocese of Kingston. Until a new candidate was found, Fr. Donovan doubled as minister and treasurer (1964-65).

• Fr. John J. Collins held the position for one year (1965-66). In 1969, when Fr. st. Onge became minister, Fr. Donovan was full-time treasurer and so remained until the school closed (1969-71).

one must characterize the sticking quality of most of

the regents differently. Of the original five regents, (Robert

• R. Dorin, Charles r~. Hegarty, John B. Leonard, John F. ~lurphy, Richard G. ~urphy), only Robert Dorin is at present (1969) in the Society. Two of this group (Cha~les M. Hegarty and John

• B. Leonard) left after ordination •

Of the later regents the vast majority left during

regency or shortly thereafter: Winslow s. Durgin, Alan J. Pratt,

• William J. Davenport, James J. Loughlin, Joseph O'B. Monahan, John F. Mack, David A. Culliton (N. Y. Province), Robert J. Kelley, Michael c. Normile, Stephen M. conner, Nicholas

- F. Finke, James F. Mulcahy. To this list of departing regents must be added all the New England Province scholastics who lived at Xavier while studying at Brandeis: Noel F. Brawn, Francis
- J. Doe, Robert J. Paradowski •

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This loss of regents, when or after being stationed at Xavier, paralleled a similar loss of regents notably from Jamaica assignments. It was a manifestation of a spirit of unrest, a lesser sense of commitment and some strange immaturity which characterized many religious groups. Xavier just happened to have more than its share of these people. Religious discipline was as strong there as in any similar house, and small group masses and expressions of solidarity were perhaps more notable. Despite this distressing situation, some Xavier regents have remained and are now priests. Robert Dorin, after his theology studied German abroad and taught German at Cheverus until there was no longer need for it. He then obtained a position teaching German at Xavier in New York city. Richard J. Stanley gave the Trappists a good try for a time. He is now a teacher at Cheverus, where and from where he gives highly prized directed retreats. Thomas J. Gallagher, a regent 1965-69, returned to Xavier as a priest 1970-71, then taught theology and counselled at Cranwell and Boston College High School. After studying both at Weston in Cambridge and at the Center for Religious Development in Cambridge, he was appointed Associate Director of Novices.

The stability, which was manifest in the faculty fathers from 1962-68 and even after, means that those who in early 1970 opted to leave or to remain at Xavier had living experience with Xavier and were in a position to form judgments on the apostolic work in which they themselves had been engaged. There appeared two viewpoints -- the work was worthwhile and

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should be continued as long as possible versus the view that the work had ceased to be for God's greater glory and that, hence, something else should be undertaken..

Stability and quality characterized two other parts of Xavier staff -- the teaching brother and the registrar-secretary. In 1967 Brother Michael L. Greenler began a distinctive career as a teacher of physical science where his patience, gentleness, expertise and concern had a profound and edifying effect. He was

at Xavier to the end since physics was his major and chemistry a real possibility. Two coadjutor brothers - Robert J. Clifford (1962-63) and Maurice Ahern (1963-65) -- served the community for brief periods.

The other example of stability and excellence was Margaret Sheehan, sister of Fr. William J. Sheehan of the Jamaica Mission, who was secretary and registrar during the lifetime of the school. The then pastor of St. Bernard's, Concord, Fr. John York, had recommended her to Fr. Foley and her work surpassed any reasonable expectation. She could pleasantly control students as well as efficiently and ahead of time aid staff members. If Xavier had continued, surely some place there should have been named for her.

During the years of Xavier's planning and existence the province made a special effort to have more secondary school Jesuits have, in addition to the usual Weston M. A. in philosophy or in place of it, a specialized degree either in some aspect of education or in an academic discipline or both. Where these could not be obtained by full-time study, use was made, as XAVIER 284

has been shown elsewhere, of programs conducted with prestige only in the summer. Thus, Fr. J. c. O'Brien had pioneered for the province in the Harvard masters' program combining Education and English. James Laughlin studied at Wesleyan and Charles Hegarty at Bread Loaf.

There are other degree holders. From Fordham, Fr. Vigneau had an education degree, Fr. James L. Greenler one in mathematics. Richard Stanley had a master's in classics from Poston College and Fr. St. Onge one in education. Fr. Kerdiejus' master's degree in physics was from St. Louis. Fr. Richard Griffin had a certificate in catechetics from Lumen Vitae in Brussels. Joseph O'B. Monahan entered the Society with a Bread Loaf degree in English. Fr. Francis P. Sullivan was concluding a doctoral dissertation in theology at the Catholic Institute of Paris. Leo Fahey had a degree in ascetical theology from Catholic University.

Others had done special work in summer sessions. Fr. James P. Sheehan for example, had worked in the special summer liturgical program at Notre Dame.

Since declining enrollments were to prove an important factor for the Jesuit withdrawal from Xavier, some remarks on this matter in the early years are pertinent. Where figures on enrollment are used, they are drawn from the statistical tables

appearing annually in the Jesuit Educational Quarterly. The opening class has its figures commonly placed at 147 but in the Quarterly the figures are listed as 149. When there were two classes in 1963-64, the total enrollment was 230

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with 118 new freshmen and 112 sophomores, down from 147 or 149 • This total was 230 originally listed, erroneously, in the the Quarterly at 203 but corrected in a following listing to 230. In its third year the school had a 304 total with 110 in first year • In 1966-67, the year before the accreditation team came, the total was 399 with 113 in the first year. In the school year of the accreditation visit, 1967-68, there was a total of 410 students with 114 in the first year. That year had the highest total enrollment but, outside the first year, the highest year in first-year students, 120, came one year later when the total was down to 401.

one year after the first-year class had been graduated and practically all had spent one year in college, a formal attempt at accreditation was possible. In preparation, a self-study was engaged in and its results made available to the visiting team. The registration was the aforesaid 410 total • The school had a staff of twenty-four Jesuits, nine lay associates. It seemed to have viability. Yet some had wondered even then whether the school may have become too choosy in its acceptance.

Three hundred and seventy-four, a number never again equaled, took the Scholastic Aptitude Test entrance examinations for September 1965 and 178 were rejected, probably discouraging applications from the same families, school and local sites. The tuition had reached \$575.00 to which had been added in most cases \$200.00 for bus transportation. That very November of 1967, four of the members of the executive committee of the XAVIER 286

independent school unit of the New England Association had urged that Jesuit schools in New England charge \$900.00 a year tuition. So highly did they prize Jesuit secondary education that they did not wish it to be supplied too cheaply. The very thought of closing any of the Jesuit schools appeared to them incredible. Such analogous places as Belmont Hill and Hopkins Grammar School in New Haven could charge this amount and where there was excess, funnel it into scholarships for worthy but less affluent students. Following this advice in 1969 and 1970 was to prove

tragic for Xavier. But at this moment of the accreditation visit and follow-up, the only thin cloud of sinister significance was the case that 120 was the largest member of enrolled freshmen when 150 might have been expected and were really needed.

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Chapter XVI

XAVIER -- TBR ACCREDITATION (1967)

A team representing the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary schools visited Xavier on October 23-24, 1967. The group was headed by William N. Randall, Headmaster of the Huntington School in Poston. Other members of the five-man team were Herrick Macomber, Director of Studies at Phillips Exeter; Rev. Charles J. Sheerin, Head of the English Department at Groton School; Dom Hilary Martin, O. S. B., of Portsmouth Priory; and the Jesuit John B. Handrahan of Cheverus High School.

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The choices appeared to show an effort to have representatives from the type of schools analogous to Xavier.

The report signed by the chairman is very comprehensive as to the origin, location, purposes, facilities, faculty and curriculum. Since most of these eruditional points have been included -- even at greater length -- in the previous chapter on Xavier, space is reserved here for remarks on the curriculum and the extracurricular activities in the locale where Xavier is situated.

The committee comments on the curriculum are interesting and even curious. So full a program for each student left few if any study periods during the day. Surely they were really necessary might have been asked or answered. The assumption on their need could be challenged •

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To soften its animadversion for the benefit of the administration, the report indicated that so full a program imposed serious burdens on the administration to work it out and keep it working. But, Jesuit administrators and such generous and competent woman as Miss Sheehan welcome and embrace the burdensome "magis" in good causes.

A recurring fault was found in the honors courses since their syllabi were homegrown, as it were, and not the staple of advanced placement proposals. If student outcome in college board subject matter tests were acknowledged as excellent and a sign of good preparation for college experience, one, like the writer who has viewed Xavier's honor programs in practice, knows

their excellence and often superiority over programs following meticulously the advanced placement syllabus. To cite one possible example, it may be asserted that the junior-senior elective history courses, taught by Fr. Frank Sullivan, was in fact superior to very good honors courses following the advanced placement syllabus.

Honors courses in mathematics, physics and the classics were admittedly taught excellently. They represented the imaginative, flexible and substantial work praised in theory by the visitors but less in practice when these qualities were carried out in Xavier's own mode or fashion. The Xavier honors courses might be said to have represented the "personalis" of Jesuit education, if one may be pardoned here for using the nominative rather than the accusative case for this technical Jesuit quality.

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The "thoroughness and flexibility" which did not serve as a middle term in discussing social honors courses was applied explicitly (as it should have been) to the English curriculum.

The report was silent on the standard and progressive courses offered to all students in grammar, literature and composition. It singled out for praise the writing workshop for juniors and seniors •

It also commended the department's good use of the library and a recent participation in a theater workshop in England. The visit may have missed Mr. Joseph O'B. Lonahan's fourth-year English course which coordinated literary offerings with contemporary music.

The norm of the advanced placement syllabus was again used in an overall assessment of the mathematics department. Its four-year course of prescribed mathematics was ultra-modern (in a praiseworthy, not in a pejorative, sense) open-ended, oriented toward abstract mathematics, variable in content at the upper levels, and constantly open to revision. Presumably, this final quality did not imply mercurial changes. Nevertheless, the content of honors courses should be the generally followed or the easily measurable Advanced Placement Syllabus, not just a Xavier arrangement even though it had proved so far its worth •

The science curriculum at Xavier was distinctive in comparison to the other Jesuit schools in New England, and to many (undoubtedly most) schools. It was commended with a left hand. In first year there was a general science course covering

a wide variety of sciences. In addition to introducing all

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students to some scientific knowledge and approach, it made it possible to discern who had a general aptitude for science, whether he wished at once to begin three-year cycle or to defer to junior or even to senior year one or two science courses with a non-scientific major.

For those who chose a scientific sequence for three years, there were but two subjects (chemistry and physics), each taught for one and one-half years. There was, first, three semesters in a rigorous course in chemistry. Then the same followed in physics. Biology, which was a one-year choice for others, was squeezed out of the science sequence to give greater depth to the other two. This depth thus offered an opportunity for students to bypass the initial college course in one or both of these sciences. Advance placement was at that time the climate of opinion and action in college circles, and these more extended science courses kept this aim and mentality in view. Without passing comment on Xavier's science sequence the committee felt badly that it gave no opportunity for a year's study of biology in the science sequence. This could be affected by having all three courses for one year or, if the extended time were continued for chemistry and physics, by dropping some one of the non-science courses to fit in biology. The report does not throw light on this matter and never praises or dispraises Xavier's special arrangement which did have the backing of the university departments interested in the improvement of secondary school science courses.

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The three-year sequence of French or German was commended for the oral-aural approach, the use of the language laboratory, the exclusive use by the teachers of the foreign language in class and the lively pace of instruction. The beginners' classes were judged too large for the full benefit of the excellent material and instruction. The committee thought it would be fine to allow a four-year sequence of these languages thus contracting in fact, if not in theory, Latin as the foreign language for all in first year.

As to Latin, there had been a shock and a pleasant one about the two-year prescribed Latin course and its extension by electives for one or two more years: Instruction was actually in

Latin and not just erudition about Latin -- formation over Wissenschaft -- another distinctive Jesuit Ratio feature capable of being found in numerous other subjects besides Latin. Yet, although the library was good in quality on the classics, it was judged a bit sparse for a school which emphasized Latin. Much of this added desideratum might well have been on the archeology, history and social life of Rome and the Romans, and thus about Latin which the school had been praised for de-emphasizing. No comment was passed on the merits or demerits of Xavier's Latin honors course vis-a-vis the Advanced Placement Syllabus. Perhaps too few students were involved or the subject was not judged that important.

The history and social science departments suffered due to the absence in 1967-68 of the two teachers on leave who apparently were net replaced or, if replaced, by less

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satisfactory instructors. Fr. Frank Sullivan's elective class in modern world history from 1660 to the present was praised, rightfully, for giving rise to brisk discussion and real thought. The report might have added his requirement of regular and serious book critiques and his coordination of arts and letters with the more political and economic textbook matter.

Some added elective courses in history were suggested, but it might be stated that some of these proposed electives might represent a social science other than history. American History, prescribed in second year and taught by a substitute, was poor in comparison with the material on hand. World history in first year, not in its mode of instruction but in its very content, was stated as too general to establish perspective. The course should be replaced by a study of medieval or ancient history. One wonders if this remedy would supply greater perspective. Without plumping for this fairly standard first year general history instruction, one might argue that a good teacher or even an ordinary one can give perspective in this general survey and overcome partially, if not wholly, the view of young students that history only began with world War II or Vietman or even Watergate. This limited perspective could be paralleled to the view that the Society began with its Thirty-First (1965-66) or Thirty-Second (1974-75) General Congregation.

Theology, although prescribed for fewer hours over four years, received five lines in the report compared to the fifteen lines given to history prescribed for two years and elective

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thereafter. The theology classes were found interesting, well taught and effective for the daily lives of the students as, said the report, "Xavier philosophy would have it." the permeation of the curriculum with theology was evident in discussions in English and history classes, as it should be. This would have pleased Fathers Grassi, Early and McGuire and their followers who limited, in comparison to other subjects, time given to formal instruction in religion. They relied on its suffusing other value subjects as well as on the continued presence of religion as manifested in a variety of daily or frequent religious practices. Only in the late 1960's did the colleges begin to equate theology in hours and credits with philosophy requirements. Both may have suffered by this equality •

Granted what were Xavier's curricular excellencies, there was one notable curriculum omission (rather two) as shall be seen. Despite the extracurricular activities in painting, singing, visiting museums, nothing exposed all the students to music and art appreciation. Such a course should be added, and the students were said to want it •

It has been observed that there was no notice of what within the prescribed and elective courses was done on art and music curricular very strikingly by Mr. Tenahan and Fr. Sullivan • Fr. Vigneau, too, in the academic, as opposed to business assemblies which he introduced, did lay emphasis on such matters. Perhaps more knowledge should have been available on the assemblies or some simple questions asked by the committee. These assemblies, which could include a wide variety of cultural

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subjects, could broaden interests and perspective, and yet not overcrowd a curriculum already thought to be overloaded by the committee. Perhaps as Xavier grew in numbers, Fr. Vigneau found less time to plan these academic assemblies. The temper of the times and the thrust of the new criteria used by the New England Province of the Society of Jesus to determine its apostolates could have given preference to social science over artistic contributions.

Extracurricular activities, which admittedly opened up fine arts to some students, were as a whole commended for their variety and quality. If there was a fault -- and it appears there had to be --, it was because the faculty, then numbering

twenty-four Jesuits and nine lay associates, was too small to perform this task adequately. Hence, recruitment of more staff was urged. It is ironic that this was the very year when the Province had freed Fr. Thomas Lyons from his job as prefect of discipline (1964-67) so that he could more fully supervise his three remaining activities in athletics, the cafeteria and the bookstore.

Athletics were pointed out for some shortcomings despite the admitted hard practice, grit and good coaching. Only two of the seven coaches were full-time, and the time of departure of the school buses in seventy minutes after the last class cramped participation. As to the eighty percent participation of the students in optional, though encouraged, intramural sports, this should be replaced or supplemented by a prescribed physical education program during the regular school

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• day. Since the curriculum was in fact as well as in the view of the committee very crowded, what effect would have this proposed prescription had? On this the committee did not comment.

• Perhaps on such minimal matters the praetor passes •

The committee report praised the quality of the Xavier students. The Standard Scholastic Aptitude Test had screened students beginning with its second class. The freshman class then in the school in November 1967 actually had 374 applicants of whom 178 were rejected. The percentiles were found above average. Recent graduates had scored 550 on verbal aptitude, 570 on mathematical. Ten percent were already either on deans' list or in honors programs. Especially singled out were the scores on the physical and mathematical achievement tests of the College Board.

As to current student reaction to their curriculum,

• facilities and staff, the visitors had found these from casual remarks and explicit questions to be most satisfying. If

students had any regrets, it was because they could not enjoy all

• that was available • Whatever handicaps might arise from disassociation from hometown peers was abundantly replaced in the estimation of the students by the Xavier community and its ethos.

• Guidance and its director, Fr. Joseph E. Mullen with collegiate experience at Holy Cross, and his corps of assistants

-- chiefly Weston theologians engaged there as part of their

• \* apostolic training -- were rated highly as were the physical and

academic facilities for guidance work. The work was lauded as remarkably thorough. With these assessments the students, when

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queried, agreed. At this time the Province was making available graduate courses in counselling. In addition to student courses and degrees, each summer one of those interested in this work was sponsored by the province at the elite guidance program at some academy during late June and early July.

The physical plant was generously lauded although it was noticed that the gymnasium lacked seating arrangements as well as room at the ends of the basketball courts. If some added facility were needed, it would be a "teaching theater" for combining several sections of one subject occasionally into one large grouping. Thus, groups in the same subject matter, meeting four times a week separately, might meet in common on a fifth time for lectures by expert teachers. This method was suggested as a way of not excessively increasing the teaching staff -- a staff which the report indicated as too small for its extracurricular supervision. The method proposed has been commonly used in colleges and has its advantages and drawbacks. Many teachers might prefer that, if their sections were to be combined every one or two weeks, they be the extraordinary teachers. Tastes will differ.

The care of school finances was enviable and professional. This situation might stem from the instructions of Fr. General in 1937 and enflashed by Fr. James H. Dolan to have modern accounting systems set up in Jesuit educational establishments. The first treasurer, Fr. Edward J. Whalen, had been a treasurer at Weston and at Boston College as well as a minister in other places. Fr. John J. L. Collins had been

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trained in finance at the Wharton School and taught finance in the Boston College School of Business Administration. The intervening treasurer between these two was Fr. Francis Donovan, a minister with a keen eye for finance at 761 Harrison Avenue and at Cheverus as well as at Xavier from its inception. The gift of \$170,250 from the Xavier community representing surplus of its salaries plus perquisites and gifts was declared by the committee to be impressive. The tuition of \$580.00 was considered a solid ground for the economic future of the school. The increase up to

\$900.00, effective September 1969, was to prove a different story.

The final summation on this school was most laudatory even though shortcomings, often of dubious value, were pointed out. The school was to be alerted to the danger of spreading its faculty too thinly-- apparently to supervise its extracurricular activities and to keep its beginners' foreign language course of proper size. While there was little possibility of athletics or extracurricular activities gaining an upper hand, yet an academically-minded committee felt that a little ground might be yielded to some unspecified extracurriculars. How this might be done compatibly with xavier's academic aims was unfortunately not spelled out •

The only hints along the way seem to be the prescribed curricular physical training in place of heavy reliance on in~amural sports, perhaps a later departure time for the school buses, more full-time coaches and a faculty more free or more enlarged to supervise outside activities. So the report ends •  
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Physical training was not added. In its last full year 1969-70, the faculty of thirty-one listed nineteen Jesuits and thirteen lay associates -- a decrease in one from the thirty-two in 1967-68. Poor extra-curriculars!

The report went to the Executive Committee of the Independent School Commission of the New England Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Xavier received its first ten-year accreditation at the December 1967 meeting of the association. It was at this meeting that, in filling an expired term, no representative of a Catholic school or association was placed on the executive committee of the independent school group. When Fr. Joseph P. Duffy protested this prior to the formal afternoon announcements, he received no satisfaction from the secretary of the independant school group. Some others did not seem to mind. They were content with crumbs. All this was in marked contrast to the membership of the executive committee of the college division.

Hence, the New England Province Prefect represented the case of the Catholic schools in the independent school unit to Mr. Dana Cotton, the secretary-treasurer of the whole association and its chief stockholder, as it were. From his attendance at a Denver meeting Mr. Cotton wrote that he would look into the matter prior to the next meeting of the board. In late January, a telephone call informed the prefect that Mr. Cotton had

presented the matter showing the very high percentage in this group of the Catholic schools yet unrepresented. There was the agreement that at the next election, December 1968, this would be

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corrected. The prefect was asked to submit nominations. As a result, a long-term superintendent of a Catholic diocesan system --a third name on the prefect's terna --was appointed to the crucial executive committee •

What was surprising, even scandalous, was the apathy or timidity of Catholic sisters, brothers and non-Jesuit clerics about taking legitimate issue with the association when the matter had been explained as Fr. Duffy had done in a timely way. If one runs fine schools, one should have the courage and conviction to speak out •

Xavier also had other educational affiliations though it was through the New England Association that formal accreditation came. Xavier joined the Association for Independent Secondary Schools with which Fr. Lorenzo K. Reid, Fr. Arthur J. Sheehan and Fr. Edward B. Rooney were long prominent. And it was affiliated with other associations including the National Catholic Education Association whose annual Easter-time meeting drew large crowds in Atlantic City, usually every second year, and elsewhere when local Bishops or Archbishops extended invitations.

stemming from Fr. General Ledochowski's Instructio of 1933 had come the National Jesuit Education Association with which Xavier had an active connection. Its first executive secretary was Fr. Daniel O'Connell, briefly a commissarius of education. After 1937 and for over twenty-five years, Fr. Edward B. Rooney held this post. During Fr. Rooney's tenure he had two New England Jesuits as assistants to him not as assistant

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directors: Fr. Leo ("Luke") A. O'Connor and Fr. Richard T. Costello. At a later time Fr. Paul A. FitzGerald, then dean of the Boston College Gr:idia te School, was appointed assistant director of the association.

Three contributions of the Jesuit Educational Association were of great help to any school, including Xavier. These were the occasional Special Bulletins with information on current trends and government plans. There was the Quarterly, published from June 1938 to March 1970, with learned, inspirational and statistical articles. There were secondary

school institutes with their follow-up reports -- a mine of information, especially for new secondary school people. In a few months after accreditation was granted, arrangements began for replacing Fr. John P. Foley whose term as rector was expiring. A new arrangement of rector-headmaster was agreed upon on July 31, 1968. Fr. John R. Vigneau was appointed to this post. In a short time the controversial stage at Xavier arose.

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## Chapter XVII

### WITHDRAWING JESUIT PRESENCE -- ITS IMMEDIATE PRELIMINARIES (1968-1969)

Since a notable decline both in applications and in registrations after acceptance was an important factor in the withdrawal of Jesuit presence from Xavier, figures in these matters are pertinent. While applications in December, 1965, for the class of 1970 were a high of 302, only 156 were found acceptable and of these only 108 enrolled as freshmen in the fall of 1966. In December, 1966, for the class of 1971, the highest number of applicants in all its years presented themselves -- 374. The total enrollment of freshmen in 1967, was, however, only 114. By December, 1967, there was a notable decline in applications for the class of 1972. The numbers were down from the 374 of the previous December to 248. Only 157 were acceptable and the actual registration was 110.

The December 1968 application and subsequent slow registration for the class of 1973 became a matter of serious concern. Of the 207 applicants and 131 acceptances by the school, only 100, after a process drawn out to April, 1969, indicated determination to come. This class was generally considered the poorest since the opening year. It was concerning this class application and determination to come to which Fr. Vigneau spoke at the first session of the Province Congress at Round Hills in February, 1969 •

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As an aside, it should be pointed out that the official statistics widely used on the state of applicants omitted the applicants of December 1966 for the class of 1971 when the number of applicants were the highest. Somehow, this strange omission was detected, but only on one of the archival copies was the missing information listed.

As a sequel to the accreditation process and in view of the slow response of acceptable students to register, a Xavier

community meeting took place as early as February 26, 1968. In addition to the Xavier staff, there were invited to attend, but not to vote, other groups and individuals. Invited were all the Jesuit students residing in the community, the Spiritual Father, three theologians engaged in part-time counselling, the Province Treasurer and the Province Prefect for Secondary Schools.

In detail Fr. Francis J. Donovan, Minister and Treasurer, aided by Mr. Doug Smith of the Boston College High School Treasury Office explained what expenditures and revenues could be projected from June, 1968, through June, 1971. These figures could show what tuition must be charged in view of projected and generous raises for lay teachers and for some decline in total enrollment. If the school had from 352 to 383 students, the tuition charge must be \$800.00. If the registration fell to 306 or down to 282, a \$1000.00 charge was necessary. In view of the current \$580.00 tuition, these increases up to \$800.00 or \$1000.00 were notable additions. The only other solution would be a drive for funds usable for general school purposes or to found tuition grants. Discussion followed

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this presentation so that vctina during the next few days could be informed.

Voting returns showed unanimity on some points, wide cleavages on others and many unanswered results on q~estions of a crucial character. There were also answers that had a squinting connota ticn. All twenty-two voters agreed that even as a means of saving money there should be no increases in class size up to thirty and no raising of teaching loads up to twenty-five hours a week.

As to the authentic apostolic value of Xavier, eighteen believed it was apostolic, two that it was not, and two others believed that it probably was not.

If the province were to close two secondary schools or turn them over to others, should Xavier, the community asked, be one of these. Here there was more division. Eleven opposed such a change, four and perhaps five favored this course of action, six abstained. A straight-out-vote on this issue would lhave been more helpful, especially if any of these six abstentions preferred that Xavier should remain •

As to an immediate rise in the annual pay of \$600.00 to lay teachers, all but one voted affirmatively. Nor should there

be any skimping on class ratio. Tuition and gifts were the ways to gain funds.

In view of some criticism on adequacy of Xavier in cultural and athletic facilities, a vote on this matter showed the belief that they were not adequate or, if they were, they were barely so. As a consequence, some more money must be spent

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On April 17, 1968 Fr. Harold o. Small, American Assistant of the Society of Jesus, thanked Fr. Vigneau for the copy of the report of the February meeting and its voting conclusions. He remarked, without prescience, that, as long as Cardinal Cushing was alive the Society could not surrender Xavier, since gratitude was a virtue. He thus hinted that some way short of withdrawal should be sought for its problems • Xavier went ahead with plans to raise funds and to increase tuition. On October 9, 1968, a letter was addressed to the parents of Xavier students by Fr. Vigneau. Even when the school was accredited a year before, he pointed out, there had been a warning that, without a notable increase in tuition, Xavier could not continue as an excellent school. After long studies on possible charges, it was concluded to raise, beginning in September 1969, the tuition to \$900.00 for the first three years of students and to \$750.00 for the class of 1970. This letter ended on an upbeat note concerning the school and its future. There was no intimation of serious problem if the tuition were raised directly from \$585.00 to \$900.00, or to \$750.00 for the senior class.

At the same time, a letter was sent to the province detailing the new tuition charges. It also indicated an earlier undated decision to limit the student body to 400 in view of the province manpower capabilities and the burden of higher salaries for the lay associates. It indicated that no saving of money was anticipated by any increase in class size. Parents with financial ability must expect to pay fully while poorer students

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can still be aided. Some sort of an answer was invited to enlighten the province as it studied the apostolate of secondary schools. No copies in any formal reply to this appeal were found in the Xavier archives. T, for cne, first read this October, 1968, letter when I received the Xavier files in late November, 1977. Opportunity to discuss these matters with reference to Xavier could easily have arisen in the course of the current

province planning and the sociological survey meetings. The moves towards Jesuit disassociation from Xavier began to move more rapidly on the inside. On February 20, 1969, Fr. Vigneau, as rector, wrote his annual letter to Fr. General Pedro Arrupe. He recalled the preparation for and the announcement of the tuition increase to \$900.00 and set forth some of the results. In December, 1968, there were only 207 applicants whereas in December, 1967, there were 248 and, in 1966, there had been 374. Requests for financial aid had doubled. If a good lay faculty were to be retained and properly reimbursed, a further increase in tuition would soon be mandatory. Not only were additional Jesuits out of the question, but some of the present Jesuit staff were contemplating study or experimental work. The cardinal's choice of Concord as a location for the school was deplored. Nor did Cardinal Cushing, it was said, help by snide remarks about even the \$580.00 tuition. There was an intimation that Emerson Hospital might purchase the plant.

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#### XAVIER 307

As for the foreseeable future -- without any possibility of governmental or continued province financial aid -- there appeared no market in enrollment for a school whose tuition could be soon forced higher. Fr. Vigneau concluded his letter to Fr. General by asserting that either there was no real apostolic need for this type of education in Concord, or the upper middle class must show a willingness to pay for it and subsidize it • In the absence of Fr. General, who was on visitation in Australia, one of his general assistants, Fr. Vincent T. O'Keefe, responded on March 10, 1969. If people do not care to pay adequately for superior education, some other use of Jesuit manpower and effort should be sought. As to the Cardinal, a frank conversation with him by Fr. Vigneau and Fr. Provincial was proposed. He might thus be prepared for later closing of the school. Concomitant with this Roman correspondence was Fr. Vigneau's report to the February, 1969, Province Congress at Round Hills concerning the currently low registration of a new and coming class of 1973. It was only in April, 1969, that the minimum required enrollment was reached and, as has been reiterated, it was a less satisfying group of students academically.

Before matters came any more to a head, an interesting study authorized by the trustees of Xavier became available.

This study was a nineteen-page Attitude Survey Report dated May 12, 1969. Leo F. Wheeler, a professional consultant of Canton, Massachusetts, has been engaged by the Xavier trustees to initiate this study beginning on March 31, 1969. This inquiry

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sounded out seventy-nine individuals representing the student body, teachers, alumni, parents of present and former students, officials of the Society and of the Archdiocese of Boston, educators and natives of Concord. For these nine categories queried, a total of seventy-nine being polled seems somewhat small. Pertinent in this report were questions on financial aid to the school, increase in size and recognition or not of the current state of Xavier's financial jeopardy.

As to whether there was a real concern for Xavier's future or continued existence on which most had no insights --, students may be said to have been concerned up to eighty percent, parents up to ninety percent, alumni only twenty-eight percent. Even these percentages come from joining votes for considerable concern with the votes of those who are so confident that they experienced no concern whatsoever.

When the question was raised about increasing enrollment in its relation to the Xaverian program and image, there was a problem. Respondents were told that increased enrollment meant not a jump, for instance, from 400 to 500 or 600 students, but only an increase in student ratio to teachers seemingly independent of whether there was a 400 or 500 student body enrollment. To some this ratio type of increase was adverse, less so to others. To eighty-eight percent of the faculty and to sixty percent of outsiders, this change in student ratio would be considered adverse. It was also considered adverse by fifty percent of the parents and twenty-five of the students and seventeen percent of the alumni. There was, thus,

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some difference in viewpoint between current and past students and those who have paid the bills or just looked down with appreciation from the outside.

The next question asked, without any reference to image, was whether Xavier should increase enrollment and where. There was no indication in the terms in which respondents were to interpret the word "increase." How, therefore, it was answered seems anyone's guess. To this question eighty-seven of the

alumni responded affirmatively but only eighteen percent of the current students. Fifty eight percent of all the outsiders as did seventy percent of the faculty and twenty-five percent of the parents opposed an increase. coeducation was also opposed by seventy-seven percent of the parents, favored by eighty-seven percent of the outsiders and eighty-six percent of the faculty. Students were in opposition by fifty-five percent.

The recently announced increase in tuition as one way of bettering the financial standing of the school gave rise to a series of questions. Asked if they would send their sons or return themselves to Xavier at this price, the greatest affirmative of 100% came from the parents of alumni. Sixty percent of the alumni would themselves return or send a son, but another twenty percent of the alumni would not and still another twenty percent doubted that they would. Sixty-seven percent of the current students would return and only eight percent were totally negative •

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#### XAVIER 310

A related question on fund raising dealt with a willingness to contribute. Here, if the definitely affirmative answers were joined to the probability ones, the alumni were favorable to eighty-seven and a half percent, the parents of the present students to eighty-three and a half percent, but the parents of the alumni who were 100% for sending their sons back to Xavier were but seventy-five percent willing to contribute. Tuition, even high tuition, they seem ready to pay, but were less prepared to grant later subsidies. In general, however, all those who did favor contributions wished that the drive for funds had been initiated at once. It was this enthusiasm that brought about a steering committee for this purpose. Its activities, however, were delayed in November, 1969, for practical reasons involved in a possible withdrawal of the Jesuit presence. ~lr. weiner believed that the young alumni despite some sophisticated views on Xavier would rally round in an emergency. He sensed, too, that, while parents sympathized with Xavier's pull towards inner-city students, they did not want Xavier to overlook boys from the middle economic class. The report ended with a few recommendations to keep Xavier going. nr. \. Jeiner thought it would be well for Xavier to know and ponder the view of a headmaster, once an opponent of all sectarian education, who now believed that church-related schools were islands of sanity. This view paralleled those of the

executive committee of the Independent School Commission of the New England Association in November, 1967.

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#### XAVIER 311

More lay trustees were also proposed by Fr. Weiner •

A process in this direction was well-started prior to the events of late 1969 and early 1970. He recommended increase in size of the student body up to 500 by aggressive recruiting efforts. He did not recommend a drive for funds but rather emphasized annual and deferred giving.

His final sentences were: "Xavier deserves to remain in operation. Its family and its friends will see that it does."

These were brave words. Some friends and family continued to believe them •

The next step towards disengagement came with the Xavier Commencement on June 4, 1969. Fr. Vigneau presented an annual report of four pages which was often referred to later and was widely publicized. In speaking of the widespread disorder affecting so many schools in the past school year, he indicated that Xavier, without favoring change for its own sake or merely enunciating sound moral platitudes, had striven to enmesh in action its social ideals.

Where a stand had to be taken on a gut issue, this was done. Commitments in deeds not just words and ideas were encouraged. Granted that not everything that was done was always correct or secure, Xavier was challenging social structures where and when needed. If such a mission of Xavier were not accepted by students and parents, Xavier would close. Here was a clear and early enunciation of the view that unwillingness to accept this prophetic concept of Xavier, along with its academic excellence, was a signal that continued work there by Jesuits was

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#### XAVIER 312

not consonant with God's greater glory. Perhaps these words were taken as graduation day rhetoric. They quite obviously were not. In the same month of June, Fr. Vigneau proposed that the recently combined office of rector and headmaster of Xavier be split. He would prefer that another be rector, in the sense of a religious superior, and that he be headmaster in full charge of the school. Considerable time was spent by Fr. Provincial in studying and finally approving a delineation of the respective functions. Since these details are not pertinent to the current narrative, they are omitted.

A request for the change along with a terna for a new rector was submitted to Fr. General. In August, 1969, he wished the system of a rector in full charge of school and community to be continued and he was prepared to accept the nomination of Fr. Richard J. Olsen for the post. There was some embarrassment when it became known that Fr. Olsen's name as rector had been approved but that no action on its promulgation was forthcoming. Further clarification on problems were needed. It had been the understanding of superiors and Fr. Olsen that his temperament and training suited him for the office of religious superior rather than headmaster. After further clarification of the situation, Fr. General acquiesced in the appointment of Fr. Olsen as rector of the community with Fr. Vigneau continuing only as an independent headmaster of the school. Fr. Olsen assumed his office on November 1, 1969. It was during this somewhat of an impasse on jurisdictional matters that plans on increasing trustees with some lay people as members were set

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XAVIER 313

aside •

The next development towards withdrawal of Jesuit presence came from the outside although the group of seven in question included Fr. Vigneau. On November 5, 1969, Fr. Joseph D. Devlin, New England Province Director of Secondary Education since May 31, 1969, met with the principals of the Jesuit secondary schools in the province at 297 Commonwealth Avenue while Loyola House was still Province Headquarters. At this time the principals were Fr. John R. Vigneau (Xavier), James C. O'Brien (B. C. High), Robert J. Starratt (Fairfield), John G. Cornellier (Connolly), James A. Denson (Cranwell) and John J. Bresnahan (Cheverus). The projected purpose of the meeting had been a formulation of a statement on the scope and purpose of secondary education in the province as a way to attract future Jesuit teachers. The focus of the group so changed during the discussion that a different objective was effected. Its members recognized that due to declining manpower there must be a cutback on the number of the schools serviced by Jesuits.

Moreover, a slow process of decision-making was out of the question. According to the last Province Congress, the high schools, for continued Jesuit life, were to rely on self-studies, separate incorporation of community and closer university ties • These devices now appeared overly slow or halfway measures. Now it was believed by the principals that one

top-flight school would be most desirable, obviously in or near Boston to capitalize on its academic and cultural treasures. If there were but one, it might incorporate completely the province  
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criteria on the promotion of justice and church reform. ~wo more traditional schools rr.ight be maintained but nc more. The reasons were the dwindling number of Jesuits ready to be assigned, an increasing number of those seeking other work, and the expensive involvement of adding lay teachers. By five years, the cutback must come on a decision fer one or, at the most, fer three schools. Three principals unnamed would favor one school or perhaps one additional and traditional one: the other three seemed to favor one major school plus two other traditional schools. In all events, two would have to surrender Jesuit presence in some form, and perhaps even three or four.

At the end of the meeting Fr. Devlin asked and apparently received help for later formulating a plea that could be presented to the congress scheduled fer early January, 1970. Whatever Fr. Devlin received for concretizing the proposed motion was to be kept confidential, and so did not appear in the quite ample Xavier archival documentation.

Before the Province~ congress met at Shadowbrook in early January, 1970, some further developments took place. On November the 11th, the province consultors met and for a time conferred with province curia planners on the forthcoming congress. Dissatisfaction was expressed by two of the consultors that Fr. Provincial had permitted the recall of the 1969 congress personnel rather than authorize new elections for a "province forum" as the group would later be termed. Opportunity for freshness of approach and spirit had thus been lost. consequently, the prospect for the January, 1970, meeting was of

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a drab qrcuc with a ~rab effect on the province •

It was ncted also th~t this same characterization of drab perscnnlity and drab outcome was widespread in the province concerning the personnel and predictable ccnclu~ions of the congress. Hence, there was need of a gutsy agenda, especially on secondary schools.

Seven days after this consultors meeting, Fr. Vigneau tendered to Fr. Provincial, en November 18, his resignation as headma~ter. He wished the resignation to be effective by June, 1970 • In this letter he recalled his long involvement in

secondary-school work but indicated that he was then impatient with the province dragging its feet on the issue of secondary schools. As an elected member of the two previous sessions of the province congress, he had been pleased with his work but, since its second session, only waiting appeared the outcome. The recent meeting of the principals and their resolves had been heartening. Early and drastic action was, however, needed. Perhaps he had reason to believe his voluntary resignation would advance action in this realm •

There were some reactions in the Xavier community to the announced results of the principals' meeting and, finally, to the resignation. Just before the latter, Fr. Rector, Richard J. Olsen, alerted Fr. Provincial that, after the Province Consultors' meeting, Fr. Vigneau had cancelled the trustees meeting and postponed work on the ~rejected drive for three months. To Fr. Olsen, these actions seem steps calculated to allow the schools to slip downward. At a community meeting on

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#### XAVIER 316

November the 13th, Fr. Vigneau was reported to have suggested to the community that an offer be made to relinquish its connection with the Xavier School. Doubts had therefore surfaced that on his own he was bringing Xavier to an end as a Jesuit school. It was just after this communication that Fr. Provincial, on return to his residence, learned of Fr. Vigneau's resignation.

On reflection and on advice the provincial wrote on November 25th that he was not ready to accept the resignation at present. Too short a time had elapsed since the last arrangement had been made and there really was hope in the coming province meeting. It was, moreover, to the Xavier trustees, fully informed, to whom Fr. Vigneau's resignation should be addressed. Details of any such trustees' meeting, their decision and any proposed replacement should then be forwarded to Fr. Provincial. He expressed his opposition to any hasty cancelling of a fund-raising plan since this would make the future more hazardous. No precipitative action of any kind should prejudice the final destinies of Xavier.

Fr. Provincial visited Xavier during December and Fr. Devlin visited it once. Concerning his visit, Fr. Provincial wrote on December 16th that he appreciated Fr. Vigneau's anxiety at province inactivity to date on secondary school matters. He indicated, nevertheless, that no resignation could be effective prior to June, 1970, and even an acceptance then was contingent

on later decisions. secondary school matters would be one of the special issues at the coming congress. Fr. Provincial himself would have the matter brought up so that conclusions could be

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reached in a matter of months. Any further inaction was out of the question. He ended by recommending a vacation to Fr. Vigneau.

In a memorandum of December 21, Fr. Devlin recounted his visit to Fr. Vigneau who was looking forward to study and contacts in the Boston area and performing some secondary school work in the province. Fr. Vigneau denied all allegations of trying to close Xavier. He had informed one lay teacher of his resignation and would inform others if no satisfactory action were taken at the coming congress. He stressed that it might well be a preference policy for Jesuits to work in other peoples' institutions rather than in their own. He had a low opinion of current province high school teachers. There were too many psychologically sick, insecure, negative and angry ones. He urged psychological interviews for all Jesuit faculties as well as some due process devices to hear complaints of Jesuits who might be removed by principals from the classroom.

Fr. Vigneau made one more preparation in advance of the congress. He dated a three-page document on December 31, 1969, for immediate delivery to Fr. Provincial. He wished the congress to know what had happened at Xavier since his report in February, 1969, on the matter of low registration which had improved to an extent in April of that year. Presently, some at Xavier were doubting the apostolic value of that school and of other schools as well. For some, this view was the decisive factor for their planned departure from Xavier. The raise in tuition to \$900.00 had kept the school solvent for the present, but estimated needs

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XAVIER 318

Higher lay salaries would necessitate a further rise. Of the fourteen Jesuit teachers currently on the staff, six were definitely planning to leave and probably a seventh. The principal of a choice of ministries could possibly help to bring in new recruits, but it could also lead to so few that the school would die on the vine. It was crucial for all to know that the current applications and its consequent registration were extraordinarily low. There was also an opportunity to sell the property, but a prompt decision on the continuance or not of the

school was needed to take advantage of any offer to sell. A developmental drive for funds he called a chimera. The school, too, had been disadvantageously located and begun at an inappropriate time. His proposal was to close the school as soon as possible and, by all means, not to accept a new class for September, 1970. These opinions were his own although others shared them. A failure of the congress to decide definitely on Xavier would be cruel -- worse than a crime, a blunder as it were.

With this document the initial phase of withdrawal of Jesuit presence at Xavier comes to an end. Since this term on withdrawal of Jesuit presence will frequently be used as a middle term and frequently be misunderstood or ignored rather than denied, it is advantageous to explain its technical sense found in germ in the congress resolution and elaborated upon as one concrete issue is regularly brought into play as to its amplitude.

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#### XAVIFR 319

The New England Province, after an agreed on date (June, 1970, or at latest, June, 1971) will no longer assign Jesuits to administer and instruct at Xavier or to serve as its legal trustees. If some other group should take over the trusteeship of the school, Jesuits who volunteer to work at Xavier may, after dialogue with Fr. Provincial, be authorized to teach there but none will be assigned there as a result of any contract with any new (non-Jesuit) trustees. This definitive and unwavering position was either not understood or was protested as will be seen from the numerous efforts to have unnamed volunteers guaranteed the title to teach at Xavier even with the ultimate power of trusteeship vested in a Jesuit group. It is the making of this decision and the efforts both to explain it and to illustrate its limited scope to which the next chapter is devoted •

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#### Chapter XVIII

I: I 'JHDRAt-a"-:G JESCI' PFFSENCE -- ITS ANtJOIJ~ICEf~ENT ( 1970)

At the Province Congress, it was Fr. Provincial who took the initiative in expounding in confidence the situation at Xavier. According to the minutes, he asked whether the congress had a better alternative to Xavier's closing at that time. In a memorandum prepared as a basis for this talk can be found a fuller exposition of his views.

The recruiting of the students had been difficult especially in the early winter of 1968-69 although this situation had been somewhat ameliorated by the spring of 1969. He recalled the subsequent divisions of authority at Xavier, the recent realizations expressed by the province's principals of secondary schools on over-expansion due to declining membership in the Society, the recent resignation of Fr. Vigneau accepted by Xavier's trustees but not yet by himself. He set forth the urgency for an immediate answer.

Moreover, in view of the province's criteria on the promotion of justice and reform of the church, it was questioned whether Xavier's catering to the upper class was really the best use of apostolic talents. Finances for the moment were satisfactory but, with the projected rising scale in salaries, tuition then at \$900.00 must be further raised. Six to eight Jesuits planned to leave Xavier on reasons of "spiritual, personal, psychological and apostolic nature." Prospects for new students were very low. There were, in addition, possible

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XI\VI E:R 321

prospective purchasers for the property. Decision must be made quickly to determine whether in this very month new candidates for September should be accepted. He wished to make clear he was not asking a ratification of his decision but for a viable alternative from this session of the congress to a move to "disassociate ourselves from the school." This formulation "to disassociate ourselves from the school" is sharper than a "closing Xavier down" as his thought was reported in the minutes. A discussion was carried on both in the afternoon and evening sessions of Friday, January 2, 1970. Much time was spent on the exact meaning of secondary school education which, as an undefined term, was generally favored. A fair number of the Xavier staff, either delegates or observers, presented their views with most of them urging a discontinuation of the school. It was fine, they said, in many ways but not the current appropriate outlet for apostolic zeal •

After some time, Fr. Robert P. White moved that the congress "recommend to the Provincial to withdraw Jesuit support for Xavier in the future." This concretized the more general provincial statement of the minutes, that is, "Xavier's closing down," and was in clearer accord with the memorandum formula to "disassociate ourselves from the school." This motion of Fr. White's was seconded.

There was a brief added discussion. Fr. John c. Ford requested a written ballot. The chairman (Fr. Joseph D. Devlin) agreed on such a written ballot. The voting was forty-eight for, and two against the White resolution. Seventeen abstained •

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#### XAVIFR 322

Immediately after this vote a motion was introduced to set up a commission to gather all pertinent data on the other five secondary schools. It was amended to say that the composition of this commission would not be specifically voted by the congress. After one question was raised on the composition of the commission, the proposal as amended was passed. Another motion was also passed for a full history of Xavier so that salutary lessons might be drawn.

On January 16, 1970, prior to the publication of the minutes the executive committee of the congress issued, as part of its preliminary report on all aspects of the congress, the following comments on the Xavier role in the total secondary school discussions. There are some underscorings here. The first is in the text, the second is mine.

Secondary Education. This discussion was obviously one of the most urgent sessions of the congress: focused, as it were, upon the decision about Xavier although the decision had been looming during the last year, the time for decision came to a focus only at the congress. Fr. Provincial asked for the floor and announced to the congress that, unless they could come up with a feasible alternative, there seemed to be no other option than to withdraw Jesuits~  
direction ~ staffing of Xavier.

Extensive discussion took place in which almost one half of the Xavier faculty spoke in favor of the decision. As in past congresses, a number of Xavier people were present as observers at the congresses.

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#### X.AVIFR 323

The major thrust of their decisions both individual and collective emphasized their perception of greater responsibility to the needs of future service even when this meant the most difficult decision.

At the end of this discussion, despite the fact that some felt they needed further information, the final vote to endorse the Provincial decision was yes, forty-eight [seventy-two

percent]; no, two; abstained seventeen.

Hence, the congress by a seventy-two percent majority voted its inability to offer a viable alternative "to recommend to the Provincial to withdraw Jesuit support for Xavier in the future" (the words of the white resolution) or, in the words of the report "to endorse the Provincial decision" ("to withdraw Jesuits from the direction and staffing of Xavier"). This action came quickly to be formulated in the technical expression of withdrawing Jesuit presence from Xavier. This expression excluded any continued, even though limited management of Xavier by any contractual guarantee of any set number of Jesuits who might labor there under other people's management. If Jesuits were to be there, it would be by personal arrangement in discernment with Fr. Provincial, as men then often worked at state colleges or elsewhere. Such arrangements were in keeping with the freedom of choice in ministry as passed in the second session of the 1969 Province Congress and officially approved.

Rumors spreading in the town of Concord on the sale of the Xavier properties spurred rapid action. On January 4th, Fr. Provincial planned an appointment with Cardinal Cushing to

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XAVIER 324

explain the situation. The appointment for Fr. Provincial, Fr. Vigneau and Fr. Francis Miller, the Province Treasurer, was at 10:00 A.M. on January 6th, the very day the president of the nearby Emerson Hospital wrote of his interest in the Xavier property. In the meeting with the cardinal, the circumstances were explained, possible ways of dividing profit or losses were presented and the cardinal accepted the inevitability of the decision to withdraw.

A five-page letter was addressed to Fr. General on January 8, 1970. Much was detailed that has already been seen in this narrative. It recounted the visit to the cardinal and his acceptance of the proposal to withdraw. It alluded to the fact that Xavier was serving a middle or upper middle class student body in days of increasing awareness of the poor and the underprivileged. Hence, Fr. Provincial could not turn aside requests for change in status in keeping with the personal and health needs of men at Xavier in order to save a school barely able to survive. He appeared sanguine about a sale of property to Emerson Hospital or to the Concord-Carlyle regional school district. Since there could be (although it seemed far-fetched) some religious or private group ready to continue with the

school, no sale would be consummated until this possibility had been explored. The plans on placing the students elsewhere were explained. A brief timetable on plans concerning public announcements and legal and financial plans were also included.

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X~VIEF 325

Plans for assimilating the Xavier student body were quickly arranged. In the event that even the Class of 1971 would not be kept at Xavier, both Boston College High School and Cranwell School agreed to accept any who requested a place. Since the Classes of 1972 and 1973 would not be kept at Xavier, these same two schools agreed to accept the current sophomores on application and to give special attention to applicants from the freshman class. Fr. J. c. O'Brien, the Principal of Boston College High School, and a former Xavier teacher, proposed that, in return for the generosity of Boston College High School in accepting transfers, it receive the library, audio-visual and scientific equipment plus a good choice at several excellent teachers with one of them placed at the top of this list of desirables.

On January 9th, a brief report was made available to the Boston press on the withdrawing of Jesuit presence from Xavier. The announcement was brief:

The Jesuits at Xavier school, Concord, through the headmaster, Rev. John R. Vianeau, S. J. announced that they are withdrawing from the school. Half of the Jesuit teachers will leave in June 1970 and the remainder will depart in June 1971. The reasons for this definitive decision and the alternatives which might be considered by interested parents and others will be explained at a public meeting to be held in the school auditorium on Tuesday, January 30 at 8:00 p.m. Representatives of the mass media will be present at this meeting.

The century old Jesuit presence at Boston College High School will be strengthened by the decision of the Jesuits at Xavier, and the administration at Boston College High School has made generous offers that will facilitate the transfer of many Xavier students. The details of this arrangement will be explained at the public meeting •

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XAVIER 326

On this same January 9th, the assembled students were informed. At this meeting, it was announced that Fr. Raymond J. Callahan was continuing as headmaster until further notice.

Fr. Vigneau would now be only the President of the Xavier Corporation. The same day, signed while Fr. Callahan was director of admissions, a copy of the press release was given to each student at the school assembly for the benefit of parents. Prior to these releases and announcements on January 9th, the faculty had been informed of these matters by Fr. Vigneau. Its members were asked not to pass any comments prior to the public meeting and to assist the students to keep a sense of Christian perspective.

The much heralded and awaited public assembly took place as scheduled. Fr. Vigneau assumed the brunt of the announcement in a nine-page statement. For the withdrawal, he cited the lesser numbers of available Jesuits and the very low number of new applicants. Several seasoned teachers, for spiritual reasons, were departing the staff to serve "even greater needs." For these departures there were no obviously trained Jesuit replacements. Only one of the lay staff would consider continuing in these new circumstances. In a short time even a tuition charge of \$900.00 would be too low to maintain the school's excellence. The steering committee which had worked on finances was thanked but their efforts were no longer considered germane.

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• XAVIER 327

• In the first place he stressed what earlier has been intimated at Xavier, Jesuits were not fulfilling service for the greater glory of God to which they were committed as an ideal. For . . .

• Jesuit commitment involved risk, flexibility and, while it promised itself nothing, demanded all from self. Xavier school did not make such service possible •

• Matters of a pragmatic character were also expounded.

There was a willingness to cooperate with any group that might take over the school but not to arrange for Jesuits to remain •

• The current junior class of 1971 could graduate from Xavier provided enough enroll for the following year. They might transfer if they wished to Poston College High School or Cranwell

• School or attempt early entrance into college. Those in second year, who would not be continued at Xavier, could be accepted by one or other of the same two Jesuit schools. Those in first year

• could apply for acceptance by these two schools and be given

every possible consideration. No new class of 1974 would enter in September, 1970. Xavier alumni will be affiliated with Boston • College High School's alumni.

Fr. Vigneau concluded this address with pride in a heritage that, while creating first-class institutions, could be • flexible enough to move on when God's greater glory beckoned.

Newsweek, in its February 2, 1970, issue, carried an extended article on the problems of maintaining Catholic schools •

• The article had a paragraph on the Jesuit withdrawal from Xavier.

When asked, according to this article, to explain the gnawing doubt about the lesser value of work in Xavier, Fr. Vigneau was

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reported as saying, "I want to try something new and I think I would like to work among the blacks in Boston." This remark, continued Newsweek, brought applause from many students and silence from parents. There are in the Xavier files several letters applauding Fr. Vigneau's credo.

Opposition to the Jesuit withdrawal was at a high pitch ~ for the next few months. In the files of Xavier are eighty-five telegrams and twenty-nine letters sent during January. By some Emily Post system of etiquette, the letter writers received a gracious form letter, but no response appears to have been forwarded to the senders of telegrams. Three additional letters which came later were separately and personally acknowledged. The letter sent out at the end of January in reply to pleas for some form of continuation at Xavier was the following:

Thank you for your letter concerning the recent announcement that the Jesuit Fathers [sic] are withdrawing from Xavier School, Concord, Massachusetts.

As you are aware this was not an easy decision to make. I did so only after consideration of all the factors involved and I regret any inconvenience that this decision has caused you. It is, however, irreversible. I am sorry that I could not answer your letter personally but the large amount of correspondence received on this issue precluded any such arrangement.

With best wishes and a promise of prayers for you and your intentions, I am

Sincerely yours,

William G. Guindon, S.J.

Provincial

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XI\VIFR 329

That, at the public meeting, it became known that some of Xavier's Jesuits were ready to remain and perhaps be joined by others from other sources led to one important warning as well as to proposals on continuation of some Jesuit efforts to save the school. Mrs. L. S. to a warning, Mr. Ralph O. West, Director of the Evaluation Commission on Independent Secondary Schools of the New England Association, recalled that since Xavier had been accredited as a Jesuit school with a sizable Jesuit staff, any marked change in that personnel would affect seriously the accredited standing of the school •

As to a way of continuing Xavier with Jesuit assistance, plans such as the Shreveport or Austin Prep plan came into prominence. These are set forth in detail later in this narrative. These possibilities became the chief hopes of a group of parents under the leadership of George A. Coleman, Dr. Harry Ernst and Dr. Richard Stanton •

Reactions of New England Jesuits to the decision as presented to Fr. Provincial were varied. Some expressed the view that they regretted the manner in which the withdrawal had been made, but they took no further action. One who wrote was informed that the Xavier experiment was really just a boat drill: more than a boat drill could be expected elsewhere.

Other views expressed strong doubts on a variety of issues. The congress was not given adequate time to make so drastic a move. There was some doubt whether Xavier's financial situation was as weak as alleged, and whether the enrollment was as hopeless as pictured. Put the greatest stress was laid on the

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presence of enough and qualified volunteers to join that portion of the Xavier staff who were ready to remain.

Time and again, and from a variety of sources, this matter of volunteers arose. At no time was a list of these people with their qualifications presented to Fr. Provincial. One letter in the files written by an official of another Jesuit school than Xavier did list some seven people. Three of these were Jesuits who as priests had had experience in secondary school work, three had their priestly experience in colleges, and one had experience in both. Of these seven, some were of college retirement age; a few were actively teaching in Jesuit secondary schools.

Other points were also urged as grounds for reconsideration. Even the congress had placed great emphasis on the value of Jesuit secondary education; yet it was here that contraction was made. Comparisons were made with the continued support of three colleges where stress on Jesuit values was not always too evident. It seemed to objectors that, if lack of manpower was a decisive factor in withdrawing Jesuit presence from Xavier, it should be the colleges rather than the secondary schools that should be affected.

Personalities, too, at times obtruded into the objections raised. Fr. Vigneau was charged with too single-handedly able to effect the closing of Xavier. In view of the freer hand given to younger Jesuits in life style, it was argued that older men willing to continue Xavier might have the use of the Xavier faculty residence while working in the school

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XJ\VI ER 331

as volunteers.

To these objections a settled answer was given. The decision favored by the clear majority of the congress and ratified by the provincial was to stand. There was a financial and enrollment problem at Xavier. As to any volunteers, they would have to work with some group, whatever it might be, that might assume the fullest legal, financial and academic responsibility for Xavier. Jesuits, so inclined, could volunteer to teach there under these outside auspices and, after dialogue with Fr. Provincial, have their requests seriously considered under the principle of the freedom of choice of ministries.

Moreover, it was emphasized that any new setup was in no circumstances to include any Jesuit trustees even when others assumed financial responsibilities. Nor was any arrangement to be judged compatible with withdrawal of Jesuit presence which would require any guaranteed number of Jesuits as could be a feature in some proposals. Since no group, as will be seen, ever assumed responsibility for the continuation of Xavier, the topic of volunteers and their sanctioning never came to a test •

Even while these objections were being raised by Society members, a new reaction on January 17, 1970, came from Cardinal Cushing. This was occasioned by newspaper accounts and some public pleas which had reached him. In a letter to Fr. Provincial, he noted the possibility of volunteers and seemed worried by public dismay and disenchantment along with consequent ill effects on other aspects of Catholic education. He recalled

the past sacrifices made for education, especially by Jesuits •

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#### XAVIER 332

He discerned apostolic value to the archdiocese in Xavier and indicated how the school had enhanced, and could continue to enhance, adult education. In view of these desirable effects, and to stem advancing secularism, he believed the preservation of secondary school education necessary.

Because of his necessary absence from his office,

Fr. Provincial could not respond until January 27th to this letter concerning the decision "to relinquish responsibility for staffing and directing Xavier High School." As to the volunteers, they were presumably retired men between sixty-five and seventy years of age. Their names had not been disclosed to him. Hence, there can be no decision on their availability. Appreciating the value of secondary education, the province was willing to turn the management and staffing over to some other group rather than to close the school. Adult education was realized as a valuable contribution, and one of those priests who was withdrawing from Xavier planned to prepare himself for full time at it. The sad fact about Xavier was the lack of available and qualified teachers, and of qualified students, only twenty-five of whom had appeared ready to enter a class in September, 1970, where 200 could be enrolled. This response is the letter which the Coleman Report was to characterize as abrupt. It was undoubtedly to the point, not on closing Xavier, but on withdrawing Jesuit presence. It was hardly disrespectful, as the term "abrupt" might imply. The narrative now turns to a fathers' group interested in, and even militant for, some retention of Xavier, and then to the final decision sanctioned by the General to withdraw Jesuit

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#### XAVIER 333

presence from Xavier •

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#### Chapter XIX

#### PARENT GROUP REACTION TO JESUIT WITHDRAWAL AND FINAL DECISION (1970)

The narrative now turns to the efforts of George

A. Coleman and Harry R. Ernst as representatives of a parents' group to propose a plan for the retention of Jesuits at Xavier.

A letter from Mr. Ernst came to Fr. Provincial William G.

Guindon, both by mail and by hand, and set forth the proposals.

The parents incorporated would not take trusteeship, but would,

by lease, under a new group of Jesuit at Xavier trustees, assume authority for legal and financial matters. Academic responsibility would rest with the Jesuit trustees.

As precedents, there were cited the Shreveport Plan at St. John's, Shreveport, Louisiana, and the Austin Prep Arrangement, and these concluded with the Philadelphia and Grosse Pointe Academies of the Religious of the Sacred Heart. Under those arrangements, enrollments had increased and Christian enterprises flourished. The letter incorporating these thoughts eventuated in a telephone conversation on Sunday, January 25, 1970, in which an opportunity for fuller discussion was requested by Fr. Ernst. A briefer resume of this letter was forwarded to Cardinal Cushing, with whom a discussion was also requested. On January 27th, in acknowledgement of the telephone call to him, Fr. Provincial sent a letter to Fr. Ernst detailing the substance of this conversation. There had been discussion of Fr. John R. Vigneau's statement that some group might propose plans for the continuation of Xavier as a Catholic institution,

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#### XAVIER 335

and that such proposals would be gladly received. So Fr. Provincial reiterated the manner in which Jesuit volunteers could be authorized to work there, not under Jesuit trustees, but under the trusteeship of such a new group •

Also, on January 27th a three-page proposal was sent to Fr. Vigneau, along with a copy to Fr. Provincial. This detailed the plan which was submitted in the names of Dr. Harry Ernst, George A. Coleman, and Dr. Richard Stanton, but signed by Fr. Coleman on behalf of the committee. The letter narrated that a group of fifteen fathers on January 18th had voted to seek an interview with Fr. Provincial to discuss the feasibility and conditions of a Shreveport or Austin Prep Plan to save Xavier. After some statements on the January 25th telephone call, the accuracy of which on some smaller points was open to question by Fr. Provincial, a definite, if incomplete, proposal was made. The parents' group would first incorporate in order to negotiate. The Jesuits would contract in writing to supply a minimum of fifteen volunteers, with one to serve as principal. Added Jesuits would be appreciated. Then the fifteen Jesuits would be constituted the trustees of Xavier. They would lease the property to the parents' corporation for one dollar (\$1.00) a year. In the event that the cardinal took over the property, the lease would be arranged with him, but the contract for fifteen

Jesuits would remain. All legal and financial details of the school would be the responsibility of the lay corporation, and they would protect and enhance the property •

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#### XAVIER 336

Plans on curriculum, to be approved by the lay corporation and the cardinal, would be presented by some two Jesuit priests as chairmen in the eyes of the fathers' group of the Jesuit trustee group of fifteen volunteers. All these volunteers would be paid by the lay corporation. The initial contract would be for five years, subject to mutual cancellation on six months' notice, but such that no class of students, once accepted, would fail to complete its full four years of instruction. In this way flexibility would be permitted and inequity avoided.

Since this was a statement of intent, fuller details had yet to be arranged. Another month was needed by the group to learn more details on the Shreveport and Austin plans. They wished, however, that pending that time no disposition be made of the property. A brief timetable was appended. If the plan was judged feasible by February 1st -- then only a few days away --, there should be a joint announcement by the cardinal and the provincial that a plan was being worked out. By February 10th, the tentatively established new boards would go over details with Shreveport and Austin plans as models. By March 1, there should be a definite announcement on the future of Xavier. Copies of this letter to Fr. Vigneau went not only to Fr. Provincial, but also to Cardinal Cushing and one proposed Jesuit trustee.

Since Mr. Coleman personally delivered to Fr. Provincial his copy of the letter, they conferred for a time on its substance. After the session, Fr. Provincial prepared at once a memorandum on the conversation, and on the same day •

#### XAVIER 337

composed a response for Mr. Coleman. He stressed his opposition to having Jesuits comprise the beard of trustees since withdrawal from this task was an integral part of the withdrawal of Jesuit presence from Xavier. As for volunteers, he was in the dark about any names except two who were presumably volunteers. Even with the possibility of a turning over of the property to Cardinal Cushing for school use, there was need of a real estate appraisal, and time for this was still required. Hence, February 1st was an impossible date if and since appraisal must precede

negotiations. As to volunteers, there would be no contractual agreement on numbers, but the methodology for their being sanctioned as volunteers to the proposed lay management was detailed. These points of the memorandum were incorporated into a letter.

The letter referred to some factual matters which, while annoying, did not attest the substance either of the plan or its rejection. It might also be observed that, up to this point, nothing was said about Jesuit contributions from their salaries to the school. In the Shreveport contract, according to a telephone conversation of Fr. James C. Carter, S.J., Director of Education for the New Orleans Province to Fr. Joseph D. Devlin, on February 2, 1970, the Shreveport Jesuits were obliged to contribute eighty percent of their salaries back to the school corporation.

Fr. General was the next recipient of pleas and complaint. Prior to his receiving the extended plea for a continuation of Xavier, which was dated February 8, 1970, he had

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XAVIER 338 •

written to Fr. Provincial on February 2nd. In view of the public statement of January 13th, there seemed little on which to comment concerning Fr. Provincial's letter to him of January 8th.

He trusted that the matter had been fully discussed in advance with the Xavier community since some letters from its members had objected to certain assertions made in the public statement. He reminded the provincial that there would soon be need for a formal petition to suppress Xavier as a religious house undoubtedly erected canonically.

The Coleman documentation which went nominally to Fr. General was also distributed to Cardinal Cushing and to all who had been official participants in the January Province Congress. It consisted of a two and one-third page letter signed by the three spokesmen for the fathers' group, plus a series of accompanying documents and an index page.

In first place, among accompanying documents, was the recent correspondence between Cardinal Cushing and

Fr. Provincial, a rather unusual use of private correspondence.

It was later learned that the Cardinal had supplied this

private correspondence. Another important and controversial enclosure was A Considered Reaction to Speech of Vigneau Announcing

the Public Abandonment of Xavier School on January 13, 1970. Next appeared a series of facts and events occurring

during the past year, designed to show that the situation was not as clear-cut as alleged. Next came accounts of the Shreveport • and Austin plans as submitted by officials in those schools. The Wiener Survey was included to shew the strength of the school.

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#### X.I\ VI FR 339

The historic letter of the headmaster en dated May 29, 1969, was added. Dangers to students were indicated through newspaper clippings concerning a lecture at Xavier by an ex-priest, Arthur Melville. There was data from the Steering Committee, set up to establish a better flow of thought on sensitive matters between school and parents. To conclude the data there appeared Fr. Vigneau's speech of January 13, 1970 •

The letter proper stressed the excellent grades given to Xavier until complaints arose about the demolition of the original chapel and the substitution of a liturgy room with a different type of ornamentation and without reservation of the Blessed Sacrament. The charge was made that it was the headmaster who had determined to close the school without prior consultation with relevant groups such as the trustees, advisory lay board, faculty committee, parents, students, alumni. This unilateral decision was disclosed to Fr. Provincial who was allegedly able to use the "pro forma" backing of the congress to accomplish the purpose. Hence, the deed, according to this letter, was really accomplished by two men •

Reasons given on January 13 were alleged to be misstatement, or open to other interpretations. The lack of students was denied since alumni and parental assistance in recruitment had not been used. Staff was hardly lacking since half the present staff was remaining and there were twelve new volunteers. These latter, plus two of the current staff, were under sixty years of age and were ready to commit themselves for five years. If lay teachers were leaving, it was because they

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#### XAVIER 340

It has been inferred that the school was closing. Efforts of parents in raising funds had been thwarted in November, 1969. An earlier statement of Fr. Vigneau on the value of teaching at Xavier was contrasted with his present view. There was the remark that if there was a place where the value could be doubted, it was in the completely secularized Jesuit colleges which were being kept open. The decision was particularly unjust toward these in the two lower years.

The proposal on the Shreveport system, offered on January 27th, was rejected by Fr. Vigneau as lacking sufficient detail and by Fr. Provincial's postponing any decision until March, when a financial report would be available. Such a delay made the proposals being considered too late.

pleas had been turned down abruptly

Cardinal Cushing's

as the enclosed

correspondence would show. The two plans submitted (evidently referring to the Shreveport and Austin plans) were precedents for the retention of Christian education in an age when colleges were becoming increasingly secularized. The sponsors guaranteed, in conclusion, that the project would be forwarded, not in the public media, but in the family of the church.

The Considered Reaction required close attention since views on its authorship and sponsorship were to arise. It was, its content declared, the work of parents who have the responsibility, even after Vatican II, to seek out a Catholic education for their children. They denied Xavier's insurmountable financial difficulty since they had not been sufficiently asked to aid it. There was also, for some future

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years, enough Jesuit volunteers to rescue Xavier without less to other institutions. It went as far as to assert that, over a span of years prior to 1970, there had been volunteers to salvage Xavier. This was a very intriguing statement for a province prefect who had been kept in the dark about this group clamoring in vain to be assigned to Xavier. Parents, too, were never given the opportunity to explore possibilities of increasing next year's first year enrollment, or to study reasons, perhaps (perjoratively?) revealing and instructive, as to why there was a notable drop in applications •

Each space was allotted to Fr. Vigneau who equated the will of some Jesuits at Xavier, not only with the will of all at Xavier, but with the will of the entire province. He seemed oddly disposed against Xavier clientele, though not equally so against that of other Jesuit schools. Nor should a reason, even based on personal apostolic grounds, override the rights and expectations of parents. There was much talk of readiness to cooperate with groups ready to conduct Xavier. The cooperation had been cold and remote, more a radical unchristianity than the radical Christianity heralded.

This first portion of the Coleman report was followed by another section referred to as the Xavier Episode. It really was a repetition, perhaps by a different hand, of what had already been said, but worded in somewhat more emotional terms. In failing to consult the laity on the planned withdrawal, repudiated clericalism was evident. Since there was no exact yardstick to measure the value of work among blacks, the poor and

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XI>VIFR 342

in the qhe t tc, as against work "it Xavier, people were asked to accept this evaluation against Xavier en a say-sc.

As for a plan for a lay board as trustees to contract for volunteers, the deer was slammed in its face. Refusal to meet such plans was not cooperation, but dictation. Nor could doubts be cast on volunteers since most were under sixty, and the fact that they would be obtained from other Jesuit high schools could not be called pirating.

Nor was time enough allotted for consideration. Hence, they must term the negotiations as secretive, chilling, impersonal, Olympian and triumphant. If the greater glory of God was to be used as a measuring rod, it should rather apply against the Jesuit colleges which left so much to be desired. The Jesuit stewardship of Xavier school, built by archdiocesan funds and handed over completely to the Society, was strangely irresponsible. Yet this section ends irenically in that it asserted that the struggle to retain Xavier will be carried on, not in the media but within the church family.

The page on facts and events as well as the earlier section on the financial, educational and apostolic excellence of Xavier were designed to offset the poorer picture of these matters alleged to favor withdrawal. A note of concern entered as material was introduced on the more Marxist presentation to the Xavier students by an ex-priest. The early appreciation of the Steering Committee was contrasted with its demise for "practical reasons" in November, 1969. The complaints on the new chapel appeared to have stymied the Communications Committee.

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The Shreveport Plan was described from data supplied on January 20th to George Coleman by Rev. Roy Schilling, S.J., Principal of St. John's at Shreveport. That school then enrolled 300 pupils, charged tuition of \$456.00, had a faculty of nine Jesuits and thirteen lay people, plus a full-time business

manager. When it had been determined that the school might close, this plan was approved experimentally for a five-year period subject to termination on notice given six months prior to the opening of the next school year. The contract could be continued for additional years •

Moreover, there were two distinct corporations -- the community and the school. The community was incorporated under the old charter as St. John's College of Shreveport. The new corporation "The Jesuit High School of Shreveport" had not been set up by February 5, 1970. This school corporation was to be essentially lay, but with a small non-controlling number of Jesuits. All control of the school, except finance, was vested in the Jesuit community corporation. The school Jesuits worked under contract to the school corporation. Their salaries were not above the level of poverty and, from the surplus of these salaries, money was to go to the school as a contribution. The lay corporation guaranteed the upkeep of the property. As to funds previously held in the bank by the one corporation (except the account of the Jesuit salaries) but including scholarships, these were made over to the lay corporation. If the venture were dissolved, unspent funds were to be returned to the Jesuit community. There was no reference to the data learned on XA.VI.F.R 344

February 2nd that it was eighty percent of current Jesuit salaries which were being contributed to the school.

The Austin Prep Plan was described in material supplied by Robert Jenkins, a trustee of the prep. When, in the spring of 1969, the Augustinian Provincial had publicly announced that the school must close due to lack of religious teachers and financial problems, a four-hour discussion had led to a reprieve for the school provided a suitable plan was submitted to provincial headquarters in Villanova, Pennsylvania. Nineteen men worked on a plan and five flew to Villanova for a two-hour conference. Agreeing that he had made a mistake, the provincial proposed an increase in trustees, up to eleven, to include five priests at Austin, five lay men, and himself as board chairman. At the time of the Jenkins Report the five priests taught only theology but exercised such administrative functions as discipline, hiring and transporting. Tuition had been increased from \$450.00 to \$650.00 and there were twenty lay teachers. The 1969-70 registration was 605. There was the usual hired help. An executive committee of five laymen and two Augustinians operated the school and met regularly. Since the laymen were

pleased with the current arrangements, they were willing to discuss them with those interested in a similar plan for Xavier. The final item of this sheaf of documents was a copy of Fr. Vigneau's January 13th address. The text was underscored at key points and at times punctuated with question marks to indicate what were considered overly personal and questionable remarks. One could sense the conclusions to be drawn from these

- XAVIER 345

- errand-tions by referring to the content of the official letter and the Considered Reaction.

As early as February 14th, an answer to these

- communications came by telegram from Fr. General to Fr. Provincial wherein he requested that the advisability of the Shreveport Plan at Xavier be discussed. Only on February 16th
- did Fr. James C. Carter forward to Fr. Devlin his previously promised views on the Shreveport Plan. He indicated that the question remained open of whether or not St. John's, Shreveport,
- was a truly Jesuit and Christian school. A week later Fr. John R. Walsh, Rector of the School, sent Fr. Devlin copies of pertinent legal documents. Annual Jesuit salaries for 1969-70
- were projected at \$58,764.00, and the projected Jesuit contribution to the School at \$16,764.00. It did appear that the nine Jesuits on the staff, out of a faculty of twenty-one, would
- be able to increase the contribution to \$20,000.00 -- not eighty percent of their salaries as earlier indicated. Fr. Walsh had no

- adverse comment.

- After receiving the Coleman data, Fr. Provincial conferred with individual consultants and wrote a series of letters on February 12th and 14th. By Telex to Fr. General he
- requested that no substantive response be given to the Coleman group until he had an opportunity to confer in Rome with Fr. General on March 5th. At that time, he would be in Rome on a
- return from a visit to New England Jesuits in the Middle East

- XAVIER 346

On the same day, in acknowledging to Fr. Coleman his reception of the material, he wished firmly to seek an explanation of the inclusion of his correspondence with Cardinal Cushing in response to a letter from the cardinal. He requested no further distribution of this material.

Fr. Provincial also wrote to Cardinal Cushing that

Fr. General, in an upcoming conference in Rome, would be interested in how correspondence between the two of them had come to the public domain. Although distressed by this situation, he would appreciate a conference prior to his departure on February 20th. It is interesting to note that papers on February 15th carried a formal statement from Cardinal Cushing on the closing of Catholic schools due to financial drains on parishes and lack of religious, who were preferring other forms of social over school activity. The cardinal also observed that some who might have become religious were opting directly as lay people for social service.

On February 14th, Fr. Provincial sent a four and one-half page letter to Fr. General, with copies forwarded to Cardinal Cushing, Mr. Coleman and one Jesuit proponent for continuing Jesuit presence. He explained how it was that he would be in Rome in early March and informed Fr. General of the names of the other recipients of this letter. He referred to the inclusion in the Coleman Report of private correspondence between the cardinal and himself and his request that the source of its being divulged be made known. He then made the charge that, if not the cardinal's letter of January 17, at least the Considered

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Reaction, supposedly written by a parent, was written by a new England Province Jesuit. Any such usurpation of externs to overturn decisions of superiors was a serious matter.

He then discussed the theoretical possibilities on Xavier. To continue as before was if possible. A Shreveport arrangement requiring some definite number of Jesuits, could not be supplied. Any retaining of Jesuits as trustees was against the withdrawal of Jesuit presence from management as much required as withdrawal from administration and teaching. Some possibilities of handing over the school to others, or its sale, were outlined.

It could be doubted that the cardinal would continue a school. He could be relieved of a burden if Xavier School were sold in his behalf. The cardinal, on the return of the school, might dispense of it himself, with the Society receiving a pro share in liquidated assets. He reiterated the reasons in manpower shortages and student decreases as grounds for his decision. He did have the good news that enough of the present junior class had made an advance deposit to guarantee the continuation of the school for them during 1970-71.

In addition to this provincial communication, a letter with sixteen pages of documents was forwarded on February 16, 1970, to Fr. General by Fr. Vigneau. Since Fr. General was later to praise this memorial, it is set forth in detail. It was written, according to its opening words, with a heavy heart • Trained as he had been, he found it difficult to defend himself: but the good of the province demanded an explanation of his views

#### XAVIER 348

en Xavier and on the extended course of action leading to the decision concerning it. He regretted that some good men had failed to speak out at opportune moments, but they must now face reality with courage and Christian hope. Even lay people who are saddened at the decision to withdraw were concerned with the public display of disloyalty of some Jesuits. Even the formal protestors represent only fifteen Fathers.

As for the Shreveport Plan, of which Fr. General had requested consideration, Fr. Vigneau offered a series of reasons for opposing it. A commitment asking for fifteen Jesuits at a new Xavier was impossible to make, especially if the whole province manpower needs were kept in mind. The request ignored the current decrease in student applicants and the low quality of those accepted one year ago. The debt of Xavier was ignored or considered non-existent. A less clear statement was made on gratitude due to, and expected by, cardinal Cushing. In the form of control proposed, there was but management under lay control, while legal control remained with the Society. Hence, there was not the most basic withdrawal, he correctly implied, from legal trusteeship.

Moreover, the whole plan was suspect, due to the racist atmosphere of Shreveport -- a point, as has been seen, not touched on in the two long February letters of the Shreveport rector and principal, but which had been indicated in an earlier phone call from the Director of Education of the New Orleans Province of the Society of Jesus. Nor was this consideration a feature in the analogous Austin Prep situation. There was easy

#### XAVIER 349

provision in the Shreveport arrangement to withdraw if untoward social objectives, arising out of racism, were attempted.

Twelve pages followed giving a chronological history of Xavier, from its beginning in 1962, when the School had to subsidize the bus transportation of students. It concentrated on

the period from January, 1966, when it was voted to raise tuition from \$400.00 to \$585.00, and continued through the January, 1970, Province Congress. Fr. Vigneau cited his paper on manpower shortages, written October, 1966, for the Province Sociological Survey, and published in November, 1967 •

As a result of some critical remarks in the accreditation report of 1967 on the need of increases in manpower and salaries, a document had been sent to Rome and acknowledged in April, 1968. He had stated at the Round Hills conference on Social Apostolates in November, 1967, that quality in secondary schools could only be maintained, in view of decreasing manpower and inadequate money, by closing some of them or turning them over to others. That some such action should follow was a conclusion of this conference with sixty-nine Jesuits in attendance, and at which Xavier was mentioned as a logical place at which to begin a cutback.

The increase in tuition to \$900.00 was announced only after consultations, and with reasons, in the hope that any responses would throw light on the apostolic ministry of New England Secondary Schools. Shortly after this letter on increased tuition rates was sent, a meeting of parents resulted in a Christmas appeal for funds. Prior to the first Province XAVIPR 350

Congress, a meeting on Xavier's status was held by trustees and community, and an account forwarded to the General in February 2C, 1969. At the Congress the precarious position of Xavier was brought to attention.

Even in the First Phase of Planning going on after December 8, 1968, some Xavier faculty agreed on withdrawal, while little was said by present proponents of non-withdrawal. In the various plans in the second volume of Phase 1 Planning (a document dealing with renewal by the Jesuits in New England), forty-two favored a withdrawal from Xavier. Only Fairfield Prep had a lower number of recommendations for being discontinued. In view of this opposition to the continuation of Jesuit presence at Xavier, little reaction was evident to maintain it or to fight for its continued life.

To show his long continued view on the need to narrow secondary school apostolates, Fr. Vigneau cited his remarks at the April 27, 1969 session, of the Province Congress, which appeared in the report of the Planning Program. He had told of the honest struggles at Xavier to come to grapple with a death warrant, and expected that the province would supply norms

whereby the Xavier community could judge whether it had truly worthwhile apostolic work. He had urged that the congress satisfy that demand. In reality, the second congress had, in addition to setting up the two criteria for all work, proposed for secondary schools what later seemed to be halfway measures such as continued planning, possible increased collaboration with colleges and separate incorporation. Quite honestly, he was convinced, these solutions only led to, or continued, drift • Following these statements came the actions of the final seven months prior to the January, 1970, Congress. These included the June, 1969, headmaster's report, the first meeting of a steering committee to see into possible raising of funds, a September 20 community meeting on the application of the two criteria and the possibility of staying at Xavier, and the October 20, 1969, meeting of the steering committee where doubts had arisen due to wonderment on continued Jesuit presence at Xavier. On November 6th, he had written to this committee that he could not begin a process to raise \$500,000 in view of the need of the province to study its secondary school commitments. This view he had made known to high school principals and to several of the province staff. Hence, there could be no steering committee meeting until January. At the November 11, 1969, meeting of the province consultors he had vigorously insisted on the over-commitment in secondary schools being on the agenda of the coming congress. Community meetings at Xavier on this subject had been stormy. His resignation as headmaster came on November 18th. An offer to discuss this matter privately was taken up only by one member of the community. The remainder of the narrative was more of a journal of what has been previously seen, and ended with his report of December 31st, submitted to Fr. Provincial urging some ending to Xavier.

Pages thirteen to seventeen of this communication to Fr. General made a series of propositions. There had been concern over expansion as far back as 1962. The province concern, therefore, on over-expansion was five years old. Xavier had been, especially mentioned wherever the question of contraction had been raised. The community at Xavier had been well informed on its financial status. The faculty had known of the problem of increased recruitment efforts, along with poorer results. Even five of those who complain about Xavier's theology courses had declined to teach them. The community has known of the challenges to its continued existence in province meetings but, when they did not agree, remained silent until they then

shewed negative and emotional reactions.

At the end Fr. Vigneau appended refutations of these striving for the continued Jesuit presence at Xavier. First singled out was one advocating a Shreveport plan with the aid of some nine other Jesuits. Another Jesuit who once saw the need of cutting back schools and, specifically Xavier, was soliciting Jesuit teachers for Xavier. Lack of cooperation was denied and datelines for details were then set until ~arch 31st. The original lay board of advisers had believed they were imposed upon, even in the raising of tuition to \$900.00. The newly planned group would arrive only when registration was so low as to spell disaster. Hence, there was the need of early province action.

He ended this section by saying that it was better for him to take the blame himself. These details made clear that Fr. Vigneau had long championed the idea of contraction in the province secondary school apostolates and that his recognition of Xavier as one to go had not begun, as the parents' group in: lica ted, when compla int.s on the modernized prayer chapel were

raised. His narration also showed that there had been, or should have been, questions on the solvency of x~vier, a fact that is seen that \$204,875 of its debt to the province was absorbed by the province. It would have been better had the last pages on personalities not have been written, but they show the bitterness on his part as well as the bitterness he found in his opponents • Dated the same day as Fr. Vi~naau's communication was a letter to Fr. General from Fr. James c. O'Brien, then Principal of Rosten College High School, long a member of the Xavier English department and a recipient of the Coleman material as a member of the Province Congress. He regretted that it was from Xavier that the withdrawal had occurred, since Xavier was clearly and courageously implementing the two criteria on church renewal and the reform of social structures. He noted that such a social policy did not seem to meet the sympathy of the Coleman group • He was not convinced that Jesuits have the competence to make a solid contribution to the ghetto apostolates, and he believed that there were many disadvantaged people in the affluent suburbs. The manner in which the withdrawal was decided and promulgated was not the best. Xavier's closing showed, too, what happened to an overexpanded apostolate when key people are transferring to other works. Despite all this the decision was probably inevitable.

Moreover, with so many leaving Xavier, any



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XAVIFR 355

indicated, supplied widely to all who had been delegates at the Province Congress. He still did not believe that the substantive issue of Xavier's future had been met. He did not understand, or was unprepared to accept, the basic determination made to withdraw Jesuit presence in trusteeship, administration and teaching and, to permit only under the principle of choice of ministries, the sanctioning of Jesuit volunteers for a Xavier under some non-Jesuit trusteeship.

A conference was held at provincial headquarters by Fr. Provincial on February 17th. At it were present three province representatives: Fathers Paul T. Lucey, Francis X. Miller and Joseph D. Devlin; and three Xavier trustees: Fathers John R. Vigneau, Richard Olson and Francis J. Donovan. It had been preceded on February 13th by an inconclusive meeting at the Parker House by some similar group, but at which the presence of some outsiders precluded much more than trivia •

As the basis for the meeting were three pages of comments on the proposal of George Coleman concerning Xavier School written by Fr. Provincial and dated February 13th. A set of jottings set forth the progress of the meetings. Although the appraisal of the property was ready, there were but two copies available temporarily and in confidence. This precaution was taken since appraisal price was not necessarily the asking price. Money owed by Xavier to the province was not to be too great a concern. \$85,000 was a clearly discernible amount, but province taxes due and minor amounts could be waived in gratitude to the cardinal for his numerous benefactions •

XAVIER 356

As to the Shreveport Plan, on which Fr. General had urged consideration, it left the society members as trustees, a notable presence from which the official decision called for disassociation. Fr. Vigneau summarized the position to be maintained by the Xavier trustees that there was no Jesuit



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## XI\ VIER 357

tuition returns, this request was rejected •

At the March 9th meeting the Parents Group of Xavier was joined by a few non-trustee Jesuits. Some others were present as interested parties: Anthony Saltamacchia, Alba Tayler, and John Kinsbury. This last gentleman had approached Fr. Callahan with an enthusiastic but vague notion of an ecumenical school for which he was seeking aid from an Episcopal clergyman. The purpose of the meeting was to hear serious proposals for the continuation of Xavier as a school, and to discuss facts and figures on its educational and financial status. Fr. Donovan set forth the conclusions of the February 17th meeting at provincial headquarters.

The status quo was impossible. A modified Shreveport plan left direction to the Society and expected men directly supplied by the province, both of which were contrary to the announced withdrawal of Jesuit presence. Any decision by the cardinal to continue the school, or to sell, was unknown. When, in the discussion, some fifteen volunteers were mentioned for a Shreveport plan, it was pointed out that, while the parents' group knew these names, Fr. Provincial did not. As an excuse for the silence on the names of these men, it was stated that the volunteers would come forward only when they knew that something definite was to be done. So, in truth, they waited themselves out.

In answer to a question, the legal ownership of Xavier was clarified and the legal steps required for its disposition explained. Whatever funds were received from its sale, it was XAVIER 358

then believed, would have to be expended on other similar education establishments in Massachusetts. No one knew whether the cardinal, if the property was deeded back to him, would continue a school or dispose of the property.

As far as the presentation of some viable plan was concerned for continuing the school, the trustees did not believe they had one. Financial figures showed the poor economic condition of the school. Its appraisal on plant and site was estimated at \$2,700,000 by Mr. Thomas Horan of Meredith and Grew. In a disposition of property, it was believed that the cardinal would receive ninety-five percent of the proceeds, and the Society five percent. The problem of Xavier's low enrollment was reiterated. The principle of attraction, in answer to a



decision as foreseeable and necessary. Fr. Vigneau's cogent reasons against the Shreveport and Austin plans clearly substantiated their rejection. Hence, Fr. General was deeply grateful and consoling •

A third letter of Fr. General went to Mr. Coleman. He and his associates were to be esteemed for their interest.

Despite a commitment to secondary school education, he had, after consultation, approved the decision to withdraw from Xavier: and he also judged the province unable to assume responsibility for an Austin or Shreveport arrangement. If Mr. Coleman were to submit some other plan, that plan should go to the Xavier trustees.

Mr. Coleman took up this final sentence in

Fr. General's letter and wrote again to Fr. Provincial on March 31, 1970. His specific question was whether Fr. Provincial would permit volunteer Jesuits to staff Xavier or not. He knew the volunteers to be ready, willing and competent, but added that it was idle for them to volunteer to Fr. Provincial if they were not assured that the school would be carried on. He then turned his attention to the low estimate on the plant, claiming that instead of a value of \$2,700,000, it was more truly valued at \$4,630,000 •

Mr. Coleman's ER 360  
He claimed that the lower figure, which incidentally had been divulged at the meeting of March 9, 1970, was the sale price as publicly announced on March 9th itself when Xavier went on the market. How could so low a figure be justified? First, for future support from a group of parents, it could well be diminished as a consequence of arbitrary and heartless action.

Concerning this letter, Fr. Provincial wrote a series of jottings. He denied that Xavier, for any price, had been placed on the market on any date. He understood others could cite varying values. He was satisfied with Mr. Horan's appraisal. He could not estimate what were the three plans which Mr. Coleman believed his group had offered. He reiterated in what way he was prepared to sanction volunteers, a way at odds with Mr. Coleman's which had them both as trustees and as guaranteed in number to a corporation that merely leased Xavier from its Jesuit trustees. He concluded that all that had been learned since January 13th had only confirmed the decision to withdraw.

Two different viewpoints had clashed. In the province one, Jesuits would neither be trustees nor administrative nor teaching staff but only volunteers who had Fr. Provincial's





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### XAVIER 363

Prior to this time and in anticipation of sale, lease or return to the cardinal, Xavier and the province had employed the services of Mr. Thomas Hcran of Meredith and Grew to work out a detailed appraisal of the whole property, particularly the land and the school. Xavier, in early January, had employed Mr. John Dolan of Hale and Dorr to advise it on all connected legal matters. For similar advice the province relied on its attorney, Mr. Edward P. Hanify of Ropes and Gray.

Because the hospitalization of cardinal Cushing made the proposed interview impossible, Fr. Provincial wrote at length on the recent history of activities concerning Xavier. He stated the appraised value for property and buildings as \$2,700,000, and listed its basic debts to the province as \$85,000. He then outlined the options open to the Cardinal. If he preferred that some other group run Xavier as a Catholic school, the property would be deeded back for whatever arrangement the cardinal may have approved. If he did not plan any such continuation, the Society would set in motion the necessary steps for selling the school and turning over the proceeds to the Cardinal. If the Cardinal preferred to make the sale himself, the property will be deeded back as a gift. All these actions would be effected through the trustees of Xavier. Since these legal arrangements would be with the Cardinal as the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Boston (R. c. A. B.), references hereafter will use this standard abbreviation •

### XAVIER 364

By April 2nd, Mr. Hor-lln, who had been keeping in touch with Mr. James Dunn, the business manager of the Boston Chancery, learned through Mr. Dunn that the R. c. A. B. preferred the return of the property for him to sell. Since the Rose Hawthorne property in Concord was also on sale, it was thought preferable that one agency should deal with both properties. Once the basic decision was known and the Cardinal showed it in writing on the same day (April 2nd), both lawyers studied the original deed of property and reached the conclusion that there had been an outright deed and not merely a deed of trust.

A meeting of trustees was planned for April 16th.

Since so many arrangements on the school had been dealt with between the cardinal and the provincial's office, it was thought appropriate that Fr. Provincial and Fr. F. X. Miller, the



four-page exposition by Mr. Dolan in the form of a letter addressed to Fr. Vigneau. Mr. Dolan informed those present of the people he had consulted. These included a Mr. Kelleher, Director of the Division of Public Charities in the office of the Attorney General of Massachusetts; the representative of the Exempt Organization Section of the Boston office of the Internal Revenue Service; and Mr. James Dunn. Since the cardinal had expressed himself as favoring the direct return of the property to him as R. c. A. B., Mr. Dolan had learned, despite some initial doubts, that such a conveyance could be affected by a majority vote of the Xavier trustees. They would provide that the President of the Board file, with the advice of Hale and Dore as counsel, a petition in the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts. This petition should explain the reasons for the dissolution of the Xavier corporation, and request the court to authorize dissolution and provide for disbursement of the outstanding assets after payment of liabilities.

Then Mr. Dolan detailed the terms of the conveyance •

In returning the property to the R. c. A. B., Xavier retained the right to use its premises free of charge so that the school  
XAVIER 366

could continue through June 30, 1971. There was also another understanding which was later recorded. By Mr. Dolan's original proposal, the R. c. A. B. agreed to devote all net proceeds from any and all disposition to purposes relating to the operation of Massachusetts' schools and institutions of learning conducted under the auspices of the Roman Catholic Church, or affiliated orders or organizations.

As to other goods, it was proposed that the library of 7,000 volumes, and the school equipment and supplies, go to Easton College High School and Cranwell School. Both of these were Massachusetts charitable organizations, the first so organized on March 29, 1927, and the second on June 23, 1939. How this material would be divided would be settled by Xavier directors after consultation with both schools. Scholarship funds (estimated at \$20,646 in June, 1970) were to go to Boston College High School, and both the principal and the interest to be applied to students coming from the communities that Xavier had served. The awards within such geographical confines would be at the discretion of Boston College High School. The community goods in the Jesuit living quarters were to go to the Society of Jesus of New England. No reference was made to any allocation to Bishop Connolly High School in Fall River,



principal, and not merely the returns, from the scholarship moneys. In this way there would be no residual obligation hanging over it.

The province was also to sign a statement guaranteeing creditors all proper claims. Xavier should inform all principal benefactors just how benefactions received were being allocated. During the interim between the initial presentation of the petition and the final dissolution of the Xavier Corporation, all forms of insurance should be reviewed. In 1971, after all requirements were completed, a certificate of compliance was to be filed with the Court. With these terms and understandings, Mr. Dolan was authorized to proceed. At this time he had hoped XAVIER 368

that his work would be done in three or four weeks, and that initial court action would take only one week.

Between the end of April and mid-July, while the draft petition was being placed in order, there was a slight development when it was learned that Fr. Vigneau had not merely resigned on April 30th as Xavier trustee and chairman of its board but had set action in motion to cease to be a province consultant and to leave the Society and the priesthood.

During this same spring of 1970, a further change in the post of superior at Xavier was being arranged. Fr. Richard Olsen had indicated that he wished to relinquish the office to which he had been appointed the previous November 1st. He desired an opportunity to conclude a master's degree in counseling at Boston College and to reside in one of the nearby province dwellings. His request was granted. Both he and the community were consulted about a new superior for the final year. There was some recommendation for Fr. James L. Greenler on the grounds that he could talk with differing factions at Xavier. Although this view was also denied, Fr. Greenler was appointed Superior on June 17, 1970.

By the end of June, Mr. Dolan had a copy of the decree ready. The Attorney General had proposed that the list of forty-five cities and towns from which Xavier students had come be specifically mentioned in connection with the use of the scholarship funds handed over to Boston College High School. so the places were listed alphabetically from Acton through Woburn.

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there was a cross reference to this in one item of the petition, and this, too, had to be modified. Since this change was of considerable financial advantage to the Boston Archdiocese, the XAVIER 370

original and modified texts are presented. The original text had read:

Any and all proceeds received by the Archbishop from the leasing, sale or other use or disposition of the Premises from and after the date of the Conveyance shall be used or applied only in connection with the maintenance and improvement of the Premises or for purposes relating to the construction, improvement or maintenance and operation of a school or schools in the Archdiocese of Boston, Commonwealth of Massachusetts for the education and religious instruction of boys under the guidance of Roman Catholic priests or other religious orders or organizations of the Roman Catholic Church.

The amended paragraph read:

The parties agree that it is their intent and expectation that any and all net proceeds received by the Archbishop from the lease, sale or other use or disposition of the premise from and after the date of Conveyance shall, to the extent feasible, be applied for maintenance, improvement and operation of a school or schools in the Archdiocese of Boston, Commonwealth of Massachusetts, for the education and religious instruction of boys, under the guidance of Roman Catholic priests or other orders or organizations of the Roman Catholic Church, provided, however, that the expression of intent herein contained shall not be deemed to impose any trust on the Archbishop with respect to any such proceeds, it being understood that the Archbishop may, in his discretion, apply any and all such proceeds for such purposes within his corporate power as may, in his uncontrolled discretion, be deemed desirable by him.

With this important modification in the accompanying and signed agreement, a hearing on the petition was held on Wednesday, August 19, 1970, before Mr. Justice Kirk. After Mr. Dolan's exposition, the interlocutory decree was granted. Mr. George T. Finnegan of Ropes and Gray represented the province lawyer at this court session.



installed on October 7, 1970.

Before this entrance of a new ecclesiastical figure into the final unsettled detail on money for severance pay, some reference must be made to Xavier reaction to and acquiescence in the arrangements. That there would be no doubt on the amplitude of purposes for which the Xavier property could be used from September 30, 1970, to the end of the 1971 summer, Fr. Callahan XA.VIER 372

had this topic checked by lawyers. While rentals to such groups as insurance firms were prohibited, any and all Jesuit educational functions, if approved by Xavier, were appropriate. Hence the Kickoff Day planned for Saturday, September 26th, for the Province Secondary School Program was quite within the terms for use. There were warnings, if any were needed, against any removal or disposition of classroom equipment. Tractors for cutting grass were school, not community, property. But automobiles were at the disposition of the community for use, turn-in, or for sale.

With the death of Cardinal Cushing on November 2, 1970, an interview with the new archbishop took place. The arrangement concerning the \$25,000 check was explained and, on November 10th, Fr. Leggat turned over a check for this amount and, in return, received the deed to the property which he then recorded. During this early November interview, Archbishop Almeida raised the possibility of a resurrection, in some form, of Xavier. He had requests or pressure from a Dr. Arcide of Concord.

on November 20th Fr. Provincial wrote at length concerning the withdrawal from Xavier. He presented the reasons, for withdrawal of Jesuit presence along with the approbation received from Fr. General. He added the alternative proposals he had made to Cardinal Cushing and the cardinal's choice. In an explanation of terms covered in this narrative, he indicated that the cash balance remaining was to become the possession of the province. This would amount to nothing, since, he pointed out, the province had been subsidizing Xavier and that, for the

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#### XAVIER 375

At this stage of inquiry Fr. Provincial turned to Fr. Robert P. White, S.J., President of Western College, Cambridge, who was both a civil and canon lawyer. He inquired whether, in view of the outright grant involved, a recourse was necessary to the Holy See. He was not so convinced himself. Fr. White's reply, dated February 23rd, occupied some five pages. He first set forth the facts as he knew them, and then commented. He did have one notable difference in factual presentation involving two stages, not just one, by which the property had been given. As he understood it, the cardinal, as R • c. A. P., purchased and gave the property to the incorporated Society of Jesus in New England, which in turn gave it to the Xavier trustees • This gift was without legal encumbrance in the sense that there was no mortgage or specific agreement for its return. It was given under a constructive trust in the sense that the property was to be used for the secondary education of archdiocesan youth. Hence the property was given subject to a fiduciam or fidei commissum. When the province transferred the property to the Xavier corporation, the same constructive trust applied. When the continuation of the school became impossible for either the religious house of Xavier or the province, the lands, buildings were deeded back to the cardinal as corporation sole. After some explanation of canonical requirements, he concluded in Section D of his letter: The transfer of the land and buildings in Concord, from Xavier High School to the Archdiocese, is a gift and subject to canon law on alienation, if there is no contract, agreement or constructive trust (fidei commissum) requiring its return to the Archdiocese upon the inability to conduct a secondary school •

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#### XAVIER 376

Point F asserted that the presence of a constructive trust was evident. The province could not use the property for any other purpose than carrying on the secondary education. Hence, in view of the obligation to transfer back the property,



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#### XAVIER 377

On this same day Pr. Provincial informed Fr. White of this action.

On March 10th, a rescense was formulated indicating that Archbishop Fedeircs believed it preferable to have recourse to avoid any future problems. A final request went to Rome on March 15th asking for the action desired by the archbishop. On May 6th, 1971, Pr. Vincent T. O'Keefe, as Acting Vicar General of the Society of Jesus, enclosed the required rescript from the Congregation of Religious and Secular Institutes, dated March 29th and signed by Fr. Edward Heston, c. s. c., its secretary •

At the same time, Fr. O'Keefe announced that the suppression of the Xavier religious house had been submitted affirmatively to those members of the society's general curia who had the right to attend a general congregation by reason of their office. Through Fr. George W. Nolan, assistant to the provincial, this information about the rescript and a copy of it was forwarded to Fr. Finnegan on May 11th, and he acknowledged its rescript with thanks on May 12, 1971.

In the meantime, various topics arose concerning the Jesuits remaining for a year at Xavier. These concerned arrangements for their future ministries and about house improvements. A preliminary meeting on their future had taken place as early as the Kickoff Day. Questions arose, too, whether some changes made in the faculty residence were necessary or only extravagant. From September, 1970, Fr. Greenler was making a detailed account of all house items which were ultimately to be allocated. Some had already been disposed of to the novices then

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at Weston. Since new houses were being established, provisions were made for their receiving articles once the school year was over. Among these were the projected St. George Street House, for a small community attached to the Immaculate Conception Church on Flarris on Avenue , and Maxwell House, which Fr. Joseph R. N. Maxwell planned with the authorization of Bishop Connelly to set up on the Cape in quarters held on an indefinite and free loan basis.

The Maxwell House was commodious and many valuable pieces of furniture were allocated to it. The unexpected and sudden death of Fr. Maxwell in Austria on September 19, 1971, brought an end to this planned apostolic venture. One of the



initial settlement. When designations were made, it was to be Fr. Callahan's function to arrange for ultimate delivery to the approved places. Should not all goods be disposed of by the end of August, temporary storage was to be arranged at Weston • Since the province could reasonably expect some formal and connected narrative on the exodus from Xavier, Fr. Provincial himself first proposed a detailed memorandum on items to be covered. Then Fr. George w. Nolan prepared and corrected some draft statements until a final one was ready by April 7, 1971. This statement was released in the form of a news item for the third (April) issue of the recently established~~' edited by Fr. Thomas r~, curran, S.J. The text of Fr. Nolan's statement was contained in four typed pages. The early history was detailed, and the account explicitly pointed out that it was directly to the newly formed Xavier Corporation that the gift of land and structure had been given, not first to the province to give in turn to Xavier. After rehearsing the legal and canonical stages involved, and indicating the carefully planned inventories, the statement indicated August 31, 1971, as the date for the dissolution of the Xavier Corporation. His final remark indicated that any balances would revert to the province, but XAVIER

warned in the following language:

However, this item [balances] represents an illusory benefit because, during the past year, it has been necessary for the Province to underwrite a substantial deficit for the School. In some way this may be thought of as a return benefaction to the Roman Catholic Archbishop of Boston.

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That there was a return benefaction by the province becomes clear when it is realized that in the return of property was also included the adjoining property costing the province \$8,300. Loans amounting to \$145,000 and province taxes of \$59,375 were also absorbed by the province. The province houses and two of its schools were enriched by school and house effects, the vast amount of which had been purchased by the archdiocese. Xavier was likewise aided in receiving the \$25,000 for severance pay for its lay staff. Additional charges might have been added for province aid in smaller ways, but these were passed over in the cause of better feelings on a controversial issue.

As the school year came to a close, Fr. Provincial addressed a two-page letter to the final Jesuit community. He



L. Greenler went to Campion College, Jamaica: Fr. Francis J. Donovan to St. Mary's and Fr. Thomas J. Gallagher, who had joined the community in its final year, went to Cranwell. The New England scholastics either left the Society before the publication of the next catalogus, or left during the ensuing school year (1971-72). The last superior, Fr. Greenler, also left the Society and arranged to marry.

One might expect that all formalities would be concluded with a handing over of the key to the archbishop on September 1, 1971. But it was only on May 4, 1972, that there was entered a court decree dismissing the cause of St. Francis Xavier School of Concord, Inc., vs. the Attorney General!!~This dismissal was effective as of May 25, 1972.

On May 9, 1971 Fr. Francis J. Vaas, as lawyer for the province, had informed Fr. Provincial that Fr. Dolan, due to the press of business, had failed to file the required certificate of compliance, but was now preparing it. Hence, Fr. Callahan was XAVIFR 382

asked to see that this final step was taken. On June 21, 1972, Fr. Dolan informed Fr. Vaas that, on May 23rd, the final decree had been entered by the Supreme Judicial Court. As at this time in May, 1972, the Xavier Corporation, longer-lived than anticipated, had come to an end. The final decree was signed on June 21, 1972, by Archbishop Almeida, Fr. Lee J. McGovern, representing Boston College High School, Fr. Raymond J. Swords, representing Cranwell School and by William G. Guindon, Provincial.

Lastly, came the payment of legal fees for Fr. Dolan's services since his first billing. The charge was \$3500. Fr. H. Frank Cluff, the Province Treasurer, forwarded, from province funds, this check for these services. "Tanta molis erat • II When no mere Jesuits were in residence at Xavier, mail was gathered by Miss Sheehan to be forwarded to or gathered by Fr. Callahan. Among the last journals coming by subscription to the Xavier house library was the English Province Letters and Notices. That journal, in its truth-telling accounts of English Jesuits, would probably be more severe on some individuals than this narrative has been. This account employed all available sources and has attempted to cover all factual aspects of an extended story, while giving expression to some value judgments and to leave many more to its readers.

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