

OUR SECONDARY SCHOOLS: TODAY AND TOMORROW

1980

Pedro Arrupe, S.J.

1/ 1. I do not intend to cover the same ground as those who will publish the proceedings of this Symposium on the *Apostolate of the Society in Secondary Education*. They will have their work cut out for them, given the wealth of experience, reflection and reports of pioneering efforts that you have exchanged during these past few days! I am not even going to enter into the two specific points which you have discussed in such great detail: lay collaboration in our schools, and education for justice.

2/ I prefer, instead, to devote the time at my disposal to some considerations of a more general character concerning the apostolate of education, and, more specifically, concerning our Jesuit secondary schools. For many years I have been deeply convinced of the apostolic potential of our educational centers, and specifically of our institutions of secondary education. And today, after hearing from you about the difficulties and the problems, as well as the possibilities offered by the new focus of this apostolate, both within and outside the institutions, my conviction about the importance of the secondary schools is stronger than ever: if that were possible! Both in themselves, and in their relationship to other forms of the Society's apostolate.

2. I. SECONDARY EDUCATION

3/ In contradistinction to primary and university education, secondary education gives us access to the minds and hearts of great numbers of young men and women at a privileged moment of their lives. They are *already* capable of a coherent and rational assimilation of human values illuminated by Christian faith. At the same time, their personality has *not yet* acquired traits that are so set that they

resist healthy formation. It is especially during the years of secondary education that the mindset of young people is systematically formed; consequently, it is the moment in which they can and should achieve a harmonious synthesis of faith and modern culture. (Cf. GC31, Decree 28, no. 17.)

4/ We usually define secondary education in terms of its educational content—sometimes too closely bound up with academic programs— or else in terms of the age of the persons being educated. I would include in the category of secondary education the educational work which the Society is providing to adults in many different places: in literacy campaigns, or projects of professional or cultural improvement. This kind of work has many of the same goals (and therefore offers many of the same apostolic opportunities) that are characteristic of traditional secondary education. The adult student in such a situation approaches the teacher voluntarily, even eagerly, with a receptivity which is not generally true for his or her age level; this inspires the kind of openness to formation which we find in secondary school students.

5/ 3. The Society has taken giant strides in recent years in this type of education, especially in culturally depressed countries or regions. Inspired by the direction of the last two General Congregations, the Society has initiated an imaginative use of modern mass media of communication, creating educational institutions of a new type: radio, audiovisual, correspondence courses, etc. However, the characteristics, advantages, and limitations of this type of education— and of the institutions and structures which serve it— are not the theme which I wish to develop here. Nor will we analyze now the role which they have to play in the future. We must return to this theme on another occasion and with the depth which such an important topic deserves. But I could not let the occasion pass without at least mentioning this new educational reality, which so hopefully enriches and diversifies the Society's educational apostolate. What I have to say here with explicit reference to our secondary schools, established according to the traditional model in the Society, can and should be applied in an analogous way to this new kind of educational institution.

4. II. THE COLLEGE, AN APOSTOLIC INSTRUMENT

6/ The basic idea behind all that I have to say is simply this: the secondary school is an effective apostolic instrument which the Society entrusts to a community, or to a definite group of men within a community; the purpose can only be apostolic. This commitment, of such men and for such a purpose, is an authentic act of "mission." The secondary school is the primordial means of apostolate for that community. And that community, inasmuch as it is an apostolic group of the Society, must concentrate its activity toward attaining the greatest possible apostolic results from its use of this educational instrument.

7/ Since the secondary school is an instrument, and an instrument for a specific mission whose nature is so clearly spiritual, it is evident that the instrument should achieve the purposes of God, the Principal Cause. That which joins this instrument with this principal cause is precisely the Jesuit community, to which the instrument has been entrusted. And the Jesuit community will use the instrument in order to achieve a precise goal: the spread of the Kingdom. The community which is dedicated to work in a secondary school absolutely must interiorize this outlook, and live out this conviction; the Society has given them a specific mission; and in order to accomplish the mission, it has entrusted to them this specific instrument. Any deviation from the mission, which would tend to diminish the value of its educational and apostolic finality—for example, by reducing it to a mere cultural or humanistic project which has an accidental potential for catechesis—and any kind of abusive usurpation of the instrument—for example by an inordinate attachment to it, with a consequent erosion of apostolic availability will detract from the fundamental character both of the mission and of the instrument.

5. III. PRELIMINARY CRITERIA

8/ There are many criteria for deciding whether there should be an educational center in the first place, and then for deciding what kind it should be, etc. The relative value of each criterion in different types of concrete circumstances will be conditioned and given a new meaning by many different factors. It would be a mistake to give

absolute value to any one criterion, however pure it might seem to be. To take only one example, our evaluation of the value of a secondary school in a country where Catholics are in the minority, but where the country enjoys a high level of technology and cultural refinement, such as Japan, must be very different from our evaluation of a secondary school in another country, say in Europe, where there are abundant opportunities for Catholic education, or, again, the evaluation of a school in the developing world, where the cultural self-discovery of the masses is an overriding concern of the highest priority.

9/ This necessary diversity of criteria does not confer legitimacy on every institution simply because it exists; nor does it justify the excessive individualism of those who claim that "our situation is different" in order to resist any interference from outside, with no willingness to listen or to learn. Such an attitude of self-sufficiency, or even of superiority, is infantile and narcissistic, generally without objective foundation, and is contrary to the very nature of education, which is supposed to be a humanizing enterprise, fostering openness to others.

10/ There is also the opposite danger, an even more destructive result of a false sense of superiority: the intolerant dogmatism that insists on imposing on everyone one's own concept of education, and of the proper kind of educational institution.

11/ *6. Any Decision Should be the Result of Discernment.* The nature of the institution, its location, the number of students, the formulation of objectives for academic quality or of the publics to be served, etc., are elements which diversify the instrument in order to adapt it to the circumstances in which it is being employed. Consequently, these elements should be arrived at by way of an Ignatian discernment in which, along with the usual criteria for the choice of ministries, account is taken of local circumstances as well as the comprehensive pastoral plan of the Province and of the local Hierarchy. In one place, the Church will need a center which offers an option of high academic quality, that can compete with comparable institutions. Somewhere else, the need might be for a college geared to large numbers, as many as possible—in some cases with coeducation—in order to meet the pressing demand

for schooling, or the specific needs of Christians, or in order to express an attitude of openness and invitation to an unbelieving world. In still other regions, an emergency situation—which, for St. Ignatius, can override all other criteria— might call for literacy education, or mass cultural programs through the use of radio, records, and printed works. Each of these will be a form of education in support of evangelization.

12/ The Ignatian criteria for selection of ministries are not absolutes. Before listing them in the Constitutions, St. Ignatius, with his customary prudence, prefaces them with the caution: *"When other considerations are equal (and this should be understood in everything that follows)... "[622].*

13/ *7. We are committed to Educate any Class of Person, without Distinction.* It cannot be otherwise, because the educational apostolate (just as every other apostolate of the Society) bears the indelible Ignatian imprint of universality. To be sure, this total openness of the total educational work of the Society takes on—or should take on— individual characteristics according to local conditions. But what is never admissible is any kind of exclusiveness. Obviously, this total openness is joined to the Society's preferential option for the poor, an option which applies to every apostolate, education included. I think it is safe to say that there is no great problem in meeting the educational needs of the wealthier classes, and that there is a considerable problem—at times of tragic proportions—in meeting the educational needs of the poor. Although civil society has the prime responsibility to meet this social need, the Society feels an obligation, by reason of its vocation, to help to meet this human and spiritual need. It thus embodies the Church's right to teach in whatever way, to whatever degree, is necessary. And even though the more comfortable classes have no lack of educational opportunities, there is a great need for evangelization among these people. And because instruction and education are most efficacious means of evangelization, the Society cannot limit its educational apostolate exclusively to the poor. Moreover, looking to the long-range interests of the poor and the disadvantaged, again using Ignatian criteria, the Society should actively promote the Christian transformation of other social classes. Nor should we lose sight of the silent middle class, also a part of the People of God, and so seldom mentioned when problems are discussed in terms of the two extremes.

14/ *8. A Negative Criterion: Disavowal of Economic Discrimination.* Because the secondary schools of the Society are necessarily instruments of the apostolate — and are therefore subject in principle to the radical gratuity of our ministries, and to our poverty— their availability to students cannot be conditioned by ability to pay. This statement of principle is our ideal. I know very well that the reality is necessarily very different in various countries and in various kinds of institutions. But as long as this ideal has not yet been realized, any Jesuit institution must live with the tension of striving to achieve a situation in which no capable student is refused admittance because he cannot pay. The recovery of genuine equality of opportunity and genuine freedom in the area of education is a concern that falls within the scope of our struggle for the promotion of justice.

15/ *9. A Positive Criterion: Excellence.* Whatever be the other characteristics of a Jesuit secondary school, one trait should be common to all: excellence, which is to say high quality. I am obviously not referring to structures and physical plants: but rather to that which specifically defines an educational center and provides the basis for its evaluation: its product, the men and women who are being formed. The excellence which we seek consists in producing men and women of right principles, personally appropriated; men and women open to the signs of the times, in tune with their cultural milieu and its problems; men and women for others. Instruction, education, evangelization: these are three levels of operation which, in different countries and in different circumstances can have different priorities and degrees of urgency. But each one must be pursued with excellence as its goal, at least: relative excellence. The true objective of a center of instruction —it would, be better to say of education— is in the area of the specifically human and Christian. And here I want to make a special point about the importance of academic excellence in our educational work in mission countries. It would be a mistake to sacrifice this —not only at the University level, but also in secondary schools— for the sake of other goals, which might be good enough in themselves and would claim priority in another type of institution, or simply in order to increase the number of students.

16/ *10. Ignatian Education.* A Jesuit secondary school should be easily identifiable as such. There are many ways in which it will resemble other schools,

both secular and confessional, including schools of other religious orders. But if it is an authentic Jesuit school—that is to say, if our operation of the school flows out of the strengths drawn from our own specific charism, if we emphasize our essential characteristics and our basic options— then the education which our students receive should give them a certain "Ignacianidad", if I can use such a term. I am not talking about arrogance or snobbery, still less about a superiority complex. I simply refer to the logical consequence of the fact that we live and operate out of our own charism. Our responsibility is to provide, through our schools, what we believe God and the Church ask of us.

11. IV. THE STUDENT WE ARE TRYING TO FORM

17/ Here, I take for granted the academic and educative aspects of the school. I want to concentrate on other aspects of the integral formation that we should be giving to our students.

18/ *a. Men and Women of Service, according to the Gospel.* This is the "man or woman for others" that you have heard me speak about so frequently. But here I want to rework this idea from a new viewpoint, especially for those among our students who are Christians. They must be men and women who are motivated by a genuine Gospel charity, which is the queen of the virtues. We have spoken about faith/justice so often. But it is charity which gives the force to faith, and a desire for justice. Justice does not reach its interior fullness except in charity. Christian love both implies justice, and extends the requirements of justice to the utmost limits, by providing a motivation and a new interior force. All too frequently, we pass over this basic idea: faith must be informed by charity, faith is shown in works that are inspired by charity. And justice without charity is not evangelical. This is something we must insist on; if we are to understand our fundamental option correctly, and make use of its tremendous potential, we must understand and assimilate this basic point. It can lead to a holy respect, and a tolerance, which will temper our impatience for justice and the service of the faith. And, especially in non-Christian countries, we must adopt this, and look for ways to insert those Christian values which are also human values, which are recognized as being genuinely human.

19/ 12. *b. New Persons*, transformed by the message of Christ, who will be witnesses to His death and resurrection in their own lives. Those who graduate from our secondary schools should have acquired, in ways proportional to their age and maturity, a way of life that is in itself a proclamation of the charity of Christ, of the faith that comes from Him and leads back to Him, and of the justice which He announced. We must make every effort to inculcate those values which are a part of our Ignatian heritage. We can even pass them on to those who do not share our faith in Christ, if we translate them into ethical and human values of moral uprightness and of solidarity, which also come from God.

20/ The really crucial question is this: If the finality of our education is the creation of new persons, men and women of service, then what are the *pedagogical* repercussions? Because, this really is the purpose of the education that we are giving. It is a different kind of focus, at least to the extent that it gives priority to human values of service, of anti-egoism. And this has to have an influence on our pedagogical methods, our educational curriculum, our extra-curricular activities. A desire for Christian witness, service of one another, cannot thrive in an atmosphere of academic competition, or where one's personal qualities are judged only by comparison to those of others. These things will thrive only in an atmosphere in which we learn how to be available, how to be of service to others. We need to rethink our educational methods in the light of these objectives: how to form the evangelical person, who looks on every other man and woman as a brother or sister. Universal brotherhood will be the foundation of one's personal, family, and social life.

21/ 13. *c. Men and Women open* to their own times and to the future. The students that we are leaving our imprint on day after day, that we are forming at a time when they are still more or less receptive, are not "finished products" that we launch out into the world. We are dealing with human beings, who are in constant growth. Whether we like it or not, they will, throughout their lives, be affected by all of those forces through which they will influence the world, or through which the world will influence them. The result of this struggle will determine whether they continue to live a personal life that is evangelical, a life of service, or whether they will live a kind of

neutral apathy, overcome by indifference or unbelief. For this reason, perhaps even more important than the formation that we give them is the capacity and concern to continue their own formation; this is what we must instill in them. It is important to learn; but it is much more important to learn how to learn, to desire to go on learning all through life.

22/ What I am trying to say is that our education, in its psychological aspects, must take this future into account. It must be an education which will be the seed for further personal growth; an open-ended education; an introduction to a basic thrust which will continue to be operative throughout life: continual formation.

23/ Among other things, the formation we give must take into account the kind of civilization or culture that we are living in, and that our students will be called on to live in for the rest of their lives: the civilization of the image, of visualization, of the mass media transmission of information. The revolution created by the printing press at the beginning of the renaissance is child's play compared to the revolution being produced by modern technology. Our education must take this into account. We must use it, and help our students to get accustomed to it.

24/ *14. d. The Balanced Person.* Perhaps I am asking for too much, after all the things I've already mentioned. And yet, this is an ideal that we must not give up. All of the values already mentioned: academic, evangelical, persons of service, of openness, of sensitivity to the present and to the future —these are not lost, but rather are mutually helped, when they are combined together in a balanced way. The ideal of our schools is not to produce little academic monsters, dehumanized and introverted. Neither is it to produce pious faithful, allergic to the world in which they live, incapable of responding to it sympathetically. Our ideal is much closer to the unsurpassed model of the Greeks, in its Christian version: balanced, serene, and constant, open to whatever is human. Technology threatens to dehumanize man; and it must be the mission of our educational centers to safeguard humanism, without at the same time renouncing the use of technology.

15. V. THE EDUCATIONAL COMMUNITY

25/ This is a concept which has undergone great change. The traditional "Ratio Studio-rum" of the Society, and I include the revised version of the last century, has many merits which have been recognized throughout its history. But it could do no more than reflect the restricted notion of a pedagogical community that was known at the time. The changed conditions of our own times have forced us to make generous use of the faculty foreseen in the Constitutions [457], to have collaborators who are not Jesuits. But this gives us a new responsibility: we must take whatever means are necessary to ensure that the formation given in our secondary schools continues to be a Jesuit formation, such as I have been describing.

26/ The educational community is made up of: the Jesuit community, the lay collaborators, the students, and their families. And also, remembering that the school is the first stage of a formation that will continue throughout life, it includes also — and must include— our former students.

27/ *16. The Jesuit Community.* The mission of the Society is entrusted, in the first place, to the Jesuit community; to it is entrusted the secondary school, as the apostolic instrument through which this mission is to be carried out. The Jesuit community, therefore, must be the primary source of inspiration for the educational work. Even in those cases in which lay persons have been appointed to administrative offices —for it is clear, in principle, that they must be persons who are in full harmony with the principles which guide our mission. And we must make special efforts to ensure this in the new structures, in which financial responsibility, maintenance and business affairs, and even the academic administration of the school have been transferred to an association or board, of which only a part is Jesuit.

28/ The Jesuits of the secondary school must be seen to be a united community, one which is authentically Jesuit and easily recognizable as such. That is to say: they should be a group of men with a clear identity, who live the true Ignatian charism, closely bound together by union of minds and hearts ad intra, and similarly bound, ad extra, by their generous participation in a common mission. The Jesuit community

will examine itself regularly, evaluate its apostolic activity, and use an ongoing discernment process in order to decide which from among the available options will best accomplish their mission. This religious community will be the nucleus of the larger educational community, binding it together and giving it meaning. If the Jesuit community in the school is divided, then those who collaborate with them in the school will also be divided, and the secondary school will fulfill the dictum of St. Ignatius: if it is not united, the Society not only cannot function, but it cannot even exist. (Const. 655).

29/ 17. The inspiration that the Jesuit community brings to the school will consist, first of all, in its specific application of the Ignatian vision to the educational apostolate. Concretely, this means that the Ignatian vision is evident in the objectives of the school, in the type of person we are trying to form, and in the selection of the means necessary to attain that end.

30/ Here I would like to add a word about the priestly activity of the Jesuits who are engaged in the educational work of our secondary schools. Teaching is surely a fully apostolic work; so is administration, or any of the other types of work necessary for the well-being of the school. Nevertheless, every Jesuit priest should also be engaged in some priestly activity in the strict sense of that term. This can be in the school, or outside of it. Within the school, it could take the form of a sacramental ministry, preaching, spiritual counseling, or the pastoral direction of different kinds of groups. Outside of the school, it might mean regular or occasional help in parishes, convents, hospitals, prisons, other institutions for the needy, Christian movements, etc. Such work could be daily, on weekends, or more occasional, even limited to vacation periods. What is important is that we keep alive in ourselves our priestly identity, and have other people see us in this way. To unite ourselves to Christ, to share in His priesthood, His mission of redemption and sanctification: this was the ideal that drew us to the Society, and it is the only ideal that will preserve us in it. I am slow to accept the excuse of "lack of time" as a reason for total withdrawal from specifically priestly works. Such a situation would seem rather to call for a reordering of other priorities. Experience has shown us that total withdrawal from all priestly activity, over a period of years, can lead to the loss of a sense of priestly identity. And

this is especially the case when the priesthood is not exercised in the early years after ordination. From there, it is a short step to a loss of Jesuit identity. And the consequences of this second step are easy to predict.

31/ 18. In the second place, the Jesuit community should be the source of inspiration and stimulation for the other components of the educational community (the lay collaborators, the students, the families, the former students), and this through the testimony of its life and its work. *The witness of our lives is essential.* If what we are trying to form in our students is the whole person, and not just the intellect, then we have to do this with our whole person, and not just through our teaching. The students, their families, our colleagues, all have a right to see us as integrated, to see no division between what we teach, what we say, and how we live. And we have an obligation to respond to this need. We are being hypocritical if we warn our students about the consumer mentality while we live lives that are secure and comfortable. And what I said above about priestly identity applies also here: a lack of priestly identity can lead to a secularized way of life—in the bad sense of that word—and perhaps rather easily in an educational institution (though not just there, of course). Style of dress, behavior, use or abuse of property, the way we speak, etc., all these form a part of our witness and, consequently, of our educational activity. Young people are not yet able to make mature judgments based on profound values; for them, these are often the basis for making judgments about individual Jesuits, and about the Society. We need to think about our responsibilities in this area, and about the relationships all this may have to the problem of vocations.

32/ 19. The witness of our lives includes also the *witness of our work*. I know that some of the men in our secondary schools are overworked: because of the reduced numbers of Jesuit personnel, some individual Jesuits have taken on unreasonable workloads. Does this sometimes lead to less excellence in our work? Could it lead to a lessening of inspiration in our mission? We are working at times that we ought to be devoting to reflection. We load ourselves with administrative details, or management that could be more easily delegated, and fail to do those things which cannot so easily be done by others.

33/ On the other hand, the opposite danger also exists in every institution, large or small. We can become immovable, untouchable, even though we are turning out work that is hardly satisfactory, work that suffers in comparison with that of other members of the educational community. We resist any change in the order of the day, any attempt at evaluation, any request that we help out with priestly or extra-curricular activities, or anything that might fall outside our "professional responsibilities." It is up to Superiors to make sure that our educational institutions do not become havens for the underemployed, the "antiquated," the immovable. Frequently, the best solution would seem to be to assign such a man to a new type of work, in which his priestly and apostolic zeal can be restimulated. Preventing this type of parasitism is especially important in secondary schools where, more than at the University level, we are engaged in forming adolescents, especially sensitive to the influence of witness. What I am saying here has nothing to do with the presence in the community of older Fathers and Brothers, who continue to live in the school after a lifetime of hard work there. These men bring the example of their goodness, of their presence, their sense of tradition, a sense of being a family, to the educational community.

34/ With regard to the question of the relationship between community and work, the separation of the place of residence from the place of work is, in itself, neither a necessary nor a sufficient solution. There are cases, however, where it might be a necessary first step.

35/ *20. The Lay Collaborators* form a most important part of the educational community. In this regard, the Society has made great progress. I have already indicated how the Constitutions admit the possibility of collaboration as a substitute, when there are not enough Jesuits. We are cautioned there that the contributions of the laity should not exceed certain limits. But this thinking was a reflection of the times; it was based on a concept of the role of the laity in the Church that was widely held until quite recently. Since Vatican II, the role of the laity has been reassessed; the place of lay people in the mission of the Church is now recognized explicitly. Then why not their role in the mission of the Society? This means that it is no longer the lack of Jesuits that determines the number of lay collaborators in our secondary schools, but rather the profound conviction that lay people have an invaluable contribution to make

in our apostolate; they help us to extend the apostolate almost without limit. In former times, it was possible to find a community of fifty Jesuits engaged in the education of two or three hundred students—in a boarding school for instance! Let us frankly admit that this was disproportionate; and if we look to the needs of today's world, such attention would even be called unjust, or showing partiality. To maintain such a Jesuit-student ratio today would be a scandal in the Church. It is wrong to regret the passing of former days.

36/ 21. Today we need multipliers, and that is what our lay collaborators are. This under one condition, naturally, and that is that we have correctly assessed their ability to be integrated into our apostolic educational mission. This means that we do not regard them as salaried employees, hired to do work under a master's supervision. They are not that! Their salaries should be adequate to relieve them of preoccupation with economics; they should be freed to dedicate themselves to full-time work, with complete dedication, without the need for an additional job. If they work with a divided spirit, they will almost out of necessity become incapable of becoming real educators, and not even good teachers.

37/ But there is much more. What we truly need are not just teachers. We need responsible collaborators, who share in the fullness of our mission. This is how we must accept them. And we need to learn from them; learn about the specific charism of the laity in the furthering of the work of the Church. This is the only way that their integration into the educational community can have any meaning; this is the only way in which they will become true multiplying agents.

38/ There are two things implied here: first, that they assimilate the Ignatian principles that give inspiration to our mission; and second, that they become a part of the decision-making process, with positions of responsibility in which their educational potential can yield its maximum fruit.

39/ With respect to the first, it is clear that just as we ourselves needed a formation in order to assimilate and put into practice our Ignatian vision, so the lay collaborators must receive a formation from us—a formation adapted to them. Constant attention

must be given to this; it must be an ongoing process, with due respect for the individual personality of each one. Even when they are not Christian, as will necessarily be the case in many countries, we can learn from them, and allow them to share, according to their own capacity, in those values of our mission which are universal. However, those who are incapable of appreciating our vision of man and of gospel values are not suited for education in a secondary school run by the Society, whatever academic and teaching qualities they may have. I am not talking here about forming mini-Jesuits! What we need to form are persons who are lay, but who also resonate with Ignatian ideals. To give this type of formation requires time and money. But it is an investment which will yield great dividends for the ends that we are seeking. And we can hardly neglect necessary formation of our collaborators and at the same time expect them to share in our mission wholeheartedly!

40/ Concerning their integration into administrative positions in the school, what I have in mind is more than just a type of partnership. I assume that much! What I am talking about is offering, to those lay persons who are well prepared, not just administrative and managerial assignments, but the very highest levels of educational responsibility, and to do this with full confidence. This includes even the direction of the school (as principal or headmaster), when it is necessary or useful. We reserve to the Society only its essential role as the animator and inspirator, as I have explained already.

41/ For many of our schools, participation of competent lay people is the only way to survive, if we wish the school to be a place of Ignatian education; it is simply impossible to allocate the numbers of Jesuits that would be required. But for all of our secondary schools this collaboration with the laity (so long as they share in our mission, and do not just function as hired teachers—for, ultimately, teaching by itself is not the most important element) is absolutely indispensable in our day, when the influence of the Church and of the Society need to be multiplied.

42/ *22. The Families.* We know that families have ultimate responsibility for the formation of their children. But this is just one more reason why we should also be working with the families. We should cooperate with them in the work of education,

especially in those very frequent situations in which the married couples are hardly prepared to form their children. I want to give special praise to those organizations—associations, journals, formation courses— which promote the educational formation of the parents of our students, to prepare them for a more effective collaboration with the secondary school. Also, the school can and must function as a catalyst between parents and their children, to bring about unity. One of the evils of our time is precisely the disintegration of the family: not just of the marriage, but also of children with respect to their parents. The school is a privileged place for a real encounter of parents with their own children; there they can come to appreciate their interests. It is important, then, that families have contact with the school, participate in its life, and cooperate in its cultural, social, extracurricular and other activities.

43/ *23. Former Students.* I have dealt with this theme many times in recent years, and I don't want to repeat myself here. I want only to reiterate one point: the ongoing formation of former students is an obligation; it is a strict responsibility which the Society cannot ignore. It is a work that only we can do, practically speaking, because it is a question of redoing the formation that we gave twenty or thirty years ago. The person that the world needs now is different from the persons we formed then! It is an immense task, and well beyond our own abilities; we need to seek the help of lay people who can help to bring it about. But this, of course, assumes that we first form such lay persons! The Provincials need to provide for this by assigning to Associations of Former Students a sufficient number of Fathers who have both the aptitude and the time to devote to this work. If we do not do this, the Associations will languish, and the reeducation of our former students will not take place.

44/ *24. Present Students.* The students are the center of focus, the principal component of the educational community. I have talked about them quite extensively in these pages, and there is no need to repeat what I have already said. I would only like to add one additional point: how much our students can teach us! We have to be in close contact with them. Because in dealing with our students, we can learn so much. We learn patience by encountering their impatience; we learn generosity by seeing their capacity to make sacrifice; we learn to be men for others by seeing how

much they can give of themselves if only we stimulate them with the right motivation! Through these young people we contact a civilization from which we ourselves will be excluded: in them we see the society of tomorrow; through them, we have a glimpse of the future. This is why it is impossible to educate the young from a guarded distance —living outside of their milieu, in antiseptic isolation, filled with academic dignity (and perhaps also with inferiority and timidity). This is not the way to get abundant vocations; and this is not the way to encourage young people to know the beauty of our Ignatian ideal: life in the service of Christ.

25. VI. THE SECONDARY SCHOOL: OPENNESS AND INTEGRATION

45/ You have been very clear on this point during your meetings these past few days. The secondary schools of the Society cannot remain in "splendid isolation" from the Province or from the local Church. It may well have been true in the past that some of our schools, because of their size and academic reputation, were ahead of their times and became pioneers for the city or the region, leading to a certain amount of isolation from the other schools. But this isolation, conscious or unconscious, wherever it exists, must disappear. Besides the fact that there have been profound changes in a very short time, we are the Catholic Church; we are the Society of Jesus. The secondary schools of the Society must take common cause, form a united front, with other educational institutions of the Church. They must participate in the different types of organizations which have been formed: professional, trade union, apostolic. This is especially important in those countries in which liberty of teaching, equality of opportunities, financial support, and other similar issues are hotly contested by opposing ideologies.

46/ But the more fundamental reason why our secondary schools must have this openness and ongoing contact with others is this: we need to learn, and we have an obligation to share. There are enormous advantages to be gained through collaboration of every type. It would be foolish to pretend that we have nothing to learn. It would be irresponsible to think only of ourselves in our planning, without considering the need to cooperate with other secondary schools, whether religious or secular —in the areas of elective subjects, for example, or specialized studies, or in teaching standards,

courses for teachers and parents, etc. This articulation of concrete needs with similar educational institutions in a local, regional, or national ecclesial setting, will make us more effective apostolically, and will at the same time increase and strengthen our sense of being a part of the Church.

47/ The secondary schools must also be integrated into the Province; their development must fit into the overall apostolic planning of the Province. Their relationship with other apostolic works in the Province must be fruitful. The schools are one segment of the individual unity of the "mission" of the Province, and they must be harmoniously joined to the other segments. I am not just speaking about a polite interest in the work that others are doing, or in cordial fraternal relations. I mean something much more specific: real collaboration! The pastoral aspects of the educational apostolate provide secondary schools with opportunities for cooperation with other Jesuit works which can be of benefit to all. Other Jesuits, for example, can help out in the extra-curricular pastoral activities for the young people; they can help with spiritual care, the Exercises, Christian movements, etc. And the Jesuits in the school community can help out in the parishes and residences at the times of greatest demand. And, when distance and time permit, our scholastics and young priests still in studies could also share in this fraternal collaboration. These activities will introduce other Jesuits to the apostolic activities of their own Province, bring home to them the wide range of possibilities, and at the same time bring to light their abilities and interests. Both of these are important when the time comes for young Jesuits to receive a definitive mission.

48/ Such opening up will benefit both the Jesuit communities in the schools, and also the students. It will keep Jesuit teachers in touch with the activities and needs of the Church and of the Society in other areas —and this is a valuable psychological preparation for the day when some from among them, for whatever reason, must begin a new line of work. These men will not be entering an unknown world. As I have already indicated, a certain amount of priestly activity in addition to one's primary educational work is an important means, at the personal level, for personal development of an attitude of sharing. The students will have their own horizons opened up by such contacts, by the opening up of the school. From their young

years, they will become accustomed to the ecclesial and social dimensions of their lives. I wonder whether some of the hostility to Christian commitment or to social commitment, apparent in some of our former students, may not be at least partly due to the hothouse atmosphere of some of our secondary schools in the past.

49/ 26. Openness and institutional contacts should lead to wide-ranging apostolic influence. Each Jesuit institution is an apostolic platform. Whether it is a parish or a hospital or a prison, a radio transmitter or a neighborhood social center, each institution is a focal point from which we Jesuits and the students we direct can develop some type of apostolate. Don't the students have need of this? But we need it ourselves! I would dare to say that we need it even more than they do. If the absence of all priestly or apostolic influence is justified by the amount of school work, and the resulting fatigue, then a discernment has to be made. Would it be better to accept, or gently impose, a reduction in the number of school tasks (even at the cost of cutting back on needed Jesuit personnel) so that there can be increased quality in the school life? In this sense, that there will be room for direct priestly activity, and formation of students in the needs of the apostolate.

50/ Is it possible to do more than we are presently doing to involve parents, former students, present students, and the many good people who support activities — by making our school plants more available for night classes, literacy programs, professional courses, socials, sports activities, artistic or recreational activities— and all of this for the surrounding neighborhood? Isn't it a little scandalous (and also unjustified, in terms of sound business management) that our large school plants are in effective use, sometimes, for only eight or ten hours during the day, and scarcely two hundred days of the academic year? This is only about 20 per cent of the available time; and they could be so useful for so many in so many different ways! Surely there is a place here for applying our doctrine concerning the social function of material goods!

27. VII. TO WHOM THESE PAGES ARE ADDRESSED

51/ I want to conclude where, perhaps, I should have begun: by speaking about those to whom these pages are addressed. I am not just speaking to you, the fifteen

Jesuits who have come from so many different parts of the world in order to participate in this seminar; you are not the only ones I have in mind. During these days we have had lengthy discussions, and you already know my thinking on all of these issues. I have prayed with you to Him Who is the Only Master: the Light, the Truth, the Way. I have listened to your experiences, your reflections, your preoccupations, your hopes. In your notes, and in the documentation which will be the result of your work during these days, you will find more than enough material for reflection and for inspiration concerning the future of your secondary schools.

52/ I am sure of that. And so I would say, rather paradoxically, that you are not the ones that I am really speaking to! You are not, perhaps, the ones who most need to hear all that I am saying.

53/ I am thinking, first, of the communities of Jesuits presently working in our secondary schools. These men, priests and brothers, have given themselves to a work that is very often hidden; the schedule they are subjected to—for the day and for the year—is very rigorous; often enough they are overworked. And their personal austerity is sometimes obscured by the apparent opulence the institution they are working in. I confer on these men, once again, the mission that they have already received from the Society. I repeat, once again, that the Church and the Society of Jesus hold the educational apostolate in the very highest esteem. And I encourage them to go on doing their work with dedication and enthusiasm.

54/ And at the same time, I caution these men about the danger of inertia. It is absolutely essential that they become more aware of the changes that have taken place in the Church and in the Society, and aware also of their need to keep pace with these changes. If some of our secondary schools, at least those which have the reputation of "great old institutions" have become apostolates that are little appreciated by different groups of Jesuits, perhaps we should admit that the disenchantment of the younger, dynamic generation of Jesuits may be due in part to the failure of these institutions to adjust to the new demands of today's Society, Church, and society at large. That Jesuit community which believes that its school has no need to change has set the stage for the slow death of that school; it will only

take about one generation. However painful it may be, we need to trim the tree in order to restore it to strength. Permanent formation, adaptation of structures in order-to meet new conditions, these are indispensable.

55/ 29. The second group that I wish to address is our younger men, or perhaps the not-so-young, whose apostolic impetuosity makes them look on our educational institutions —and perhaps the very apostolate of education itself —with distrust, with low esteem. They are quick to indiscriminately label all of our secondary schools, and especially the more "affluent" ones, as centers of power, symbols of a disregard for the poor, as countersigns to our fundamental option for the poor. Often enough, they ignore the real spirit of sacrifice that is needed to live and work in the school. I know that such a spirit is not always there; and I never stop urging the men in the schools to a greater personal and community austerity, just as there are other aspects —sometimes more important ones— that I have to insist on in other apostolates.

56/ But the apostolate of education is absolutely vital for the Church. So vital is it that educational work is the first, and often the only, work prohibited to the Church by certain political regimes. And this is enough to ensure the de-Christianization of a nation, without bloodshed, in the space of a few generations.

57/ Education is absolutely necessary. And it cannot be done on the scale, and with the excellence, that I' have been referring to unless it is carried out in some type of an institution. At the beginning of these pages, I have already talked about different kinds of possibilities. I have alluded to the fact that we need to educate the total person. In a social body, we cannot limit ourselves to education of the hands or of the arms; we must also educate the head. The training of future leaders is important, and Ignatian criteria are in agreement with this. Therefore, in order to promote the necessary renovation that can only come through the introduction of new blood, I urge our scholastics to consider the apostolic value of our educational works in a realistic way, and to offer themselves —or accept cheerfully— an assignment to these works with the evangelical and priestly attitude that I have already described. Let us not fall into the injustice of reproaching our educational centers for their immobility, and then at the same time deny them the means for moving forward!

The solution is both "ab intus" by encouraging those already in the schools toward a personal renewal, and "ab extra" by renewing these Jesuit communities with new recruits.

58/ 30. Finally, I am thinking about Superiors, Provincials, Regional Vice-Provincials, Commissions on Ministries, and all those who do the apostolic planning for the Provinces. They must see whether the number and type of existing educational institutions is justified by the real apostolic needs of the area; they must see whether the present apostolic works are responding to those needs, or whether new apostolic works should be begun. Which ones, where, with what characteristics they must work toward a more perfect coordination of the educational apostolate with the other apostolates of the Province, and develop the entire Province apostolate in accord with the desires of the local Church. They must stimulate Rectors to the type of renewal that is needed in order to go forward. They must support the Rectors in their efforts to call the members of the educational community, especially the Jesuits, to a renewal of their academic and evangelical training. They must strengthen the faculties, as far as this lies within their power, both by the assignment of generous young men, and by the reassignment of those men who are still in the schools, but have lost their effectiveness in teaching and evangelization, to other more appropriate apostolates.

59/ 31. Concretely, I suggest the necessity of preparing young Jesuits specifically for the educational apostolate. The reduced time given to Juniorate studies and to the period of regency in many Provinces has resulted, among other things, in a poorer training in the humanities and a weaker remote preparation for the educational apostolate. The Province should have a number of men who are experts in Pedagogy (with the appropriate academic degrees), a number proportionate to the number of its educational institutions. Finally, I commend the regional and national efforts that have been undertaken to promote the continuing education of personnel, both Jesuits and lay, often in conjunction with other religious and secular groups.

60/ 32. I realize that, in spite of the length of this address, there is much more to be said. As a matter of fact, for each of the topics I have treated, a veritable library

exists! It was not my intention to say everything, but only to recall to your minds some of the matters that I consider more urgent or important; matters that you yourselves have suggested to me. I ask you to carry back to your Provinces a message of my heartfelt encouragement and my constant concern for your fellow educators, and for the work they are doing in education. The words of one of our most famous Jesuit educators remain true today: “Puerilis insitutio est renovation mundi” – the education of youth is the transformation of the world!¹

September 10, 1980

¹ Juan de Bonifacio, 1538-1606; cf. Mon. Paed. III, 402, note 15.