

deeply rooted in Yale's mission and tradition that for most of you, fortunately, it has become ingrained. And that question is: how can I serve? How can I contribute to the wellbeing of those around me, much as we all have done in building communities within the residential colleges and volunteering in so many valuable roles in the city of New Haven? Now is an important time to be asking this question. Let me suggest why, and then let me suggest an answer.

Aristotle tells us that we are by nature political animals. But one wonders whether he would recognize the species that we have become. Eighteen months ago, the United States elected a new president who was prepared to address, intelligently and collaboratively, the most pressing problems confronting the nation—education, health care, climate change, and improving America's image in the rest of the world. Late in the election campaign, the financial crisis intervened, and economic recovery and financial sector reform were added to this ambitious agenda.

What has happened since does not inspire great confidence in the capacity of our system to deal intelligently with important problems. We legislated a stimulus package that was less effective than it should have been, and far less effective than the corresponding measures undertaken in China. Fifteen months later, unemployment in the United States is still 9.9%. After months of stalemate, Congress enacted a health care bill that extends care to millions of uncovered individuals and families, but takes only the most tentative steps toward containing the escalating costs that will create an unsustainable burden of public debt within the next decade or two. We failed to address climate change in time to achieve a meaningful global agreement in Copenhagen. And, although financial sector reform now seems to be a possibility, the debate has been replete with misunderstanding of what actually went wrong and a misplaced desire for revenge.

Why is this happening? Let me make two observations, and then trace their implications for how you might conduct yourselves as citizens and participants in political life. First, contemporary political discussion is too often dominated by oversimplified ideologies with superficial appeal to voters. And, second, political actors in the United States give too much weight to the interests of groups with the resources to influence their re-election, and too little attention to the costs and benefits of their actions on the wider public.

In *The Federalist* (No. 10), James Madison addresses the second of these observations, in the context of the fledgling republic established by the U.S. Constitution. He notes that the tendency to pursue self-interest can never be entirely suppressed, but it can be mitigated by the proper design of political institutions. In contrast to a direct democracy where individuals would tend to vote their own interests, a republican form of government, Madison argues, will have a greater tendency to select representatives who attend to the broader interests of the whole. And, he further argues, representatives in a large republic constituted of a wide range of divergent interests will find it easier to rise above parochialism than those in a smaller republic comprised of a small number of competing factions.

The protections that our form of government offers against ideology and faction have attenuated greatly since Madison's time, for at least two reasons. First, mass communication increases the opportunity to sway voters by appeal to simple formulations. Of course, the rise of mass communication could be a tool for raising the level

of discourse through more effective education of the electorate. But it interacts with the second attenuating factor: that the money required to win elections through the media has created a dependence on funding from special interest groups. And it is these interest groups who distort reasoned dialogue by sponsoring oversimplified messages.

It is easy to see how these developments have thwarted recent efforts to shape responsible public policy. For example, the interest groups opposing health care reform defeated efforts to contain costs by labeling them "death panels," and they defeated the creation of a new public vehicle for providing health insurance by insisting that we must "keep government out of the health care business," when in fact Medicare, Medicaid, and the Veterans Administration already pay nearly 40 per cent of the nation's health care bill. I am not taking sides here, only pointing to the fact that intelligent debate on these subjects was crowded out by ideological distortion.

How can we create a national and global dialogue that transcends such oversimplification and parochialism? Let me suggest that we need each of you to raise the level of debate. You came here to develop your powers of critical thinking, to separate what makes sense from what is superficial, misleading, and seductive. Whether you have studied literature, philosophy, history, politics, economics, biology, physics, chemistry, or engineering, you have been challenged to think deeply, to identify the inconsistent and illogical, and to reason your way to intelligent conclusions. You can apply these powers of critical discernment not simply to fulfill personal aspirations, but to make a contribution to public life.

Every signal you have received in this nurturing community has been unwavering in its message that the growth of your competencies is not to benefit you alone. You have learned in your residential colleges that building a successful community has required you to respect and value one another, and, when appropriate, to moderate your own desires for the benefit of the whole. And so it should be in your lives after Yale. If you are to help to solve this nation's problems—or work across national boundaries to address global problems such as climate, terrorism, and nuclear proliferation—you will need to draw upon both these fruits of a Yale education: the capacity to reason and the ethical imperative to think beyond your own self-interest.

I know that many of you are taking advantage of these first years after graduation to take up public service, and I hope that even more of you will consider this path. There are plenty of jobs in the public sector for enterprising recent graduates; many are short-term but others may lead to careers. Many of you have signed up to be teachers. Others will enter business or the professions. But whatever choice you make, you can help to strengthen the nation and the world—by treating political choices not as triggers for an ideological reflex and not as opportunities to maximize self-interest. To combat reflexive ideologies, you must use the powers of reason that you have developed here to sift through the issues to reach thoughtful, intelligent conclusions. To combat parochialism, you must draw upon the ethical imperative that Yale has imbued in you—an imperative that begins with the golden rule. Whether you serve in government directly or simply exercise your responsibilities as a citizen and voter, recognize that we will all be best served if we take account not merely of our own self-interest, but the broader interests of humanity. To move beyond ideology and faction, we need to raise the level of political discourse. You, as the emerging lead-

ers of your generation, must rise to this challenge.

In the first paragraph of *The Federalist* (No. 1), writing about the infant republic whose constitution he was endeavoring to defend, Alexander Hamilton asserts:

It has frequently been remarked, that it seems to have been reserved to the people of this country, by their conduct and example, to decide the important question, whether societies . . . are really capable or not, of establishing good government from reflection and choice . . .

There is much in America's history of the past two and a quarter centuries that would incline us to conclude that Hamilton's question has been answered in the affirmative. Our institutions of representative government have proven themselves to be durable; the rule of law has prevailed, and the scope of personal liberty has expanded far beyond what the founders envisioned. But today, in the face of oversimplified ideology and the dominance of narrow interests, we must wonder again whether Hamilton's question is still open.

Women and men of the Yale College class of 2010: It falls to you, the superbly educated leaders of your generation, to rise above ideology and faction, to bring to bear your intelligence and powers of critical thinking to elevate public discourse, to participate as citizens and to answer the call to service. Only with your commitment can we be certain that our future will be decided by "reflection and choice" in the broad best interest of humanity. You can do it. Yes you can.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. RANGEL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the *Extensions of Remarks*.)

THANKS AND BEST WISHES FROM  
THE HONORABLE DIANE E. WATSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WATSON. Madam Speaker, I offer my thanks to BARBARA LEE, who is the chair of the Congressional Black Caucus, and I want to read to you something I will leave to every Member and staff of this House:

"A happy wish for you to receive only the best that this season offers! I thank you for making my experience here one of learning, training, and developing legislative solutions. My motto is 'lift as you climb,' so that is why I am so pleased that California Speaker Emeritus Karen Bass will take my place. So, with that said, I appreciate knowing you."

I want you to know how privileged I have felt serving in this House. As I conclude my 10th year, I go back to Los Angeles to see if I can find another job. I always said that, you know, I can't keep a job.

As you heard, I started out teaching school, and I became a school psychologist. That was the most important work I could do because I was able to analyze with the young people what it

took to give them a quality education and improve their behavior for improving their lives.

Then serving in the California Senate for 20 years and chairing the Health and Human Services Committee, I could guide and fashion legislation that would benefit all Californians.

Then to be able to represent the United States of America abroad was one of the highlights of my life, never thinking that I could rise to that level, but it happened. And then crowning my public service, serving here in this House.

I want to thank my colleagues, I want to thank the staff, and I want to thank my friends for the privilege you have given me. And I would say to you, so long for now. Hope to see you again next year.

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#### FAREWELL TO CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS MEMBERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. CLARKE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. CLARKE. Madam Speaker, as the 111th Congress comes to an end, it is with deep sadness that I come to the floor to wish a fond farewell to several members of the Congressional Black Caucus who will not be moving to the 112th Congress. These members, Congresswoman CAROLYN KILPATRICK, Congresswoman DIANE WATSON, Congressman KENDRICK MEEK, and Congressman ARTUR DAVIS will be sorely missed.

Congresswoman CAROLYN CHEEKS KILPATRICK, AKA "Auntie," as I affectionately called her, has been a friend and mentor throughout my service in Congress. A proud native of Detroit, Congresswoman KILPATRICK has led a long and distinguished career in public service. Before her service in the Michigan State House and later in Congress, she enriched the lives of young people as an educator. Throughout her tenure in the House of Representatives, Congresswoman KILPATRICK has consistently supported the development of minority businesses and brought numerous projects to her home State as an appropriator.

Also leaving us will be Congresswoman DIANE WATSON, who was also a mentor, who I affectionately have referred to as "Lady Di" due to her grace and elegance. Congresswoman WATSON began her career as a school psychologist. Upon entering politics, she's been a tireless advocate for consumer protection and health care. She was a member of the California Assembly and an ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia during the Clinton administration.

Congressman ARTUR DAVIS has also faithfully served on Capitol Hill. A former prosecutor, Congressman DAVIS has led a career in public service. He served on the House Ways and Means Committee, and has been a strong ad-

vocate for improvements in health care and education throughout the years.

Finally, hailing from the great State of Florida, Congressman KENDRICK MEEK will be leaving us. He is one half of a historic mother-to-son succession to the U.S. House of Representatives and affectionately known as my "Brother." After years in law enforcement, Congressman MEEK continued in public service by entering politics. He came to Congress at the retirement of his mother, Mrs. Carrie Meek. In the House of Representatives, he has faithfully represented the people of Miami and south Florida by focusing on policies that create jobs and improve health care.

The work of Representatives KILPATRICK, WATSON, DAVIS, and MEEK has not gone unnoticed. Their contributions will provide great assistance for not only their constituents, but for all Americans. I firmly believe that they all will continue to be change-makers along whichever paths they follow. Their role as public servants will always remain strong as they continue to enhance their communities. I wish them the best of luck in their next endeavors, and I will cherish the lasting friendship we have always shared.

#### TRIBUTE TO CONGRESSIONAL BLACK CAUCUS MEMBERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, before I begin my tribute to my dear friends that are leaving, I want to make mention again of a dear friend that we lost this week, and that is the Honorable Richard Holbrooke, who served this Nation ably and who was given tribute today by H. Con. Res. 335, as amended.

Just a brief word about Ambassador Holbrooke as I begin to talk about the outstanding Members that I wish to pay tribute to. I'm reminded not only of his courage, the magnitude of his physical size, the love that he had for his family, the love that he had for the Nation, and the admiration that he received from around the world, but I'm reminded of his tenure at the United Nations. He did something that was equal to moving the Earth. He brought peace between two giants: one, the Vice President of the United States, who in fact came to speak about HIV/AIDS, and he drew also to that very issue with the then-chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Chairman Jesse Helms. He thought that was a great accomplishment—and we did too. Members of the Congressional Black Caucus went to the United Nations at that time. So I am rising to acknowledge Ambassador Holbrooke and will join with my other colleagues who honored him earlier today.

But I have the great, if you will, honor of honoring wonderful, stellar organizations that are coming to pay

tribute to a number of members of the Congressional Black Caucus. And I say "organizations" because I know that sororities, fraternities, the NAACP, women's organizations, so many would want to say thank-you to the following members:

First, my dear sister, Ambassador DIANE WATSON. I always call her "Ambassador." And that she is. She carried herself in a framework of peace; of wanting to bring people together; of challenging our consciousness, and doing it with integrity, honesty, and courageousness. Let me thank her for the work that she did in honoring Dr. Dorothy Height and thank her for the work she did in helping to carry forth the vision of C. Delores Tucker. And now, because of my sister DIANE WATSON and myself and the late Congresswoman Millender-McDonald, I can say that we have the Sojourner Truth statue in the United States Congress, which will always be remembered by this great work.

And her sister, the Honorable CAROLYN KILPATRICK, who took up the Sojourner Truth movement, she's the second African American woman to be appointed to the Appropriations Committee. I can tell you CAROLYN KILPATRICK never wavered from investing in people and ensuring that people had resources that came from the taxpayers' dollars. My hat is off to the former Congresswoman and chairwoman of the Congressional Black Caucus.

Might I thank a colleague on the Judiciary Committee, Congressman ARTUR DAVIS. Yes, a former U.S. Attorney, but a vigorous speaker and a progeny of the civil rights movement. He was in fact the beneficiary of the civil rights movement and carried it in dignity by becoming a U.S. Attorney in the district that covered Alabama. We thank him for his work on the Ways and Means Committee, and we thank him for his service on the Judiciary Committee, and wish him well.

The Honorable KENDRICK MEEK is to all of us like a brother. We loved his mother, Carrie. And we saw in him those traits as he worked hard in the 30-somethings in the first couple of years when he was in the Congress, trying to get us back in the majority, but more importantly, speaking to the people.

He ran a fantastic open, wide, welcoming race for the United States Senate. His great days are before him. His wonderful wife and children were a fixture around this place, and we pay tribute to him because of the passion and sacrifice he made for Haitians in his area and for the many people that he represented.

So, Madam Speaker, let me say to you, sadness falls because we will be losing to great things Members like Congresswoman DIANE WATSON, Congresswoman CAROLYN KILPATRICK, Congressman ARTUR DAVIS, and Congressman KENDRICK MEEK. As my dear sister, Congresswoman DIANE WATSON, is