

up and a bit more during the war in Europe. I knew life to be considerate too, for this I learned in my own home and from my own parents without having to wander to find it. I had the visions every young man has . . . and they had to do with very real things like earning a college degree, finding satisfaction in my work, buying a home and a car, and settling down to live a good life.

I thought this was enough.

But one day it wasn't. I can't tell you the day or the time or the place that this actually happened, but one day that old corny cliché caught up with me. "I wanted to do something more with my life." It was not enough to have a comfortable law practice . . . I wanted to take on a bigger client.

I suppose the same kind of thing happens to most lawyers who enter political life and to some doctors who find a prosperous practice suddenly disquieting and to some people in business who find themselves disturbed when the cash register says they're supposed to be the most happy. It happens to people like Nelson Rockefeller who are thought too rich to need anything, and people like Averell Harriman who are thought too esteemed to want to prove anything. Nobody tells any of these people that they have to serve a calling or a cause. Nobody will say an unkind word if they don't. The world is satisfied if you become a sober citizen and mind your own business. It's only when you succeed in a big way that somebody will want to shoot you down; it's breaking out of the pack that incites them to chase after you. It's not easy wanting to serve and often serving is not a lot of fun.

For many of you, this is your last class. You're on your own. You've been taught. You are your own teacher from now on. You can be an educated hermit and a prosperous one, or a different kind of person with something else going for you. There's a choice to be made and you know it. You can make it now. You can make it later. Or you can never make it and perhaps never even wish you had.

Maybe education is not infectious. Maybe it's an irritation of the skin that only sometimes gets under it. Maybe the smartest people stay out of government, avoid community service, don't become involved in a lot of meetings about somebody else's problem.

Or maybe commitment can be communicated. Maybe involvement can be inspired.

Maybe this is why a free society reveres education and our nation cherishes it.