thank you for your wise leadership.” No one seemed to mind the freelancing. There might have been a whiff of politics when the J.D.s’ turn came: as new dean John F. Manning pronounced the ritual words about the students whose studies point them toward “promoting the rule of law,” and Faust responded about “those wise restraints that make us free,” the traditional text seemed to assume a new, contemporary force.

After the honorands received their actual degrees (below; students have to wait until later in the day), Provost Alan Garber, showrunner, interjected, “Before we conclude, I note that this ceremony marks Drew Faust’s eleventh and final” time presiding over the Morning Exercises. “Words cannot adequately express our gratitude for her extraordinary leadership,” he continued; he invited applause to do that work instead.

There was plenty. As Faust put her hand over her heart, Bacow, to her right, nodded and applauded, and president and president-elect embraced—and applauded each other.

Offstage, Faust, who has emphasized the importance of the arts and of interpreting visual evidence in a digital age, was the subject of a Widener exhibit, “President Drew Gilpin Faust: Eleven Years of University Growth, Reinvention, and Inclusion”: two corridors of highlight photos, suitably placed for viewing by guests at the chief marshal’s spread in Loker Reading Room.

Back outside for the Harvard Alumni Association’s afternoon hoopla, Faust received a final formal encomium, a Harvard Medal (see page 74), purportedly a surprise. Given her lifelong engagement with civil rights, and her strong support for the guest speaker, U.S. Representative John R. Lewis, LL.D. ’12 (whom she had hailed Wednesday evening as “an American hero, my hero”), Faust may especially treasure his opening salute to “the tenure of a great leader.” He continued, “Madam President, thank you for being a friend. But more importantly, thank you for using your office to move Harvard toward being a more all-inclusive institution.”

The stage was impeccably set for Faust’s valedictory speech (see page 21). The University is throwing her a community farewell party on June 28—but it would be hard to top this radiant Commencement day as a parting gift.

The Spirit of ’68

The Wider World loomed during the week, too, of course, eliciting multiple responses, from subtle to nearly strident.

• The Crimson rainbow. In the context of...