

## *Welcoming Address by the President of the National Olympic Committee for Germany Willi Daume*

Mr. President,  
Your Excellencies,  
Federal and States Ministers,  
Mr. President of the International Olympic Committee.  
Dear Friend Avery Brundage,  
Colleagues,

On behalf of our National Olympic Committee, I should like to welcome you heartily to this country : A distinguished gathering has met here : Representatives of the Federal Republic of Germany and its Federal States, amongst them, first and foremost, the Federal President ; their Excellencies, the Ambassadors and Ministers of the countries accredited to the Federal Republic of Germany ; my colleagues of the International Olympic Committee, who have accorded me so much friendship and trust in the short time for which I have served with them. The representatives of the National Olympic Committees. of the International Sport Associations, of the cities that have asked to be entrusted with the organization of the Olympic Games in 1968, and those, that organize them in 1964. The representatives of the international and German press, and all friends and promoters of that great Olympic idea, last not least the Lord Mayor of Baden-Baden, his collaborators and the 'Kurverwaltung'. Many thanks to this lovely city enchanting us with its beauty, and that has gone

out of its way to be a most charming host for all of us.

I must begin by saying that this country and its people in some places enjoy the reputation of being good organizers, yet I have often found that others are far superior on that count. And this Congress could not even be organized, as with the little time available we could only improvise it. Our reputation as improvisors, however, is not too bright. And so we hope that all the same with your good will and generosity it will appear that this time we have proved to be a little better than our reputation, and if not, we ask you to conceal the shortcomings with your generous and kind tolerance that is so indispensable for the Olympic movement at large.

May I first turn to my African colleagues and friends and say that those amongst you with whom we discussed the situation when this Congress had to be transferred to Baden-Baden, know how much we were depressed that, for reasons beyond the control of the Olympic Committee of Kenya, our glad expectations could not be fulfilled in Africa, and that we could not experience, and help promote, the Olympic enthusiasm in this uprising and promising continent so richly endowed. For the great honour to prepare this Congress, we have not vied with others, and in an hour of difficulties we merely stepped in to fill a gap, to make it apparent how much we want to demonstrate practically our deep gratitude to the International Olympic Committee, to the international sports associations and to the great sports family of nations.

To you all we have not always been easy partners — but I daresay that this has not been so for a lack of good will on our part, but was due to a political situation which, again, is beyond your and our control. Perhaps to the outside world many problems that cause great sorrows to us in this divided nation, may appear to be vague, and may be understood only by approximation. And, indeed, one cannot do more, and that is why it is my bounden duty and my sincere wish to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the appreciative understanding with which you have regarded our difficulties.

Mr. Avery Brundage, our revered President, on the occasion of the solemn opening of the 55th Session of the International Olympic Committee had said that 'the world had never been so peaceful as to be void of conflicts between countries and political systems. But if these conflicts were to penetrate the idea of the Olympic Games their early end can be taken for granted'.

The President of the International Olympic Committee may be assured today more than ever that we all believe in the truth of his statement. And if we cannot see yet how an answer can be found to all the problems, which will also be the subject of our discussions here in Baden-Baden, yet we are convinced that this idea will prevail in the end. The belief in Democracy after all includes the belief in public opinion, and public opinion in the whole world is our powerful ally in this issue.

This world-wide consensus of opinion, however, must not only refer to the immediate field of the Olympic Games, but to sports in general. The ships of good will plying to oceans between the nations, must in no case be permitted to carry any political or social contraband. As a field of unprejudiced and amicable human activity sports meetings simply must not be the scene for the waging

of any racial or class struggles. And to say this I have a double reason as a German citizen : The memories of the shameful years of racial aberration, and the experience of the attempted class struggle brought into sports, of which we are affected most, as a nation at the seam between East and West, have taught us that lesson.

The world of today requires islands of peace, if that is possible at all, on which complete political calm prevails — islands with a climate that warms the heart and promotes the best and cherished elements in human relations of all nations, races and political systems. I sincerely hope that Baden-Baden will be one such island, and I do hope, that your Committee here will be inspired to practise the art of agreement which often in this world of ours is so terribly difficult. Whatever my coworkers and I can do as a modest contribution to that end, has and shall be done to create an atmosphere of that kind for this great and historic meeting.

This we owe to our convictions and sympathies as much as we owe it to German youth, so wholeheartedly given to the belief in the great Olympic idea, whatever inescapable human shortcomings it may have. I sincerely wish that you all will have an opportunity to experience that feeling here in Baden-Baden.

It is my fond wish, finally, that memories of pleasant days spent in Germany, and the conviction that you have taken and witnessed good and wise decisions will accompany you on your return to our countries ; may you also leave us with the conviction that we, in all modesty, strive to be sincere and faithful members of the great Olympic family of nations, equal members amongst equals, respectful and openminded towards all others, and today wishing to address this heartfelt request to our guests : You know how grateful we are, do believe also in our friendship.