

## *Speech by the President of the Federal Republic of Germany Dr h. c. Heinrich Lübke*

On behalf of the Federal Republic of Germany and the German people. I repeat and emphasize the words of welcome which the President of the National Olympic Committee for Germany, Herr Daume, addressed to you earlier. We share the regret of the Africans that the 60th Session of the International Olympic Committee could not be held in Nairobi as was originally intended. We would have then pleased if the close ties between the Olympic movement and the nations of Africa could have been visibly expressed by holding a meeting on African soil. But we know quite well that there is no need at all for such an external gesture, for the enthusiasm with which the Africans support the Olympic idea cannot be doubted by anybody. Thus you will all certainly show understanding for our pleasure that an assembly of such high repute throughout the world, is meeting in Germany in order to make important decisions for the forthcoming Olympic Games.

the significance of the 60th Session of the Inter-

national Olympic Committee and the great interest which it is attracting in all parts of the world would have made it appear appropriate to hold this meeting as would be usual in the capital city of the host country. The presence of members of the International Olympic Committee in Berlin would have been particularly welcome to us because it would have provided everyone with the opportunity of acquainting himself with the situation of that city. We sincerely hope, however, that it will be possible in the not too distant future to invite the young men and women of the world to Berlin for the Olympic Games. To be able to celebrate such a festival of peace in that city with the representatives of all nations, that is the desire of the people of Berlin who, during the last decades, have had to bear so much suffering, and that desire is shared by the whole of the German people.

The trust which my countrymen place in the dynamic force of the Olympic idea is understandable because it contributed to the revival of the

Olympic movement in the 19th century. The German scholar and contemporary of Goethe, Joachim Winckelmann, was one of the first people to promote the idea of excavating Olympia. Winckelmann believed that the greatness and beauty of all things hidden beneath the debris of centuries in Olympia would help to remind mankind of its intrinsic destiny... The historian and archeologist Ernst Curtius, took up Winckelmann's idea and devoted himself to its realization. By his address before the Scientific Association in Berlin in 1852 which has since become famous, he succeeded in winning public support for his plan to excavate the birthplace of the contests for Olympic glory. Under his guidance, the first excavations were carried out in the years from 1875 to 1881. The Frenchman, Pierre de Coubertin, then decided, as he himself relates, 'to restore in all its ancient glory whatever Germans have excavated'. His initiative led to the establishment of the International Olympic Committee and the renewal of the Olympic Games. Thus the Olympic flame, which burned for the first time almost 3,000 years ago in Greece on the altar of the virgin goddess Hestia, was rekindled after an interval of 1,500 years. This time, however, it did not burn for the Hellenes alone. Pierre de Coubertin, through the renewal of the Olympic Games, has brought the Olympic idea to all nations of the world. It was his wish that no one should be excluded, and that young people from all countries of the world should compete for the Olympic laurels. During the 70 years or so which have passed since that event, the Olympic idea has met with great enthusiasm in all parts of the world. The news that 111 nations will be taking part in the next Olympic Games emphatically underlines this fact.

But this enthusiasm for sport is not, in itself, a satisfactory explanation for this triumphal march forward of the Olympic idea. The ethos and the moral aspect inherent in the Games from their very origin, have perhaps had an even stronger appeal for people and nations than the international sporting competition as such. The Olympic contest may be understood as a symbol of mankind's struggle for inner freedom and moral maturity.

The sportsmen who step into the stadium to contest with the best in the world show us what a person can do when, by force of his reason, he subjects himself of his own free will to the hardest demands ; when he trains his body with tenacious energy and when he is inspired by the desire to be able to hold his own in competition with the best sportsmen of the world. and if possible to achieve victory. The desire for achievement which is expressed in the Olympic motto *citius, altius, fortius*, is, however, not the only characteristic of the struggle for Olympic honours. According to Olympic rules, only he who has fought in fairness and in a sportsmanlike manner and who was intent on giving his fellow-contestants an equal chance, only he is worthy of Olympic laurels. To have shown thought for others, fairness, sportsmanship and a noble attitude is valued by the Olympic contestant even higher than the actual victory. The laurel wreath honours him who has succeeded in conquering himself before he emerges victorious over others.

Those who follow the history of the Olympic Games realize that, from the outset, they were based on written and unwritten basic laws of manly virtue and honour. These lofty ideals were not intended to apply just for the period of the Olympic Games, they were regarded as maxims for life, which were also to be respected outside Olympia in the everyday life of the Hellenes. To have realized these ideals in every situation in life was to be the ambition of youth and the pride of men.

The main achievement of the champions of the Olympic idea in our times lies in the fact that they endeavoured to foster this high ethos. To Pierre de Coubertin the Olympic Games were, as he himself once said, 'a school for acquiring nobility of mind, moral purity and a stimulus for perseverance and spiritual energy'. The President of the International Olympic Committee, Mr. Avery Brundage, who has just addressed you, once expressed the hope that the Olympic Games would help to produce a mankind which would be guided in all its actions by the spirit acquired on the sports field and which refused in life to accept or tolerate a mode of behaviour different from that on the sports field. The protection and development of a strong code of morals and decency are regarded by these men, and the many others who are striving to maintain the purity of the Olympic idea, as the most important contribution that the Olympic Games can make towards the continued development of mankind.

In this age of technical progress in which man is acquiring more and more control of the tremendous forces of nature. and in which he sets out to extend his research and power to the whole of the cosmos, the readiness to subordinate oneself to moral principles becomes vitally important for the continued existence of mankind. To make individual persons, nations and their governments aware of the responsibility they bear for the entire world is, therefore, in our day and age a particularly urgent task of the worldwide Olympic movement. In addition to the Red Cross, the centenary of which we are celebrating this year, the International Olympic Committee is also a valuable and necessary complement to the political endeavours to foster international understanding which are undertaken by our advocate appointed for that purpose, namely the Organization of the United Nations.

Unhindered by political and economic disputes, the Olympic Games should express unequivocally and without taint the will of the nations to live together in peace. They point the way to the loftiest aim of mankind ; reconciliation of nations in an-all-embracing community. On the principle 'equal rights for all' the Germans base their hope that, like all other nations. they will be given the opportunity to settle their political, social and cultural affairs in free self-determination. We believe that no one can deny us the right to restore our national unity in freedom. This we regard as one of the chief prerequisites for a lasting peace in the world.

In ancient Olympia, there was portrayed on the West front of the temple of Zeus a picture of the struggle of the spirits of light and order against

the forces of darkness, chaos and destruction. It was to remind visitors to the temple that the good in man can only gain the upper hand if lower instincts are eliminated and mastered. This warning applies just as forcibly today.

Justice, peace and freedom will only become attributes of the world of tomorrow if the will of one nation to understand the others proves to be

stronger than the struggle for power at the expense of other nations. The prosperity and progress of mankind render it indispensable that the Olympic ideals of fairness and sportsmanship are accepted as binding in the political sphere as well.

I hope that your discussions will be profitable and successful, and declare the 60th Session of the International Olympic Games open.