

After listening to all the kind speeches tonight I understand why President Kennedy would want to say from the balcony of this building, "I am a Berliner." You make visitors feel honored and welcome. I thank Professor Huffner, Dr. Lehmann-Brauns, Minister Trittin, and Mr. Geier for their kind words. I thank Jens Lorenz for inspiration of the prize and for the exquisite clock that I will put in a place of honor in my home. I thank the UNESCO committee members for their contributions to an important United Nations agency.

And I especially appreciate that so many old friends, people I have known and worked with over decades in Germany, were willing to face bad weather and my boring speech in order to come here tonight.

Of course the city has had a great deal of practice welcoming visitors, it has been here for almost 800 years, at least since the early 1200s.

In contrast, I first came here only 34 years ago, in 1973.

That first visit certainly did not affect Berlin, but it had a great influence on me. It gave me the opportunity to learn three useful lessons:

Tonight in these brief remarks, I will describe those 3 lessons and, explain why they are important to anyone concerned with peace

On that first visit I learned about:

How to be patient  
How to live simply  
How to love an older woman

Let me explain

The first lesson was patience

I came to Berlin in connection with the award of the Peace Prize given by the German Booksellers Association in 1973 for *The Limits to Growth*.

That prize was first offered in 1950. So until now the Booksellers Peace Prize has been granted 57 times. In 56 of those years the prize was given to the author of the book and in 1973 it was given to the Club of Rome. So I had the privilege of sitting in the audience and listening to acceptance speeches by members of the Club who did not contribute to our analysis and who probably disagreed with what we had said, in so far as they really understood it. But I learned to be patient, and now 34 years later I am receiving a peace prize in Berlin. It was worth waiting for. This is by far the more important prize.

How did I learn to live simply?

In 1973 I flew to Berlin directly from Brazil. On that trip I had to give a speech in Rio de Janeiro in the morning and then go as fast as possible to the airport to catch the plane to Germany. Thus I packed my suitcases before my morning speech and left them in a car waiting for me. As I came running out to the car to go to the airport, the driver announced that all my luggage had been stolen. I had nothing - no toothbrush, no clean clothes, nothing except my passport and ticket. So when I arrived in Berlin I learned to live simply.

Now about this older woman. Unfortunately there was a big difference in our ages. She was a lot older than me - about 3300 years older.

Here in Berlin in 1973 for the first time I saw the magnificent statue of Nefertiti. Staring at the bust of that woman who had lived so long ago gave me a lesson about the enormous span of time over which we humans work out our affairs on this planet.

We are all going to need those three lessons in the future.

Before I explain that statement, I wish to correct a recent error. Yesterday in the newspaper, Handelsblatt, the Zurich correspondent Oliver Stock wrote an article about political developments in Switzerland that affect the Club of Rome. In his article he said parenthetically that I have been pushing back the moment of collapse every time I issue a new edition of our book. In the article, he said that now we don't expect collapse until the year 2100.

That is simply false in two ways. First we have never predicted collapse. We have always described many different possible futures - some utopian and some disastrous. We have said that if humanity does not fundamentally change its habits, the now prevailing growth in population and industry will reverse. But Stock's second mistake was more important. Our sense of time has not changed. If anything, the crisis seems to be coming sooner than we had expected.

I looked again through the third edition of the book to try and understand how Mr. Stock could have reached this conclusion. I cannot imagine it. I think he did not read the book and instead wrote as facts his own wishful thinking.

In 1972 we expected growth in the global system through the period 2010-2020. We said that if there no major changes in our habits we should expect to see growth of many physical factors, such as food

production and population starting to decline soon thereafter. Still today, 2007, our computer model shows growth in the global system through the period 2010-2020. We still say that if there no major changes in our habits we should expect to see growth of many physical factors, such as food production and population starting to decline soon thereafter. The only difference is that 35 years have passed since our first warning, so now the period of difficulties is very near.

Let me express this in a different way. Think of all the ways life changed for German citizens between the first years and the last years of the 20th century - changes in your political system, your standard of living, your environment. I believe from my research that you will see bigger changes than all those witnessed in the past century just between now and 2030 - less time into the future than has passed since my first visit to Berlin. Unless we make drastic changes in our habits.

This notion of changing habits is not widely understood, so I will ask you to participate with me in little exercise to demonstrate key points.

## HERE DO THE ARMS CROSSED EXERCISE

Why do we have to change our habits? Because the limits to physical growth are now pressing hard on us. This is seen most directly in the concern for climate change and rising energy prices. But even if we had a magic button to eliminate immediately rising greenhouse gas levels and falling oil reservoirs, there would still be the need to change our habits. This was expressed in a recent report to Chancellor Merkel helping her to prepare for the Bali Climate meeting.

I quote from the paper

“But the problem goes deeper than fossil fuels. Climate change is the thin end of the wedge of an irresolvable conflict between finite resources and unending growth. Continued and unending economic growth has become the very definition of progress and the basis for social solidarity in industrial society. At the end of the day, the resolution of this conflict would be possible only by weaning postindustrial society from its continued reliance on growth, and as such by questioning of some of the core values that underpin it: competition, entrepreneurship, consumption, and growth itself.”

Unfortunately we do not have any magic buttons, and I think therefore that energy scarcity and climate change will be the main factors forcing the rich nations to change their habits. And very soon. Two years ago, that statement always caused arguments for me. Now it does not. It is supported by too many independent studies.

A German research team, the Energy Watch Group released a report last week. It said that

#1: global oil production has already peaked, last year.

#2: by 2030 oil availability will be half current levels.

This decline will be so rapid that there is no chance to fill the gap between what we have and what we want with energy efficiency or solar energy sources.

A recent report by James Hanson a leading climate scientist said that the IPCC forecasts are too optimistic. The Kyoto Accord accepts at 2 degrees temperature rise as the limit. But today there is less than 1 degree rise in average global temperatures and we already see signs that the global ecosystem is spiraling out of control. Two degrees is a political fantasy, not a physical reality.

Our 1973 book did not specifically identify climate and energy as the main forces for change. But those two are just members of a larger family. If we did not have energy scarcity and temperature rise, we would have soil erosion, forest loss, water scarcity, rising gap between rich and poor, and others.

It is counterintuitive. The more we try to sustain growth as a way of solving our problems, the more intense the problems will have to be to stop our growth. And the dangerous time is before the peak, not after. It is starting now that the global system must create larger and larger forces against our economy and our demography to stop their expansion.

I am sure that for some the idea of a peace prize seems obsolete. After all there has been almost 60 years without conflict among the major nations of Western Europe. But I think concern for peace was never more important more than it is today.

The industrial nations are entering a period where they have to adjust to drastically more expensive energy and drastically less favorable climate. It will be very easy to imagine that force might offer short term solutions. The consequences of that you can see just by looking at the example of the United States in Iraq.

Rather than force we should remember those three lessons - be patient, live simply, and understand that human affairs evolve over centuries. We

do not need to try and solve all problems between now and the next election. But if we can learn to live simply, be patient, and allow history to take its course, we can keep the peace and achieve a better sustainability.

And there is one more lesson to remember. I will illustrate with a second simple exercise.

HERE DO THE HANDS CLAPPING EXERCISE.