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Herr Staatssekretär, liebe Kolleginnen und Kollegen,  
meine sehr geehrten Damen und Herren!

Es tut mir sehr leid, daß ich nicht alles, was ich Ihnen sagen möchte, auf deutsch sagen kann. Ich glaube auch nicht, daß es sehr sinnvoll wäre, wenn ich es versuchen würde, denn wahrscheinlich würden mich dann noch wenigere von Ihnen verstehen, als wenn ich englisch spreche. Erlauben Sie mir daher bitte, meine Muttersprache zu benutzen.

Mr. Director,  
Colleagues,  
Ladies und Gentlemen:

For all persons here present, a visit to Helgoland cannot fail to be an event both of pleasurable interest and professional profit.

To some of us the visit will additionally be evocative of old memories. My own interest in the island goes back to the early 1920's when the fishing skipper of the Lowestoft research vessel "George Bligh" used to regale us with tales dating back to his old fleeting days before 1890. At that time Helgoland provided the "run ashore" every ten weeks or so for the crews of Hull trawlers. My early interest in the island sprang too from hearing accounts of the station as it was at the time (now 53 years ago) of a visit paid by the research vessel then under charter to the embryonic Lowestoft laboratory. This vessel, the "Steam Yacht Hiawatha", was actually at Helgoland the day before the outbreak of the First World War. The next visit paid to Helgoland by a Lowestoft research vessel was one year in the early 1920's when we came here in the "George Bligh". That was a very pleasant educative occasion, and I shall always remember the kindness of the reception we were given here by the genial director of that time, WILHELM MIELCK, as well as by ARNOLD WULFF, and others of the staff.

It is indeed strange how certain things linger in the memory, and I shall always recall with amusement and some degree of admiring envy, the remarkable facilities with which WILHELM MIELCK had physically surrounded himself to aid him in his report writing. MIELCK was no wraith (I hope you all know that English word), and I shall always carry in my mind the picture of him sitting within a curved desk which

had a convenient indentation to accommodate "personal frontage", and had all manner of little brackets around it at different levels. Upon these could be placed bulky tomes which could be individually swung inwards for easy consultation without the writer having to pull them from a pile.

In my view, Mr. Director, the persistence of such happy memories is a good tribute to the regard in which we have always held your station. It has often been said, and it has rightly been said, that those who study the sea and who come together for the purpose from numerous countries over the earth, constitute as perfect a League of Nations as any yet devised in human affairs. It was therefore a most attractive thing to see when we had the pleasure of assembling here in June 1959, to witness the opening of this splendid station, that Dr. BÜCKMANN had made a prominent and permanent display of the famous triplet from GOETHE (from the speech of Thales in Act II of Doctor Faustus) which adorned the entrance of the former buildings. Having known Helgoland intimately as it lay ruins, I was amazed by what had so quickly come into being to carry on and amplify the work of other days.

You have here, Mr. Director, much more than fine premises admirably planned and excellently equipped; your station is so well located and so well staffed that the mark which it has already made in marine science must be to all a pleasing earnest of an ever-growing international repute which is both its due and its certain future.

On grounds of travel expense you are geographically very well located indeed for international conferences, and you may rightly be proud of the one which took place here a year ago.

Because that "First European Symposium on Marine Biology" which drew within your hospitable doors 236 scientists from 24 countries and attracted more than 100 good wishes, telegrams and letters, has so expeditiously produced a 669-page book full of valuable contributions from the attending experts, we have every reason to expect that, with comparable expedition, this present Symposium will make available a similar *vade mecum* on its subject theme which grows continuously in importance year by year. It is noted with interest that an outcome of our "First European Symposium on Marine Biology" held here last year was the formation of a committee which will insure the future holding of similar symposiums under its aegis, and that already two more are scheduled, one in Bergen and one in Arcachon.

We all owe you, Professor KINNE, a great debt for organizing this present Symposium and we fully realize that the obligation is upon us, your guests, to do you credit with our contributions. That we shall have the best possible opportunities to talk with each other will owe something to the fact that we are on an island only one mile long and 600 yards across at its widest point.

You are the only nation who have a poet, a great poet, about whom has been written a special article in his capacity as an oceanographer. I refer to your great poet GOETHE who, as many of you may know, studied several things which had to do with hydrography and meteorology. He is famous to all the world for his great work "Doctor Faustus" and for the triplet that I referred to which was carved in the headstones of the old Institute and now is in the new Marine Station of the Biologische Anstalt Helgoland here today. You will well understand my quoting him because he provides the very text for your Symposium here this week.

Alles ist aus dem Wasser entsprungen!  
 Alles wird durch das Wasser erhalten!  
 Ozean, gönn' uns dein ewiges Walten.  
 Wenn du nicht Wolken sendetest,  
 Nicht reiche Bäche spendetest,  
 Hin und her nicht Flüsse wendetest,  
 Die Ströme nicht vollendetest,  
 Was wären Gebirge, was Ebenen und Welt?  
 Du bist's, der das frischeste Leben erhält.

This was put into English in a translation which was said to have been much favoured in your country:

In Water all hath had its primal source;  
 And Water still keeps all things in their course.  
 Ocean, still round us let thy billows proud  
 Roll in their strength – still send up mist and cloud.  
 If the rich rivers thou didst cease to spread –  
 If floods no more were from thy bounty fed –  
 And the thin brooklet died in its dry bed –  
 Where then were mountains – valleys? Where would be  
 The world itself? Oh! thou dost still, great Sea,  
 Sustain alone the fresh life of all things.

There you have from the mouth of your great poet the text for your Symposium. And I would put it to you that we have no right to solicit benefactions from the great ocean unless we are going to exert every effort to avoid spoiling it.

Vor neun Jahren, Herr Direktor, bei der Einweihung der Meeresstation habe ich einen sehr alten schottischen Glückwunsch gesprochen, den ich Ihnen heute wiedergeben möchte:

„Möge Ihr Schornstein immer rauchen!“