

Wolfgang K. H. Panofsky

Dank

aus:

Zur Verleihung der Ehrensensatorwürde der Universität Hamburg an Prof. Dr. Dr. h. c. Wolfgang K. H. Panofsky am 6. Juli 2006

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W o l f g a n g K . H . P a n o f s k y

D A N K

I am very much honored that the senate of Hamburg University has decided to make me an honorary member of their fraternity. I am also greatly pleased and honored that the president of the university has given me personally this prize. As has been said many times my connections with Hamburg have been intimate for a very long time for 87 years. I am particularly pleased that this award is being given here in the Erwin-Panofsky-Hörsaal. As you all know my father was a great art historian. He taught here first as Privatdozent starting in 1919 the year I was born and then left under very unfortunate circumstances in 1934.

The scholarly interests of the different generations of Panofskys have always alternated. My father used to call his two sons "die Klempner" because my brother was an eminent meteorologist and I am a physicist. Then I am also very pleased here to have this beautiful music because the next generation of my children is attached to music, one of them is a professional oboist, the other one has written a textbook on viola da

gamba. Whether physicists will be resurrected in the next or next to next generation I do not know.

So, music, art history and physics have been united here and this has indeed been a very sentimental occasion for me. I particularly remember that in 1934 when my father left the wind section of the Hamburg Philharmonic, they gave us a farewell concert in the living room of our house at the Alte Rabenstraße performing some music which I will always remember, some of which is very similar to what we have heard.

My father's leaving here was a very sad occasion. Some of you may know that my father's letters are being edited by Professor Dieter Wuttke from the University of Bamberg. He collected 40,000 of my father's letters and he has thus far published two volumes of them with the third one in gestation and I hope that Professor Wuttke will be able to produce volume four and five. But volume two in a very moving way documents how his departure from the University of Hamburg was being implemented by the faculty of the university by being forced to vote on dismissal without having any real intention to do so, a very sad time indeed.

Now, tomorrow, the reason for my being here is to give one of the talks during the seminar to commemorate the initiation of the peace research center which is here at Hamburg trying to

link science and peace research. Now linking science and peace research to me has always been an extremely important matter. It is very sad that the interest in linking those two has been decreasing since the time two bombs whose magnitude was about one twentieth of the average of the magnitude of the bombs now in the inventories of the nuclear nations killed 250,000 in Japan. Since then no nuclear bombs have been used in warfare. That is the good news.

The bad news is that the interest of the young generation in trying to understand the profound impact which scientific work can have on security of nations and the world has been decreasing. It has become increasingly difficult to solicit interest of students in this but even worse it is also becoming more difficult to generate the interest of governments in science as it relates to national security. That interest has also been decreasing and we all know in our country, the high advisory councils which advise the top levels of governments have largely been discharged and many decisions which have been made are being considered very, very unfortunate by a large community of scientists. We must remember that science cannot be coerced by policy and unless governments are aware of that the future of mankind indeed looks bad. Therefore I am glad that tomorrow's

dedication will be an important step in linking science and policy.

Thank you very, very much for your award.

WOLFGANG K. H. PANOFSKY
IM GESPRÄCH