

Win Labuda

**Do we want to carry on like this?**

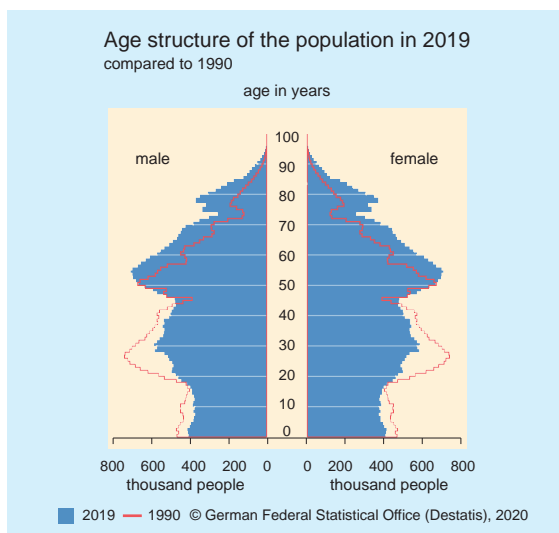


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*The Corona pandemic has pulled the cloth from our veiled reality in one fell swoop, making the real situation of the 7.8 billion people on our globe clearer. The resulting shock requires us to take a ruthless look at the conditions in our country, to take a kind of interim assessment of what our generation has achieved and what problems we leave to future generations. This subsuming look is also necessary because the reaction to the pandemic has led some zealots to believe and argue that saving the over-65s may be useless. The provocative statement by the mayor of Tübingen, Boris Palmer, „We are saving people who would be dead in half a year anyway“ gave the impression that millions of people would have to accept disproportionate restrictions on their quality of life to save a few old people from dying. Palmer’s implicit recommendation should leave people who would probably die in six months anyway untreated in the future, but may violate the first article of our fundamental law: „Human dignity shall be inviolable.“ Reason enough to begin these reflections with the appreciation of the achievements of my generation reaching the age of 80.*

In our society of increasing life expectancy, the group of over-65s is often insufficiently considered. In Germany, 17.5 million people - i.e. 21% of the population - are 65 years old or older. They will be 79 (M) and 84 (F) on average at the end of their lives. This population group is not only economically significant due to its wealth situation in the sense of high savings rates and large property ownership. On the contrary, it is also involved in the general industrial value creation within the framework of age-typical needs such as orthopaedic needs, glasses, hearing aids, stair lifts, walking aids and dentures. Through its tax rate and financial contributions to the next generation, it is also significantly involved in covering government expenditure. In the spirit of an expanded concept of productivity, the group is also engaged in non-commercial work services such as childcare, driving services for family and friends, and neighbourhood assistance. She successfully brings her life experience to bear in the course of voluntary activities or in state-supporting party work. Many scientists and doctors today give lectures, write for specialist journals or within the framework of the association’s work, as well as the author of this paper (82).

However, in addition to economic, there is also an ethical view of the subject: the noble word of human dignity, in my opinion, includes also the grace of the indeterminacy of the time of death, such as the expectation that the period of time until the possible occurrence of this last of all times in human life is irrevocably linked to the hope of regaining integrity and health. The hyper-realistic thinking of Boris Palmer may not be far from the thoughts of many contemporaries.

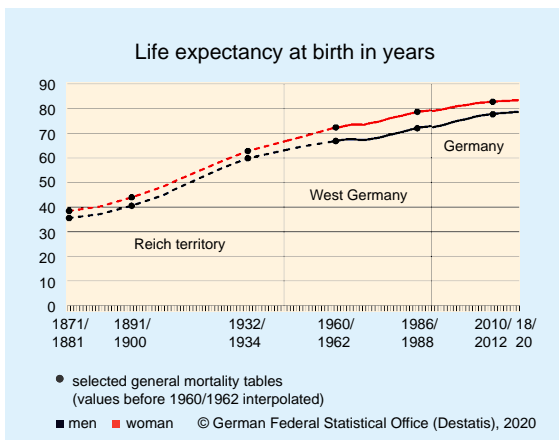


But the story is not thought to be over: who are those who want to „optimize „the end time of a person, what competence do they have and what chances do they have to assert themselves with it? They, too, will be 80 years old one day. Thus, the present writing sees itself as a general critique of the careless handling the lifespan of others. It is necessary, to resist the beginnings and especially those said to come from Boris Palmer. This also applies to some doctors who are guided to God-like verdicts following an irresistible urge. At the heart of all these impositions is always one phenomenon: the lack of respect, appreciation and affection for one's fellow human beings.

*Between two generations there is always a strangeness that separates the old from the new. Often, heritage is the only reason for a remnant of formal devotion to the old. Perhaps today's boys will find their two precursor generations unhelpful in their progress. I would therefore like to dedicate the following sections to those aspects that I have felt in the course of my life as an achievement in the sense of future generations - but also in comparison with the conditions that shaped my childhood. On the other hand, I will also comment on the occasionally serious grievances, for which my generation apparently could not find a solution:*

The young will have a lot to reproach us for, and they will probably forget a lot of things or not know at all what our generation had committed and successfully fought for:

- + Also the young may have forgotten that we kept Germany free of war and famine for 75 years, as we had experienced so painfully.
- + In addition, we have created a social legislation, that ensures that our poorest, the Hartz IV recipients, have a standard of living that is higher or much higher than that of three quarters of the world's population.
- + We have created and maintained an almost perfect - if not over-perfect - democracy. For example Christian Wulff, our 10th President from 2010-2012 - had to resign because a personal friend, active in the film industry, had taken over the bill of 754.- Euro for Wulff, his entourage and himself at the Munich Oktoberfest. However, Wulff had previously messed with the newspaper Bildzeitung. He was charged with taking advantage of the office and acquitted in the 2nd instance by the Hannover court, but the office was damaged and he retired.
- + In 60 years of time life expectancy in Germany has increased by 14 years. If we go back further to around 1900, life expectancy in Germany was only 41 years.



- + The purchasing power of an hour's work has tripled since 1960.
- + Since 1950, working time has been reduced from 54 to 38 hours per week or less.
- + Paid annual leave has been increased from 2 to 6 weeks since 1950.
- + Since 1969, there has been the right to be paid wages in the event of illness.
- + In 2011, we suspended conscription and military replacement service.
- + Since 2013, every child living here has a legal right to a daycare place.
- + Most German counties have not charged tuition fees for decades.
- + We have exemplary medical care in an international comparison.
- + Cancer mortality decreased by 25% between 1980 and 2020.
- + Between 2005 and 2019, we experienced a period of economically successful years of unprecedented duration. During this time, Germany created the financial reserves for contingencies such as the Corona crisis.
- + After the birth of a child, parents are allowed to stay away from work for 3 years and then have a reintegration claim in their company.
- + The phenomenon of „unproblematic sick leave“ by family doctors has existed. The phrase“ I let me write sick“ found at the end of the 70's entry into the German vocabulary.
- + The list of improvement characteristics for employees is long and cannot be completed in the course of this essay.
- + A young entrepreneur who comes to the banker with a plausible concept can now relatively easily benefit from funding from banks and the state. (KfW Start-Up Loans, ERP Start-up Capital, ERP Innovation Capital) So far, there has even been enough risk capital, to get start-ups with fancy ideas through the difficult first years. It is also helpful for technical start-ups that there is a functioning patent system in Germany with well-trained patent attorneys and technical officials.

+ In retrospect, today's generation is also the beneficiary of countless discoveries and inventions by great scientists of the father generation, some of whom have dramatically improved our health situation .. In the appendix to this essay there is a table which lists only the medical achievements of the past 50 years. These alone are, taken together, quite overwhelming.

*To some extent as a counterweight to all the achievements, we are also handing over to our successor generation, when we step down, a bundle of long-term problems, the solution of which will be solved within this century rather not to be expected:*

- Our most pressing problem today is undoubtedly the threat to humanity from the undignified use of our natural resources and - with the farm animals given to us. So far, there has not been a generation of politicians who have identified themselves seriously, successfully and sustainably with this task as a core concern. Only recently are there some shy approaches here. After a transition period of 8 (!) years, the „box stand“ - the sows' ploughing into a nearly body-size-equivalent metal grid, in which they can move only inches in advance and sideways should be prohibited.
- We and our children have committed ourselves to a seemingly never-ending consumerfrenzy, while in principle it has always gone up and from some point in time, it had to go further and further upwards, because otherwise a financial fiasco would have been the result. The Corona crisis, with more than half a million deaths so far, the Australian wildfires over a territory the size of Austria and half a billion burned animals, the melting of the polar caps, the constant fall in the ground water level and the rise in sea level, as well as the water and air temperature, raise the question for hard-boiled optimists as to who will take the first step, which will perhaps lead to a reversal for all of us.
- A child born, today is burdened with about €25,000 in government debt when he enters this world, which we - the politicians of our generation - have borrowed from the banks, to realize any projects, and in part certainly to be re-elected. The EU's total public debt amounts to 80.4% of the gross domestic product of EUR 14,000 billion. This equates to debts of €11,760 billion. There are still voices in favor, of even more debt and more recently even in favor of non-repayable debts. It is a fact known to every reasonable economist that national debt must not exceed the 90% of GNI threshold. The calculation of the southerners, the have-nots is always up to the question: If they do not repay the money, we lend them, then one can only re-indebt it again and again - simply because they have nothing. In the end, Europe might not fail because of the

different possibilities of its nations, but because of the different people, values and concepts of life.

- What can anyone expect who is pursuing an entrepreneurial career? He might experience the German paradox: the entrepreneurial status is highly regarded in principle, but only as long as an entrepreneur remains moderately successful. Very successful entrepreneurs are per se „rich“ and the rich have to fight here for their good image over here. This is mainly because the political parties SPD, die Linke and die Grünen do not tire, of pointing out that „broad shoulders can carry more than narrow ones“ and therefore a wealth tax would be only „fair“. Almost every left-leaning politician has repeated this slogan again and again. Peer Steinbrück and Franz Müntefering leading the queue. But it seems that no one in the auditorium has ever calculated, the extent to which the strong shoulders of the rich have long borne the burden of our state. The problem is quite clearly related to the left-wing party groups, which are constantly feeding redistribution fantasies for their electorate and presenting the capital of „the rich“ as disponible. But in reality, 10% of (rich) taxpayers pay 50% of German taxes.

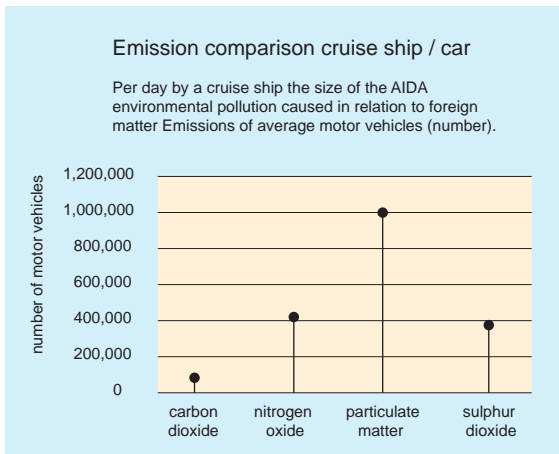
The protagonists are consistently people who are well aware from the background of education and intellect that a „rich man“, who has, for example, an income of 1 million Euro per annum, of which about 457,000.- Euro is handed over to our state. For the average earners, on the other hand, earning 48.000,- Euro, it is per annum only 12,000.- Euro, which our state is allowed to collect from them. It is incomprehensible why a fair state should in any way penalise a person who gives it EUR 438,000 more than the ordinary earner by politically motivated additional taxes (wealth tax claims, solidarity-surtax etc.). If he supports our state with such extraordinary tax payments, then it is due, in fact, to our community and not to the subliminal contempt by political circles that earn their salary through such – demagoguery. We must never ignore the fact that the central act of exchange of any democracy is based on political promises against votes.

- In the 1960s and 1970s, the economically indispensable generation of technocrats consisted largely of former middle-class pupils. In order to catch up as quickly as possible to the image of cultivated cosmopolitanism of the dwindling educational bourgeoisie, which had, of course, dug its own grave early on due to its proximity to National Socialism, replacement had to be found. They had to be outwardly Hierarchy-forming effective, for a multitude of people effortlessly reachable and at the same time mediate the appearance of modern sophistication.

Redemption came from the travel industry. In the past centuries, occasional travel had been a privilege of the wealthy.

Now, large companies such as TUI, Thomas Cook, DER and many others created travel for everyone as part of well-sophisticated package deals. Today, the gross value added attributable to tourism amounts to 105 billion Euros and secures 2.9 million jobs. Everyone wanted to travel the world as soon as possible. The essentials are: as warm as possible - as far as possible - as cheaply as possible. Acapulco was trendy and for the less well-off it is Mallorca and Antalya. Travel was soon seen as the greatest emancipation factor out of car ownership. The consequence of this development, however, is - unnoticed by many and for a long time - a magnificent environmental impact.

- In the meantime, millions of tourists move like a steam-roller through the sites of our occidental culture every day. Ruthless journeymen have even managed to get this generation of travellers to shake the palazzi along the Venetian canals, reduced to a tiny scale, that it is only buzzing. There are 320 cruise ships worldwide with a capacity for 540,000 passengers. They carry 26 million passengers a year. The well-known cruise ship AIDA alone consumes 150 t of crude oil per day. A single cruise ship of this type pollutes the environment daily with the above-mentioned pollutants as measured by the foreign material emissions of average cars:

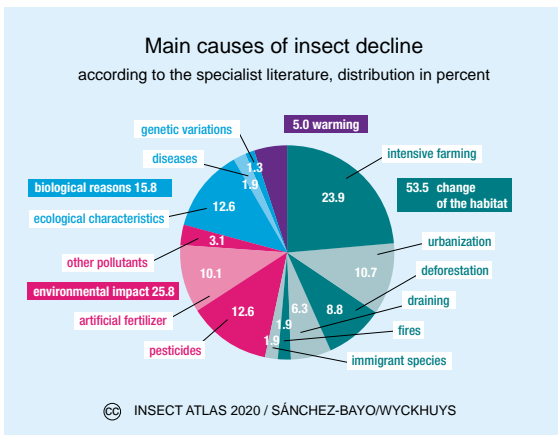


Carbon dioxide	84,000 cars
Nitrogen oxide	421,000 cars
Particulate matter	1000,000 cars
Sulphur dioxide	376,000 cars

- We have not been able to protect our youth and ourselves from the worldwide rampant evil of a health-endangering gainful obesity. Politicians are still unable to dissuade the beverage industry from producing sugary drinks. Over the 10-year period (1989 to 1999), the average body weight of 10-year-old Brandenburg boys increased by 1.6 kg to 22.8 kg (+7.6%) and that of the girls by 1.15 kg to 22.23 kg (+5.4%) Today, at the age of 60, only one in four men and one in two women have normal weight.
- At the same time, with the recent economic boom lasting one and a half decades, more and more projects were financed externally. The capital needed for this was less and less often the own, more and more often a borrowed one. In Japan in 1990 there was a real estate bubble from which the country has not recovered to this day. Thus, the banks there and also in our country are notoriously undercapitalized, even though the situation has improved in recent years. But over the past decade, savers in the EC region have been gradually expropriated in favor of government finance ministers, who, for understandable reasons, are firmly behind the ECB's zero-interest-rate policy.

This is in fact an admission of the inability of governments, to pour restrictive measures into law instead fill gift baskets just before elections, as is happening in connection with the Corona crisis in Germany. Some banks were merged, others took over. Once glamorous managers such as Ackermann, Breuer, Fitch, Jain and others - now in old age - face their often in question life's work in old age.

The necessary changes in our world are constantly associated with renunciation of all -alone in order to preserve our present state. In addition, there are the repair services in the sense of restoring the initial original condition, say 50 years ago.



- Every gardener can notice that the number of insects has decreased drastically over the past decade - in fact by 75%. The inflagrant disputes as to whether the reasons for this could be due to the increasing sealing of land, the extensive traffic of motor vehicles, the progressive development activity, the increase in intensive light sources, the lack of structures and habitats or, for example, the insecticides sprayed by agriculture, has yet to be decided. But it is plausible: if insecticides are sprayed, then the insects die. This, after all, is the function intended for insecticides.
- Overfertilization with manure affects our permissible groundwater limits for nitrate NO<sub>2</sub>. The EU has therefore set the permissible limit value for nitrate in groundwater at 50 mg/litre. In 2013, however, an average of 170 mg/litre was measured, rising to 209 mg in 2017, i.e. more than 4 times the limit value. Nitrate itself is relatively harmless to the human organism. Only when it becomes nitrite through metabolic processes, it, has very harmful effects on a child's organism.
- In the context of livestock farming, antibiotics are even fed prophylactically today. These enter the groundwater via detours via the manure and therefore act on the human intestinal flora. They also cause antibiotic resistance and are responsible for 33,000 deaths per year. Until now, politics has also been powerless in this matter. Until now, it had not even managed to keep the reserve antibiotics out of the farmers' stables. These are antibiotics that should be reserved for the cure of the most serious infectious diseases in humans. After all, there is a glimmer of light: from 2021, the feeding of reserve antibiotics in animal fattening will be prohibited. The question of how it was possible to get these last survival anchors of human medicine into animal fattening, is certainly justified and not without embarrassment for the pharmaceutical industry, but especially for our politicians.
- Our elites: It is not only recently that science offers capable and willing people an alternative way to achieve



fame and glory. This is the procurement of so-called third-party funding orders. These are well-rewarded research contracts, which are often awarded by industry to scientific institutes with the aim of researching and pleasingly reviewing the products or services you offer. In the meantime, it is becoming even more common practice to tie the allocation of chairs to certain scientists to a certain level of third-party funding quotas. (It is inconceivable that Albert Einstein, for example, would have been forcibly removed from his chair at Princeton because he did not raise enough third-party funds.) It would be conceivable and in some cases even desirable for the legislature to prohibit such „business“ in the sense of the independence of teaching and research, especially in the field of technology. But the opposite is true. The rectors and chancellors are still happy if they receive third-party funding from any corporations. If they have to pay for it, it will only be known after years, possibly at a time when they are no longer in charge.

- Doctors, pharmacists and pastors together, historically speaking, form a good part of the elite of our people. They have a special responsibility for our common good as a role model. Most doctors work in good faith for the health insurance companies from which they must be admitted. This means that the health insurance company expects the billing doctor to actually perform the medical services that have been invoiced. Unfortunately, the reality is different: In the GKV press release of 28.11.2018, the top association of all health insurance companies states: The number of external indications of misbehaviour by doctors increased from 16,764 to 25,039 cases between 2014/15 and 2016/17. In 2016/17, the total amount of damages amounted to 49.1 million Euros. However, the number of unreported cases is very high. A pharmacist from Bottrop alone was fined 17 million Euros for billing fraud.
- In the formulation of the German Basic Law, Article 8 provided for a right of demonstration in order to create the possibility of constructively expressing one's views towards legislation and public. Over the years, unrestrained demonstrations have made their ugliest journey. More and more people have more and more unqualified opinions. They demonstrate for all sorts of things until the act of demonstrating becomes independent and runs outside any political intention. The aim of the demonstration often no longer seems to be political action, but the riot in the sense of freeing non-educational strata out of their emotional jams. The same phenomenon in exposed form can be found in the disgusting street battles that are taking place on the fringes of international conferences of Government leaders in the G20 environment.

If one dedicates one's individual concerns of the demonstrators, one is always frightened by the quirkiness of so many views. For example, when a certain group of demonstrators places the blame for the Corona crisis on the American mega-philanthropist Bill Gates, who with his foundation has spent 36 billion (!) Dollar donated for fighting malaria in Africa. But at the end it was not the politically motivated and the animal rights activists who determined the events, but then, masked figures who had travelled from far away, set fire to cars and buildings of Hamburg citizens in rows and devastated their city centre. The cost of the recent G20 summit is EUR 72.2 million, as of June 2020. We find a similar phenomenon in the context of football-criminals.

*Finally, the question remains: What do we have to fear most about? The question will find different answers: Perhaps before anything else it is the agitation by violent hate preachers. At least our older generations still remember the outcome of the hate-preacher-experiment 1933 - 1945. The question, of whether democracy is, still the appropriate form of government for solving our future problems may be heretical. It is certainly not completely absurd. On many horizons, self-appointed leaders are already growing like mushrooms: Bolsonaro, Chi, Erdogan, Orban, Putin, Trump.*

It is not out of the question that the democracies based on the rule of law and separation of powers - the most divided democracies on both sides of the Atlantic will dissolve from within.

## Great achievements in in medicine - period from 1965 to 2012

1965 •	First dental implant by Per-Ingvar Brånemark	1929-2014
1967	First heart transplant by Christiaan Barnard, Groote Schuur-Hospital Cape Town. The patient survived the operation for 18 days.	1922-2001
1968 •	First bone marrow implantation by Edward Donnall Thomas	1920-2012
1969 •	Discovery of the propagation mechanism and genetic structure of viruses by Max Delbrück, Day Hershey and S. Edward Luria	1906-1981 1908-1997 1912-1991
1971 •	Discovery of the mechanisms of action of hormones by E. W. Sutherland (USA)	1915-1974
1972 •	Discovery of the chemical structure of antibodies by G. M. Edelman (USA)	1929-2014
1973 •	MRI - Magnetic resonance tomography by P. C. Lauterbur and P. Mansfield (USA, UK)	1929-2007 1933-2017
1973 •	Discoveries on the organization and triggering of individual and social behaviour patterns by K. v. Frisch (D), K. Lorenz (Au), N. Tinbergen (UK)	1886-1982 1903-1989 1907-1988
1974 •	Discoveries on the structural and functional organization of the cell by A. Claude (B), C. de Duve (B) and G. E. Palade (US)	1899-1983 1917-2013 1912-2008
1976 •	CT - Computer Tomography by Godfrey Haunsfield (USA)	1919-2004
1977 •	First artificial insemination by Robert Edwards and Patrick Steptoe	1925-2013 1914-1988
1980	First eradication of a disease: smallpox disease	
1983 •	Luc Montagnier, Françoise Barré and Robert Gallo discover and describe the HIV virus	1932- 1947- 1937-
1983 •	Discovery of helicobacter pylori as the cause of stomach ulcers by Barry Marshall (AU) and John R. Warren (AU)	1951- 1937-
1987	Refractive force correction on the human eye by laser treatment by Theo Seiler at the FU-Berlin	1949-
1989	Discovery and description of hepatitis C and D-genome by Qui-Lim Choo, Michael Houghton, George Kuo	ca. 1954-
1995 •	Findings on genetic control of early embryonal development. E. B. Lewis (USA), C. Nüsslein-Volhard (D), E. Wieschaus (USA)	1918-2004 1942- 1947-
2001	Complete DNA sequencing of the human genome by the HUMAN GENOM PROJECT by Luca Cavalli-Sforza	1922-2018
2006 •	Development of HPV vaccines against papilloma viruses (cervical cancer) by Harald zur Hausen	1936-
2011	Second eradication of a disease: bovine plague	
2012	Introducing the CrisPr/Cas method for selective cutting and modifying DNA, Emmanuelle Charpentier, Jennifer Doudna	1968- 1964-

• Nobel Prize