

World Maritime University

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The World Maritime University

«The World Maritime University is one of the most important — and imaginative — developments in international shipping in recent years. It offers a way of training high level personnel that developing countries have lacked in many crucial sectors. The university will help to make shipping safer, help to combat marine pollution, improve the efficiency of ports and administration — in other words, it will help to achieve many of the things that the maritime community has been demanding for years»

These characteristic remarks came from the Secretary-General of IMO, C. P. Sri-vastava, at the opening of the World Maritime University which he now serves as chancellor.

At the moment, there are 201 students from 73 countries at the University, located in Malmö, Sweden. We asked course administrator Jan Horck about the experience so far.

«We feel that we are coming to grips with things, and that we are getting a firm footing. We also believe we are organised to meet most of the practical problems arising when you are to accommodate and take care of people from developing countries here in the high, not to mention cold north.

«The first course with 68 students started in July, 1983. They are going to write their examination this summer. Last year, 61 students were taken in, and 72 in February this year. This makes it a bit crowded at the moment, but we will organise enrollment for February in the future. The start in July '83 has created some overlapping, which will be cleared when the first students take their examination and leave us in July. We only have room for 155 persons in this house. However, the situation will become normal from the middle of the summer.»

The very functional facilities were offered by the Government of Sweden, which in the early '80s — a period characterised by depressions in economic life, with high unemployment rates and overcapacity in most sectors in Sweden — found itself ready to offer the facilities of the maritime school they had ready in Malmö, which lacked students in a depressed market.

Rector of the University is Sölve Arvedson from Sweden. He and a perma-

nent staff of nine professors are responsible for the education. The staff members are from India, the US, Japan, France, Norway, West Germany, Egypt and the UK. In addition, they draw on a wide range of visiting professors. So far, 158 visiting professors have taught. These are often people working in the industry.

Over half the \$4m annual budget comes from recurring contributions from Sweden, which provides \$1m, The UN Development Program \$800 000, Norway \$200 000 and the Commonwealth Secretariat \$100 000. The balance of about \$2m still has to be secured on a recurring basis. Several IMO member states have made contributions. Horck reckons that a student costs about \$12 000 per year. So far, the students have all come from developing countries, and more students are being assigned to each course than should actually be taken. But still Horck believes there will be a development where a few from industrialised countries may well also be allowed.

«We have experienced that updating is also needed in these countries. Our students travel extensively to acquire on-the-spot training. They are reasonably qualified and ask questions during visits to organisations and institutions in different places. Students from industrialised countries, however, have to meet their expenses themselves.»

Personally, Horck sees great advantages, not least because of the many personal contacts one gets in this way, and because one learns the way of thinking and behaving in shipping circles in these new nations. Better understanding on both sides will help smoothen shipping relations in the future.

The students accepted are qualified

when starting. They must have a background as maritime engineers of some kind, or must hold a captain's certificate. This means that they are usually over 30 years of age and already have considerable professional experience. Most of them will no doubt assume increasing responsibilities for maritime activities in their home countries.

The World Maritime University offers two-year and one-year courses. Normally, satisfactory completion of a two-year course will result in the student receiving a Master of Science degree in one of the following subjects:

- General Maritime Administration
- Maritime Safety Administration
- Maritime Education
- Technical Management of Shipping Companies

One-year courses leading to a Certificate are offered in maritime safety administration and technical management of shipping companies.

In addition, the University also provides short-term courses of 4/6 weeks dealing with particular subjects.

The course in General Maritime Administration is the only one not requiring that a student have a technical background.

In most courses, much emphasis is put on job training.

So far there has been a great spread in the nationalities of the students. The evaluation of students applying for a course is conducted through a thorough examination of their papers and experience, says Horck.

In addition to teaching personnel, there is an administrator, two assistant administrators and a course administrator on permanent staff at the University. Also, an English language program has been organised. The English education is taken very seriously at the beginning of each course, but continues parallel with the technical courses.

The World Maritime University has got off the ground, and there are indications that its status is increasing. We feel the Malmö-based University can do much to educate people who are going to run and organise international shipping, create opportunities for international understanding, and thus make international shipping even more efficient.