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WMU in the News

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The university's rector looks to the future

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WORLD MARITIME UNIVERSITY

The University's rector looks to the future

When Mr. Erik Nordstrom was offered the position as rector of the World Maritime University it was, he said 'exactly what I wanted. It was the most interesting offer I have ever had.'

Mr. Nordstrom came to the University from the Swedish Shipowners' Association, where he was deputy managing director. Although he is a lawyer by profession – he was once a judge in a Swedish Court of Appeals – he gradually became more interested in shipping policy than purely legal matters. In his position with the Shipowners' Association he spent more than half his time travelling on behalf of the Swedish Government, served on various Government committees, and represented Sweden at numerous international conferences.

He had followed the progress of the University from the beginning and had been to Malmö to lecture on shipping policy developments, so he knew a lot about the University and its purposes.

'I was pleased when I got this offer,' he says, 'because it was exactly what I was interested in. I was always concerned about international issues, aid and so on and back in the 1970s I lectured frequently on behalf of the Swedish International Development Authority (SIDA).'

He sees the University as occupying an important position in the shipping world at a time of profound change: in many traditional maritime countries, shipping and shipbuilding is contracting rapidly, while it is still expanding in some developing countries. It is important that skills and technology in

the latter keep pace with these changes.

Mr. Nordstrom says: 'This is an institution where we can help achieve this transfer of knowledge. And it is an institution whose only real responsibility is to increase and aid the education of developing countries. Everyone in the world supports that.'

Since 1983, when the University was inaugurated, two classes of students have graduated and many of them have moved into senior positions in administration, education or management. So successful has the project been that the Board of Governors decided this year to increase the annual student intake from around 75 a year to 100. With all students studying for a two-year course this will give a maximum student body of 200.

Although the vast majority will

continue to come from the developing countries, Mr. Nordstrom says he would like to see some coming from the developed countries as well. He said: 'All of the students want this. They say that they learn from their fellow students and a wider representation would broaden their knowledge.'

'There is in fact considerable interest in the courses offered here, but finance is a problem. They could not be offered scholarships, as is the case with students from the developing countries.'

It is becoming more widely known and is helping to repay some of the tremendous support which has been given to the University by the municipality of Malmö itself. Mr. Nordstrom says: 'Three large international organizations have decided to hold

meetings in Malmö in co-operation with the University. As long as the subject is relevant to our work I usually say yes to proposals of this type on condition that the students get copies of all papers delivered and that I am allowed to address the conference. This enables me to tell them about the University and what we are trying to do here. That is good for us – and the fact that the conference is being held in Malmö is good for the town.'

While the University is making itself better known in the developed world, the number of graduates is also growing. The 1986 class will graduate on 9 December and most of them will return to their countries to take up senior positions. Each one will have been trained to the same high standards and will have the same ideals including a determination to promote the IMO objectives of 'safer shipping and cleaner oceans'.

Mr. Nordstrom looks to the future. 'In ten years time,' he asks, 'how many graduates will there be from the University? Probably well over a thousand, occupying key positions in many different countries.'

'Imagine how that will influence the spirit of co-operation within IMO itself. These graduates will often know each other and trust each other. That alone should guarantee a good spirit in the future and it should make it much easier to encourage regional co-operation and to achieve IMO's objectives. IMO is one of the cornerstones to which the students are introduced while they are here.'



Mr. Erik Nordstrom.

Cramming 35 years into 2

Ridha Bougatfa, the President of the University Students' Council, was serving as a mate on board a phosphorous carrier when he heard about the World maritime University from a fellow Tunisian who was a member of the inaugural class.

'Each time he came back on holiday he told us about it. He was very impressed and I thought that it sounded exactly what I wanted' he recalls. 'It offered training in technical management, which other institutions didn't cover. There was some reluctance about sending me at first because of the time involved, but I was convinced that the country should send people. The need was obvious. And finally I got permission to come.'

Mr. Bougatfa was no stranger

to studying. After leaving school he went to sea and spent seven years studying for his first class master's certificate, two of them in his native Tunisia and the rest in France. He also studied for a degree in law at the University of Paris, graduating in 1983.

Mr. Bougatfa, who graduates this December, is studying the technical management of shipping companies and has found it a worthwhile experience. He says: 'In my courses we have discovered that things are a lot more complex than we thought at first. We were always confined to the technical side and now we have found that there is a lot more involved in shipping than we imagined. With 35 years experience you might just be able to pick up all the things we have learned here – perhaps!'

'I think it's true of most people in shipping that they only look at their own speciality and not at

what other people do. It's fantastic to be able to see the whole picture.'

Like the staff of the University – and all those who have visited it – he has found that one of the most valuable aspects of the last two



Mr. Ridha Bougatfa.

years has been meeting such a variety of fellow students from so many different countries. 'No matter where we come from we have the same fears and concerns,' he says. 'We have different cultures, languages and traditions, but by coming to the University we have gained a broader idea of the international community. It enables the students to get to understand the interests of other countries as well as their own.'

As for the work at the University, he admits that it has been hard. 'In the first one and a half years we were very involved, but now there is more stress. We are writing our thesis and perhaps we are feeling a little tired.'

Although he has no clear idea of what he will be doing when he returns to Tunisia he expects to be offered a post by the authorities. 'Although there is no guarantee of a job, the experience we have gained here cannot be contested.'

Malmö's visiting professors

One of the most original and important features of the World Maritime University is the use made of visiting professors. Since the University opened in 1983 more than 80 of them have made the trip to Malmö, many of them more than once.

The visiting professors are experts in a particular field who visit the University for a limited period – a few days or a few weeks – to lecture on their speciality.

The system has numerous advantages, says Vice-Rector Professor Gunther Zade: 'We have a permanent staff here of eight professors and three lecturers and we have 14 different courses to run. The permanent staff cannot manage that number on their own and neither could they lecture on every subject covered. The solution is outside experts. In my own field, which is maritime training, I call on the services of experts to lecture on navigation and some other subjects.'

'The great advantage for the students is that here in Sweden they can listen to lectures from experts from all over the maritime world, people who are acknowledged authorities in their subject.'

The system also helps the University's economics. Says Professor Zade: 'If we tried to cover all these subjects with our own staff we would need 20 to 25 professors. Yet we need some people for only two or three weeks each year, so increasing the permanent staff would be very expensive.'

Because the system is unusual there was some anxiety at the start. Professor Zade says: 'We were afraid that nobody would want to come – but in fact everybody we approached was very interested. The professors like coming here because of the students. They find them very refreshing and they like staying at the Henrik Smith House, where the students live, because it gives them an opportunity to meet the

students informally.

'In fact, almost all of the professors who have been here have offered to come back – and not one has asked for a fee. Many have been back several times. The record so far is 17 visits by the same professor so I think it's safe to say that he likes it here!'

Among the professors who have visited the World Maritime University in recent months have been the following:

Mr. P. Jedrzwicz, Rector of the Gdynia Merchant Marine Academy, Poland (lecturing in computer assisted decision making and optimization in shipping).

Mr. E. Georgandopoulos, re-

tired Dean of the School of Industrial Studies, Piraeus, Greece (economics of bulk carriers and specialized ships).

Mr. J. Mulders, Director of the Dutch Maritime Teachers Training College, The Netherlands (errors and accuracy in navigation).

Prof. F.G. Frankel, ports, shipping and aviation adviser of the World Bank Transport Department (future ships technology).

Mr. L. Colucciello, chief of the Marine Accident Division, National Transportation Safety Board, Washington DC, United States (marine casualty investigation).

Mr. C. Boquin, managing director of the Louis Dreyfus Group,

Paris, France (chartering practice of bulk carriers).

Prof. M.K. Ovsjanikov, Higher Marine College 'Makarow', Leningrad, Soviet Union (strength of materials and principles of thermodynamics).

Prof. F. Berlingieri, Professor of Maritime Law, University of Genoa, Italy, and President of the Comité Maritime International.

Prof. E. Gold, Professor of Maritime Law, Dalhousie University, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Admiral J.B. Hayes, past Commandant, United States Coast Guard (roles of the USCG Maritime Administration).

Mr. J. Carton, Montreal, Canada, Director of Transworld Shipping (maritime infrastructure).



WMU students are now teachers

Several of the graduates of the World Maritime University have taken up senior positions in maritime training academies since finishing their studies in Malmö – including the two

former students shown in the photograph above.

They are (on left) Genaro Narváez Hernández, who graduated in maritime education and training (nautical) in December 1985 and Emilio

Zavala Madero, who graduated in maritime safety administration (marine engineering) at the same time. Both are now lecturing at the Maritime Training Academy at Vera Cruz in Mexico.

continued from page 12

pared with the funding and assistance of Norway. Their purpose is to assist developing countries in the preparation of training courses in maritime colleges and similar institutions. A special group has been established to ensure that the courses are consistent with the requirements of the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch-keeping for Seafarers, 1978 and associated resolutions.

The group consists of two representatives of the International Labour Organisation's ship-owners' group, two nominated by the ILO seafarers' group; and two from IMO.

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