

7<sup>th</sup> HYDRA SHIPPING CONFERENCE - 17<sup>th</sup> September 2016

Address by **Mr. George D. Pateras** , **President HCS**

Κύριε Πρόεδρε της Αδελφότητας Υδραίων Αθηνών,

Αξιότιμοι σύνεδροι

Mr. President of the Fraternity of the Athenian Hydriots,  
distinguished guests,

It is my pleasure to address this conference as President of the Hellenic Chamber of Shipping but also as an Oinoussian, since my ancestral island like Hydra are both pillars of the Greek Maritime tradition. Hydra is 3,5 times larger than Oinousses and is inhabited by approximately 2.000 people, while Oinousses is inhabited by less than 800, thanks only to the Boarding school and the Deck officers' college. This is yet another similarity between our Islands, the fact that we both have outstanding Naval Academies. I do, of course, recognize that the Hydra Academy claims to be the first ever having been founded in 1749.

It is not my intention to advocate on the topic of this event but I do wonder what would all those graduates of our Maritime Academies say if asked about smart shipping and what the future holds for them?

They have been educated to be smart mariners to use modern technology to their benefit, both for efficiency and safety.

I look forward to gaining insight into the application of modern technology in shipping from some of the major pioneers in the digital world of progress in our industry.

Advancements in technology are created through necessity, and if properly used, protect the environment and enhance safety. We can rely on their benefits as long as we don't forget our basic training and learn to use these advantages as a tool to assist us in doing a better job, safer for the seaman and our environment thus increasing reliability and consistency for a better outcome of any adventure.

On the other hand, the US mechanical engineer Thomas Midgley Jr. was highly praised for his work in refrigeration, it improved the lives of millions of people and made food and medicine preservation safer until we discovered the catastrophic shortcomings of refrigerants such as Freon 22. This doesn't mean that all progress is either bad or good.

Let us not forget that Greek Merchant Shipping flourished for decades with second hand vessels which many considered to be technologically inferior or even obsolete.

Greece has historically been in the forefront of technological advancement, nothing has changed we are still the forerunners of the digital world. I firmly believe that the Greek seaman and the Greekshipowner are both knowledgeable and flexible and will welcome modernisation and adapt easily into the reality of a digital future.

Thank you for your time and I look forward to a very interesting and informative debate.