

The 2017 Capital Link Greek Shipping Leadership Award

Speech by Professor Costas Th. Grammenos, CBE, DSc

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I am hugely honoured in receiving the prestigious Capital Link Greek Shipping Leadership Award.

I thank Capital Link, I thank Nikolas Bornozis.

Both of us have walked a very long way to reach this point. The only difference is that he is a lot younger.

I do also thank both Dr Anthony Papadimitriou and Dr Nikolas Tsakos for their exceedingly warm and generous introductions.

Yes I am a Professor but I admit I have learned a lot from them during our very long friendship.

Ladies and Gentlemen it all started 35 years ago when I joined the then City University Business School as a full time Visiting Professor and created the Centre for Shipping, Trade and Finance and the MSc in Shipping, Trade and Finance and later on the MSc in Energy, Trade and Finance. A driving force in recruiting me in 1982 was the then Dean of City University Business School Professor Brian Griffiths, from 1985- 1991 Head of Mrs Thatcher Policy Unit and now Lord Griffiths and Vice Chairman of Goldman Sacks.

I have never forgotten my National Bank of Greece years from 1962 - 1975, where I learned to read and understand the real world of Business and I started my research in Bank Shipping Finance based on well above six hundred loans, six hundred huge confidential files, which I will restructure at University of North

Wales in Bangor. There my mind expanded, my way of thinking became broader and very analytical.

The University of Wales Press publishes in early 1979 my book "Bank Finance for Ship Purchase", which will become the book of the year and eventually the flagship of this academic publisher.

I should mention that Andreas Tsavliris equally kind and close friend then and now has offered several comments on the first three chapters of my book. It is time to renew my thanks to him.

From the very early period at City University Business School I believed strongly that our academic success will go in hand with the success of both, the Business School and the City University.

I clearly followed this holistic approach all these 35 years.

That is why you saw a few minutes ago the 50th anniversary video of Cass Business School instead of seeing my own personal photographs from a period of 50 years plus.

I strongly believe, Ladies and Gentlemen, in the need of combined efforts and teamwork.

When my students ask me for the recipe of success I invariably reply that this recipe has three levels: The first one is hard work; the second one is hard work and the third one is hard work.

I have been working hard for very-very many years in my life.

Being in a thanking mood I take the opportunity to very warmly thank my wife Anna for her strong support all these 45 demanding , very demanding and very happy years.

My wife is an archaeologist -our son is a historian- and as I said 17 years ago, on a similar occasion, at the Guildhall in London she finds me more interesting as I am getting older.

Twelve days ago I had a cataract eye surgery My wife kept reminding me the eye drops. Should you travel by airplane? Ask the Doctor! Do not carry a heavy suitcase, it is very dangerous.

It is obvious her view was that I had reached the status of an archaeological object.

Going back to the Centre for Shipping, Trade and Finance I am aware that we created a new way of thinking in Shipping, in International business. Up until that time there was an excellent course in Maritime Studies at Cardiff. It had nothing to do though with Finance, Trade, Commodities, Energy and similar subjects. We added them. We created Shipping Finance as a Totally New Academic Area, Commodities also; and other topics. We created a similar approach for Energy; We added a totally new MSc course internationally the Energy, Trade and Finance in 2003.

We teach students, Ladies and Gentlemen, knowledge, new techniques, their application in business. We give them tools for analysis which will become tools for their success.

We stay away from politics, from political parties.

Our job is to academically strengthen our students,

to show them how they can apply theory into practice; to show them ways of thinking; of taking action; of taking decisions; to make them to think for the path of professional success in the tough, small and great world of international business networks.

In this process you give and take.

In this process you discover, they discover, -many of them- creation, as the ultimate purpose in life.

Yes ladies and Gentlemen, This is all about creation that makes life fascinating and worthwhile.

I am grateful that I was given the opportunity to share my efforts with our Centre colleagues at Cass Business School, other also academics and 4.700 students from over 160 countries.

Grateful indeed.