



SPEECH BY MR THOMAS TAY, GENERAL SECRETARY OF THE SINGAPORE MARITIME OFFICERS' UNION (SMOU) AT THE APPRECIATION DINNER OF SMOU AND WAVELINK, HELD AT THE NEPTUNE THEATRE RESTAURANT, ON 16 DECEMBER 2005 AT 7.30PM

Guest-of-Honour Mr Lim Boon Heng – NTUC Secretary-General, Minister, Prime Minister's Office, Mr Matthias Yao – Mayor of the South-East District, NTUC Central Committee members, Capt Chong Chee Eng – SMEF Chairman, Capt Khong Shen Ping – MPA Director of Shipping, the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, a very good evening and welcome to the SMOU and Wavelink Appreciation Dinner 2005.

This year's Appreciation dinner is significant in two aspects.

First and foremost, the year marks the 54th anniversary of SMOU and also the 5th anniversary of Wavelink Co-operative businesses.

Secondly, our Appreciation dinner this year serves as a reminder to all that SMOU and Wavelink will not be here today without the contributions and support of every individual and organisation represented here this evening. Therefore, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you and show you that your efforts have been greatly embraced and appreciated.

The local maritime economy has had a thriving year. This would not be possible without the contributory efforts of the government and the port authorities, the shipping companies and the employers, and very importantly the labour force. All three parties must work together peacefully, in harmony and unity to ensure that our maritime

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economy continues to grow and our members will continue to have job security. A strong bipartism and tripartism approach is the key to our success.

55th Anniversary Year Activities

Looking ahead into 2006, SMOU has lined up a series of activities to celebrate its 55th Anniversary. Allow me to highlight some of these events and activities.

On 28th December this year, our Young SMOU has organised for SMOU members and their families, the Snow White Musical at the Downtown East for more than 1,000 persons. We are charging only S\$1 per ticket for SMOU members and I understand that it is already fully booked.

In March next year, we are organising a 3-day 2-night cruise for our members and families on board the Superstar Virgo, and I have learnt that tickets are almost fully booked, so if you haven't bought yourself a ticket please hurry. Tickets start from only S\$29.00.

To mark the 55th Anniversary, a host of many other events will be organised, so watch out and book early to avoid disappointment.

SMTF

One of the fundamentals of SMOU would be to ensure that all our members are employed and continue to remain employable. In line with SMOU's 55th anniversary celebrations, we hope to launch the Singapore Maritime Training Fund (SMTF) in the coming year. The SMTF establishment ensures that our seafarers are continually equipped to face the future needs and challenges, as quality officers on board Singapore ships.

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The SMTF promotes the education, training and upgrading of SMOU members serving or planning to serve on vessels. It not only promotes seafaring as a rewarding career, the SMTF also ensures that ship management and ship owners remain competitive especially when the skills and expertise of their seafarers are increased. Through the further development of international training centres, the SMTF also supports Singapore as an International Maritime Hub.

As of October 2005, a total of S\$1.8 million has been contributed to the fund in the form of S\$1.2 million by SMOU and an additional S\$600,000 from shipping companies and donations. A total of 38% of our CBA companies are contributing towards this fund. SMTF will subsidise about 90 cadets in 2006 for SMOU CBA Shipping Companies.

I am pleased to announce that the SMTF Advisory Committee has been set up and is led by Mr Teh Kong Leong, the Executive Director of the Singapore Maritime Foundation (SMF).

In Honour Of A Special Friend

This evening, in addition to appreciating all your contributions and support, bringing SMOU and Wavelink to where we are today, SMOU would like to take this opportunity to honour and appreciate a very special friend, whose relationship with SMOU spanned over 2 decades and 2 millenniums. Over the last 22 years, his words of wisdom have been a beacon of light, guiding SMOU through the tumultuous 80s, the 90s and into the 21st century. This special person has grown from an individual, to a Member of Parliament and subsequently a Cabinet Minister. It is SMOU's honour to be able to progress with him as our membership is now 14,000 strong, we've a building of our own and we've formed the Wavelink Co-operative.

In appreciation to his contributions, we at SMOU have prepared a very special video tribute to remember this special person's special moments with SMOU.....

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[VIDEO TRIBUTE]

Once again we can see from this video that SG Lim has not only contributed to SMOU's success, he has played an important role in the Singapore maritime industry, campaigning to remove the Singapore Flag from the Flag-Of-Convenience (FOC). SG Lim as you saw, is a man who shares his personal life to those in need, the elderly, the labour force, even spending his Chinese New Year meeting with the workers who are on shift on the 1st day of Chinese New Year, while the rest of us are happy collecting "Ang Pows". He is indeed a man who sacrifices for the labour movement and one who leads by example.

I would like to share with you one of the most important pieces of advice from SG Lim that I will always remember. *"It is more important for workers to have a job so that they can provide bread and butter to their families, than demand for worker's rights and then grow hungry"*. This I will always remember.

We would now like to take the opportunity to honour SG Lim by awarding to him, a Distinguished Honorary Membership medal in recognition of all his efforts to SMOU. We are indebted to him and appreciate all his advice, and contributions in making what SMOU is today.

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BACKGROUND

About SMOU

The **Singapore Maritime Officers' Union** (SMOU) was established in 1951 to safeguard the interest and well-being of seafaring officers. The primary role of the organisation is to promote good industrial relations between members and their employers, improve the working conditions of members in the maritime industry through the terms and conditions of collective bargaining agreements negotiated on behalf of members and signed with shipping companies which employ them and to advance the cultural, recreational and educational aspirations of its members.

About Wavelink

Wavelink Co-operative Ltd (Wavelink) was jointly founded by **Singapore Maritime Officers' Union** (SMOU) and **National Trades Union Congress** (NTUC) on 29 June 2000 in an attempt to venture into new frontiers and business opportunities. The Co-operative aims to promote opportunities for social interaction, cultural appreciation, healthy recreation and leisure activities on an economic co-operation basis, at the same time, create career opportunities for members in the maritime and/or other industries.

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