The minister of transport at the fourth Maritime Business Lunch
"Make use of the time now"

“Husbandry means the combination of the four basic arithmetic operations with the Ten Commandments. This quotation of the former Stuttgarter Lord Mayor Erwin Rommel was the beginning of the speech of the minister of transport Mr Tiefensee about the economy crisis at the fourth Maritime Business Lunch of the BSF on the Cap San Diego. For the first time the chairman of the Baltic SEA Forum, Mr Bodewig welcomed his successor in office in Hamburg and its impressive port area. Among the around about forty guests there were Dethold Aden, the president of the umbrella organisation of German Shipowners’, Klaus Bültjer chief executive of the Germans Shipbrokers’ association and Michael Behrends, president of the VDR.

Hamburg should be once again part of the JadeWeserPort
At dinner Mr Tiefensee made a sensation when he said that Hamburg should be once again part of the JadeWeserPort. The Hanse City had quit the 500 million project, which was a cooperation with Bremen and Niedersachsen, before it was advertised. A comeback could lead to better cooperation with a view to the deepening of the Elbe, said the SPD minister: A cooperative attitude towards Wilhelmshaven would simplify the bargaining about the waterway adaptation.

The harbour has to cope the new situation
It is extremely important: He said that the Harbour has to cope with this new situation. He pointed out that he had tried to consider the needs of the affected people by speaking with them, however, now the pressure is on Niedersachsen, not on Hamburg. They have to make an effort and to indicate their consent with the scheme. He hopes that the procedures will be finished at the end of this year, however, some parts of the work has to begin now.

The crisis is temporary not structurally
The minister made an effort to encourage the attendees- irrespective of eleven percent spare ships and charter rates below ten percent of running costs. The crisis is temporary not structurally. But there can be an apparent danger because some measures – especially of other governments – can distort the competition. He is against any form of protectionism.

Infrastructure has to be pushed forward
Instead of this situation, time has to be used for urgent infrastructure projects, which are outlined in the national harbour concept as goals for next ten years. The minister received applause for this statement. Mr Heitmann from the umbrella organisation German SEA Port Enterprise praised the universal concept of the administration. Furthermore, he suggested increasing the political pressure on individual measures. He said that if a plan is adopted, the start of construction work at the hinterland connection has to begin.
Waiting for the determination of the Y-Train path
Tiefensee emphasized that he finally expects the realisation of the Y-train path. The German Bahn needs a maximum speed rail link between Hamburg, Bremen and Hannover.
The situation of the waterways is more in progress. Especially for the expansion of the Nord-Ostsee channel 700 million Euros are invested. This catchword used HHLA-executive board member Stefan Behn to think about more flexible channel fees. They must adapt to the reduced bunkerprice because now a lot ships are using the way around the Kattegat. Tiefensee appreciated this proposal.

Matthias Soyka