



FORTNIGHTLY MERCIFULLY BRIEF, PITHY AND WHOLLY IDIOSYNCRATIC NEWSLETTER.



Mercifully Brief

The fortnight just past has continued the pathetic saga of the COSTA CONCORDIA. To the great credit of the Italian government and judiciary the master seems to be treated humanely. Perhaps it is better that he is detained with the media – as the idiot, full of sound and fury signifying nothing -- at full roar. Aside from the BDI bouncing on the bottom with everything else, two companies pulling the plug and assorted other commercial matters,

the early part of February has been another slice in the never boring maritima.

Pithy

The lore has it that a master always goes down with his ship. Why? Will his suicide expiate the sins done and undone for the COSTA CONCORDIA in the next life? Will his death by his own hand slake the bloodlust of the media and its whipped-up believers? Not to go down would seem the more moral approach. Even that has its problems though. Is standing like a man, facing the music, nobly going to the gallows moral either? Then there are those who assert the master was a coward. Valor is not in his job description. He is a commercial volunteer – he is not a naval officer paid with a coercive gun back of him to be valorous. One wonders who is the more immoral here – the media or the pseudo-moralists steeped in myth which they equate with tradition.

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Wholly idiosyncratic

In the backwaters of America it seems that the US Maritime Administration is shooting itself in the foot and the head. It is a hollow bureau whose only useful function not doable by others is the US Merchant Marine Academy. This 75 year old institution is one of the best of its kind – if not the best – in training masters and chief engineers, starting them as third mates and third assistant engineers. In one fell swoop the Administrator, Mr. Matsuda, has fired the Superintendent, shut down the renowned GMATS continuing education program, shuttered the midshipmen pub set up to keep the beer inside rather than having dead middies outside distorting their automobiles, given away the training vessel and now appears to have its eyes on shutting down the maritime museum. The Hon. Matsuda says this is in preparation for making the Academy the "crown jewel of the service academies." Looks like he is trying to kill it to me – singlehandedly -- or with the connivance of a few Senators and Congressmen and his Secretary of Transportation. It makes no sense – even with the pittance additional ten million dollars extra put into the budget. I fear the school is doomed. These people will leave after the election. The grave damage will have been done. The leadership has been gutted, one of its most successful programs has been sacked, that which the midshipmen – and their parents – appreciated greatly has been closed, there is no more training vessel, the past is at stake in the museum. The "crown jewel" promises are as hollow as Mr. Matsuda. He, as the tar baby, ain't sayin' nuthin'. Full disclosure: I am a graduate simply feeling saddened by the abuse being meted to the institution by the ignorant pols led by the blind Matsuda. I attach a television appearance I had discussing the subject with my good friends Clay Maitland, Gary Hicks and David Gardy. It is at [Maritime TV The Future of Kings Point](#)

Urgings

Have you signed up for FOB yet? This is the maritime's own LinkedIn run by my good friends Sam Ignarski and Humphrey Hill in London. It is a pretty clever place at [FOB Networking](#).

Do you watch Maritime TV, the maritime industry's Internet TV channel on the web? It is neither as slick as Aljazeera nor as biased as Fox, however Dave Gardy and his talented people are doing signal service for maritima. He also has sponsorships available that can feature you and your organization. Dave and MTV have pretty good following of targeted audiences worldwide. If you want to be on TV or if you want to get the word out about your company go to [Maritime TV](#) or call (703) 961-9250, ext. 221.

Smooth sailing, fair winds and a following sea.

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Cartner & Co., LLC consults in maritime and related law, naval architecture and marine engineering and maritime economics and trade.

From the company archives: In the days of the Apple II, we devised a program for the auctioning of lobsters within a New England cooperative. Many computer generations later it still stands. If you like lobster, remember us.

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