

THE CAPTAIN OF THE TITANIC

I am not exactly sure what happened to the captain of the Titanic. Did he go down with the ship? Did he survive in a life boat and live with the burden of his folly for the rest of his life? I'm in the dark on this. I know the information is readily available, but the exact facts are not that important to this piece. One thing I can say for certain though is that surely the White Star Line did not bestow another captainship upon this man. If he lived he could never have again been entrusted with the safety of their passengers. It just would not make sense, and no one would stand for such a proposition.

Now let me introduce you to the captain of the SS Souza-Baranowski. He received his high paying captainship by helping to crash a ship full of passengers squarely into an easily avoidable iceberg. Not only did he saddle up the gravy train through folly, but his first mate also grabbed a ladel to suck from. Thomas Dickhaut was the Deputy Superintendent aboard the SS Suzy B., and Tony Mendonsa the Director of Treatment, when they helped Eddie Ficco crash her into the iceberg that was Defrocked priest John Geoghan. No foghorn was heard by these two Helen Kellers. No distress flares were spotted by these two Stevie Wonders. Deaf, dumb, and blind while at the helm.

No what do you get on the sea of corrections when you are partly responsible for a murder? You get a captainship! You become a first mate! Dickhaut is now the captain of the SS Suzy B., and Tony is his First Mate, and the ship is again sailing zig-zag through iceberg rich waters. Trust and believe that their ear muffs and blinders are on tight. The champagne flows freely in the Grand Ballroom, and these men who no rules have been made for drink like true sailors on leave. Drunk at the helm they play correctional pinball with tragedy. The hull is cracked, the pumps are failing, and Tommy and Tony order, "Full steam ahead!". You can bet the captain of the Titanic wished he knew about the jobs at the department of correction before he signed on with the White Star Line. How can you go wrong? Run her on the rocks, lose the crew and passengers, and get a promotion! A true seaman's utopia!

This all sounds insane don't it? Insane but true. In the DOC you can run a prison where guards run rogue wild, prisoners are treated so poorly that they are forced to act out, men commit suicide rather than -

very nice

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- be subjected to further abuse, the elderly are denied medical care, the emotionally handicapped are tortured psychologically and physically, and the general attitude is abusive punishment and retribution as opposed to rehabilitation and healing. When you help to run the ship like this you are rewarded. If you try to uncover the insanity of it all you are driven out. Detach the rudder. Throw out the compass. Set sail with the DOC.

The seas of no life are constantly calm. We all face storms, gales, and hurricanes. The thing is that we see the forecast and prepare. The forecast for the DOC is quite clear: fowl weather ahead! That does not mean that we as prisoners should throw the chances for positive effective change overboard. No way! We must fight the gale winds. Batten down your hatches and battle the admiralty. Report the captain and all his mates to the legislature. File the grievances and go after the ship's doctor when he neglects you. Report him to the Board of Registration. Support your jailhouse lawyers. Get active in the solution. Don't sign on to the captain's plan to divide and conquer. Support UNITY, not division. Get involved and we can all play a part in the quest for solutions. the quest for personal freedom and dignity.

I see a forecast of fair winds and blue skies for our personal vessels. Take your helm with education and concern. Stoke the boiler with faith and desire. Set your course with honesty and planning. Never allow the ship of fools run by the DOC force you into an iceberg. We will find our ports of call if we stay our course prudently.

Grand Funk Railroad sang about getting "Closer to our Home" in the rock classic "I'm Your Captain". We can be our own captain and all get closer to home.

Authored by

Tim
Muise