



FORTNIGHTLY MERCIFULLY BRIEF, PITHY AND WHOLLY IDIOSYNCRATIC NEWSLETTER.

Note: Our apologies for being late. 1-2 comes out on or about February 1. Further, we are having some technical difficulties with columns I promised. They will be resolved by then.

Mercifully Brief

Piracy stays a growth industry. There are now several identifiable profit sectors. Of course there are the pirates and their non-Somali capital – likely Russian. Then there is the lucrative sector in hiring out armed guards to suppress pirates. Of course, without some sort of immunity for all parties any contract is akin to a mafia hit contract which would impute knowledge and premeditation to both owner and armed guard entity if a pirate were injured. It would also put the master in a dilemma. It is not unlawful to carry armed guards. It is unlawful to use them if a pirate is injured. In a world sliding away from the rule of law, these concerns seem not to bother owners or their flag states. Is a bare promise from a prosecutor not to act sufficient warrant? I would not want to execute such a contract on either side.

Pithy

Tacitus (46-117CE), the Roman orator, states that the British warrior chief Calgacus addressed his assembled warriors on the subject of Rome's insatiable appetite for conquest. He said bitterly, "*Solitudinem faciunt, pacem appellant.*" [They make a desert and call it peace.] Two millennia later not much has changed. Iraq was already a desert but is now quite peaceful. Afghanistan is not yet a desert – there is great work to be done to make it so.

Wholly idiosyncratic

The IMO is unhappy with me. I wear that as a badge of honour. I publicly criticized that august body for doing little except sending memoranda and piously commenting on piracy. I further suggested that Panama gives the most money to the IMO and that it might

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influence the IMO from within. Of course, Panama is the largest flag in the world; alas it too sends out memoranda. I am crushed that the IMO has called me "dogmatic." I am have difficulty in getting meaning out of that -- but I surely must be dogmatic if it says so in a letter to Lloyds List from an IMO person. Arf.

Urgings

My good friends Sam Ignarski and Humphrey Hill have set up an enterprise FOBnetworking. It is modeled on the LinkedIn scheme but it is devoted wholly to maritime efforts. There are numerous groups and so forth and one can post things such as videos and documents. It is very efficient and is an excellent networking tool alone or in conjunction with the usual other ones. I urge you to sign up at www.fobnetworking.com. It is free of charge right now to people and I think there is a small fee for companies. See you there. You will not be disappointed.

Smooth sailing, fair winds and a following sea.

John A. C. Cartner
Managing Member, the Cartner Companies
and Cartner & Co., LLC, maritime consultants

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

From the company archives: 1996. Egypt. Egyptian Navy. Oversaw and managed the conversion of the fire control system of a Russian-designed Kilo submarine, built in the People's Republic of China, to a wholly modern system with ancillary cooling and electrical modifications in situ in Alexandria.

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