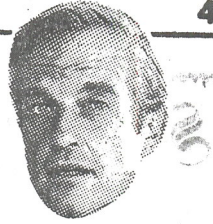


Mopey Dick**Arthur Hoppe**

PORTIONS of Mr. Nixon's new book have been leaked to the press. And after two years of exhaustive research, he's concluded that he's totally innocent of any wrongdoing.

Good for him. While you're waiting for it to be published, I'd highly recommend another book in this same genre. It's "*I Should've Gotten a Medal*" by Horatio Fullspeed, who was, as you know, the captain of the Titanic.

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LET ME SAY at the outset, (Captain Fullspeed says at the outset), that I perhaps should have questioned my aides more closely on the night I was viciously attacked by a vindictive iceberg in the North Atlantic.

Why icebergs have hounded me throughout my career, I do not know. I have always treated icebergs fairly. But there is more to an iceberg, I say, than meets the eye.

Thus when Lieutenant Dean reported he had seen an iceberg, there are those who say I should have asked him, "In which direction does it lie?"

This is easy for them to say in hindsight. And while I would never for a moment criticize Mr. Dean, let me say in all honesty I do think the stupid idiot should have informed me the dirty iceberg lay dead ahead and was crouched to crush us. Believe me, I would have immediately ordered him to "Turn left" or "Turn right" or perhaps even, "Let's slow down a little, okay?"

But let me say this about that. As

captain, it was my duty to weigh not only icebergs but what was best for all my passengers. At the time, I was deeply preoccupied with rearranging the deck chairs.

Moreover, I had full confidence in Lieutenants Haldeman and Ehrlichman, who were at the helm. And let me say that they were two of the finest public servants who ever steered an ocean liner smack into an iceberg.

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ONCE THE ICEBERG had run into us, my first concern was to maintain public confidence in the Captaincy. Thus my remarks that this was merely "a fourth-rate collision" and we were "only stopping to take on ice" should be viewed, at worst, as little white jokes.

And I will never forget how my loyal secretary, Hughes Kissinger now, told me that was "the greatest speech of reassurance" he had ever heard, as he climbed into a lifeboat.

Lastly, much has been made of the missing 18 ½ pages of the ship's log concerning my conversation with Mr. Haldeman following the incident. Actually, if my persecutors must know, we were discussing how best to rearrange the deck chairs for the benefit of *all* the passengers.

So I am confident history will judge me as one of the a greatest captains of all times. For, in all due modesty, let me say there are not many captains who would heroically ram and severely damage a huge iceberg in order to save The Free World from the creeping menage of icebergs. Thank you.