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## The Barometer

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# THE BAROMETER

12 August 1980

My dear Admiral:-

This is a footnote to Doctor Doyle's article on the ORANGE PLAN in the May-June 1980 issue of the REVIEW.

In the Summer of 1940 I was executive officer of the CALIFORNIA, then located in Hawaiian waters. One day my skipper, Captain Bemis, received a message from the CinC, Admiral J.O. Richardson, stating in effect that he wished to talk to Commander Carney, the exec.

Wondering what I had been caught at, I hastened to comply with the CinC's wish.

Without preamble, Admiral Richardson stated that in his opinion war with Japan was inevitable, that it would be long dragged-out, that people in my age bracket would be war-time leaders, and that he wanted to talk to some of that group about the realities as he saw them.

Flattering as it was, it seemed far-fetched to consider me as a potential war-time leader. Mind you, I was then a commander.

The Admiral then proceeded to paint the readiness—or lack of it—picture. To me it was shattering.

Pointing out the lack of advanced bases, the slow pace of up-dating Fleet offensive and defensive characteristics, the fact that there were fatal shortages in ammunition replacements and back-up stocks of fuel, spare parts, and essential supplies, and the tenders and logistic ships needed to support an advanced-positioned Fleet—he was saying in plain and understandable language that the Navy was not ready for war.

Step by step he dismantled my confident belief that the U.S. Navy could win a quick decision. Instead, proceeding from our deficiencies, he foresaw the United States hanging on for a couple of years while the country and the Service built the strength necessary for an offensive campaign, and then a hard fight of a year or two before victory could be won.

Probably a *four year war!*

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I considered myself a competent professional, versed in all of the experiences and skills required for advancement. At least, I *had* so considered myself. When Admiral Richardson finished with me I was sure of nothing. Mentally and spiritually I staggered back to the CALIFORNIA

I was so profoundly disturbed that I had stomach butterflies, I was almost nauseated, and sleep would not come. My tight little professional world had collapsed.

Finally I pulled myself together. Accepting Admiral Richardson's views as irrefutable, I would throw out every previous professional belief and make a new thinking—start from scratch. No matter what the conventional wisdom held on any given subject, I would challenge it, disregard it, and make my own evaluation.

It was a turning point in my life, and later I expressed my gratitude to Admiral J.O.

Sincerely,

/s/Robt. B. Carney

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