sibility for the issuance of tropical storm and hurricane advisories and warnings for the general public, merchant shipping, and other interests rests with the National Weather Service Eastern Pacific Hurricane Center, San Francisco, California. The Department of Defense responsibility rests with the Naval Pacific Meteorology and Oceanography Center, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. Formal advisories and warnings are issued daily and are included in the marine bulletins broadcast by radio stations KFS, NMC, and NMQ.

In the central Pacific (between the meridian and longitude 140°W), the civilian responsibility rests with the National Weather Service Central Pacific Hurricane Center, Honolulu, Hawaii. Department of Defense responsibility rests with the Naval Pacific Meteorology and Oceanography Center in Pearl Harbor. Formal tropical storm and hurricane advisories and warnings are issued daily and are included in the marine bulletins broadcast by radio station NMO and NRV.

Tropical cyclone information messages generally contain position of the storm, intensity, direction and speed of movement, and a description of the area of strong winds. Also included is a forecast of future movement and intensity. When the storm is likely to affect any land area, details on when and where it will be felt, and data on tides, rain, floods, and maximum winds are also included. Figure 3607 provides an example of a marine advisory issued by the National Hurricane Center.

The Naval Pacific Meteorology and Oceanography Center Center-West/Joint Typhoon Warning Center (NPMOC-W/JTWC) in Guam is responsible for all U.S. tropical storm and typhoon advisories and warnings from the 180th meridian westward to the mainland of Asia. A secondary area of responsibility extends westward to longitude 90°E. Whenever a tropical cyclone is observed in the western North Pacific area, serially numbered warnings, bearing an "immediate" precedence are broadcast from the NPMOC-W/JTWC at 0000, 0600, 1200, and 1800 GMT.

The responsibility for issuing gale and storm warnings for the Indian Ocean, Arabian Sea, Bay of Bengal, Western Pacific, and South Pacific rests with many countries. In general, warnings of approaching tropical cyclones which may be hazardous will include the following information: storm type, central pressure given in millibars, wind speed observed within the storm, storm location, speed and direction of movement, the extent of the affected area, visibility, and the state of the sea, as well as any other pertinent information received. All storm warning messages commence with the international call sign "TTT."

These warnings are broadcast on specified radio frequency bands immediately upon receipt of the information and at specific intervals thereafter. Generally, the broadcast interval is every 6 to 8 hours, depending upon receipt of new information.

Bulletins and forecasts are excellent guides to the present and future behavior of the tropical cyclone, and a plot should be kept of all positions.

AVOIDING TROPICAL CYCLONES

3608. Approach And Passage Of A Tropical Cyclone

An early indication of the approach of a tropical cyclone is the presence of a long swell. In the absence of a tropical cyclone, the crests of swell in the deep waters of the Atlantic pass at the rate of perhaps eight per minute. Swell generated by a hurricane is about twice as long, the crests passing at the rate of perhaps four per minute. Swell may be observed several days before arrival of the storm.

When the storm center is 500 to 1,000 miles away, the barometer usually rises a little, and the skies are relatively clear. Cumulus clouds, if present at all, are few in number and their vertical development appears suppressed. The barometer usually appears restless, pumping up and down a few hundredths of an inch.

As the tropical cyclone comes nearer, a cloud sequence begins which resembles that associated with the approach of a warm front in middle latitudes. Snow-white, fibrous "mare's tails" (cirrus) appear when the storm is about 300 to 600 miles away. Usually these seem to converge, more or less, in the direction from which the storm is approaching. This convergence is particularly apparent at about the time of sunrise and sunset.

Shortly after the cirrus appears, but sometimes before, the barometer starts a long, slow fall. At first the fall is so gradual that it only appears to alter somewhat the normal daily cycle (two maxima and two minima in the Tropics). As the rate of fall increases, the daily pattern is completely lost in the more or less steady fall.

The cirrus becomes more confused and tangled, and then gradually gives way to a continuous veil of cirrostratus. Below this veil, altostratus forms, and then stratocumulus. These clouds gradually become more dense, and as they do so, the weather becomes unsettled. A fine, mist-like rain begins to fall, interrupted from time to time by rain showers. The barometer has fallen perhaps a tenth of an inch.

As the fall becomes more rapid, the wind increases in gustiness, and its speed becomes greater, reaching perhaps 22 to 40 knots (Beaufort 6-8). On the horizon appears a dark wall of heavy cumulonimbus, called the **bar** of the storm. This is the heavy bank of clouds comprising the main mass of the cyclone. Portions of this heavy cloud become detached from time to time, and drift across the sky, accompanied by rain squalls and wind of increasing speed. Between squalls, the cirrostratus can be seen through breaks in the stratocumulus.

As the bar approaches, the barometer falls more rapidly and wind speed increases. The seas, which have been gradu-

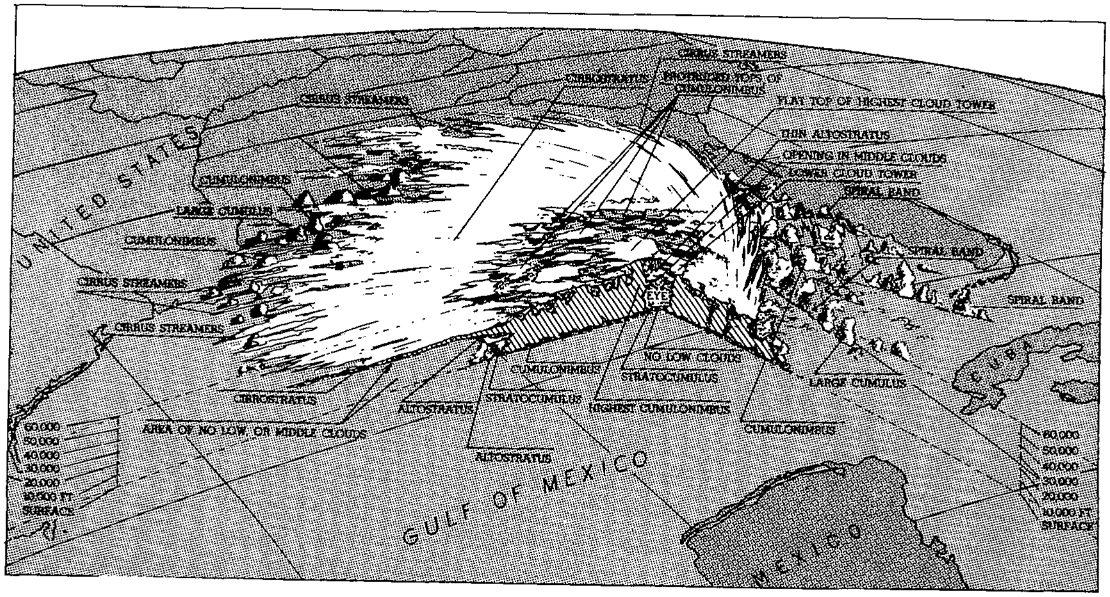

Figure 3608. Typical hurricane cloud formations.

ally mounting, become tempestuous. Squall lines, one after the other, sweep past in ever increasing number and intensity.

With the arrival of the bar, the day becomes very dark, squalls become virtually continuous, and the barometer falls precipitously, with a rapid increase in wind speed. The center may still be 100 to 200 miles away in a fully developed tropical cyclone. As the center of the storm comes closer, the ever-stronger wind shrieks through the rigging, and about the superstructure of the vessel. As the center approaches, rain falls in torrents. The wind fury increases. The seas become mountainous. The tops of huge waves are blown off to mingle with the rain and fill the air with water. Visibility is virtually zero in blinding rain and spray. Even the largest and most seaworthy vessels become virtually unmanageable, and may sustain heavy damage. Less sturdy vessels may not survive. Navigation virtually stops as safety of the vessel becomes the only consideration. The awesome fury of this condition can only be experienced. Words are inadequate to describe it.

If the eye of the storm passes over the vessel, the winds suddenly drop to a breeze as the wall of the eye passes. The rain stops, and the skies clear sufficiently to permit the sun or stars to shine through holes in the comparatively thin cloud cover. Visibility improves. Mountainous seas approach from all sides in complete confusion. The barometer reaches its lowest point, which may be $1\,{}^1/2$ or 2 inches below normal in fully developed tropical cyclones. As the wall on the opposite side of the eye arrives, the full fury of the wind strikes as suddenly as it ceased, but from the opposite direction. The sequence of conditions that occurred during approach of the storm is reversed, and passes more quickly, as the various parts of the storm are not as wide in the rear of a storm as on its forward side.

Typical cloud formations associated with a hurricane are shown in figure 3608.

3609. Locating The Center Of A Tropical Cyclone

If intelligent action is to be taken to avoid the full fury of a tropical cyclone, early determination of its location and direction of travel relative to the vessel is essential. The bulletins and forecasts are an excellent general guide, but they are not infallible, and may be sufficiently in error to induce a mariner in a critical position to alter course so as to unwittingly increase the danger to his vessel. Often it is possible, using only those observations made aboard ship, to obtain a sufficiently close approximation to enable the vessel to maneuver to the best advantage.

The presence of an exceptionally long swell is usually the first visible indication of the existence of a tropical cyclone. In deep water it approaches from the general direction of origin (the position of the storm center when the swell was generated). However, in shoaling water this is a less reliable indication because the direction is changed by refraction, the crests being more nearly parallel to the bottom contours.

When the cirrus clouds appear, their point of convergence provides an indication of the direction of the storm center. If the storm is to pass well to one side of the observer, the point of convergence shifts slowly in the direction of storm movement. If the storm center will pass near the observer, this point remains steady. When the bar becomes visible, it appears to rest upon the horizon for several hours. The darkest part of this cloud is in the direction of the storm center. If the storm is to pass to one side, the bar appears to drift slowly along the horizon. If the storm is heading directly toward the observer, the position of the bar remains fixed. Once within the area of the dense, low clouds, one should observe their direction of movement, which is almost exactly along the isobars, with the center of the storm being 90° from the direction of cloud movement (left of direction of movement in the Northern Hemisphere, and right in the Southern Hemisphere).

The winds are probably the best guide to the direction of the center of a tropical cyclone. The circulation is cyclonic, but because of the steep pressure gradient near the center, the winds there blow with greater violence and are more nearly circular than in extratropical cyclones.

According to **Buys Ballot's law**, an observer whose back is to the wind has the the low pressure on his left in the Northern Hemisphere, and on his right in the Southern Hemisphere. If the wind followed circular isobars exactly, the center would be exactly 90° from behind when facing away from the wind. However, the track of the wind is usually inclined somewhat toward the center, so that the angle from dead astern varies between perhaps 90° to 135°. The inclination varies in different parts of the same storm. It is least in front of the storm, and greatest in the rear, since the actual wind is the vector sum of the pressure gradient and the motion of the storm along the track. A good average is perhaps 110° in front, and 120-135° in the rear. These values apply when the storm center is still several hundred miles away. Closer to the center, the wind blows more nearly along the isobars, the inclination being reduced by one or two points at the wall of the eye. Since wind direction usually shifts temporarily during a squall, its direction at this time should not be used for determining the position of the center. The approximate relationship of wind to isobars and storm center in the Northern Hemisphere is shown in figure 3609a.

When the center is within radar range, it will probably be visible on the scope. However, since the radar return is predominantly from the rain, results can be deceptive, and other indications should not be neglected. Figure 3609b shows a radar PPI presentation of a tropical cyclone. If the eye is out of range, the spiral bands (figure 3609b) may indicate its direction from the vessel. Tracking the eye or upwind portion of the spiral bands enables determining the direction and speed of movement; this should be done for at

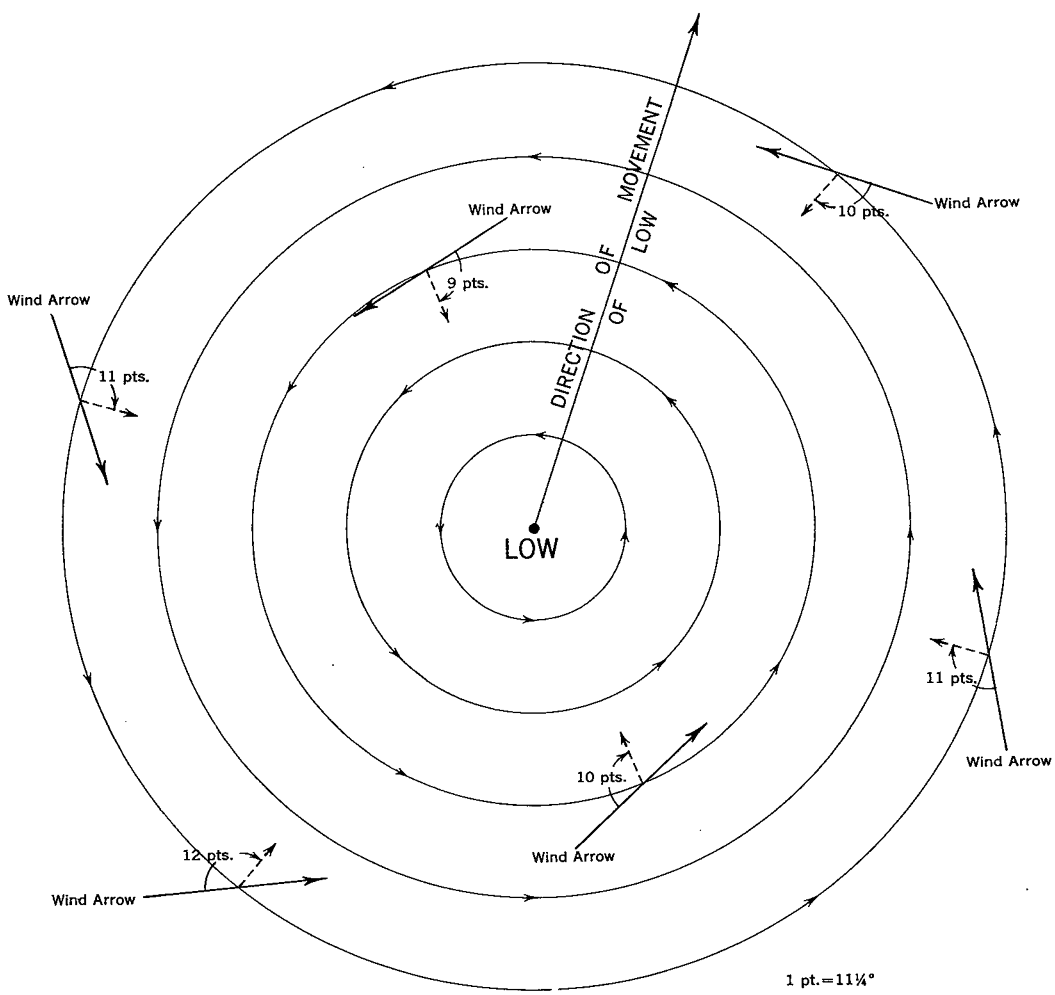

Figure 3609a. Approximate relationship of wind to isobars and storm center in the Northern Hemisphere.

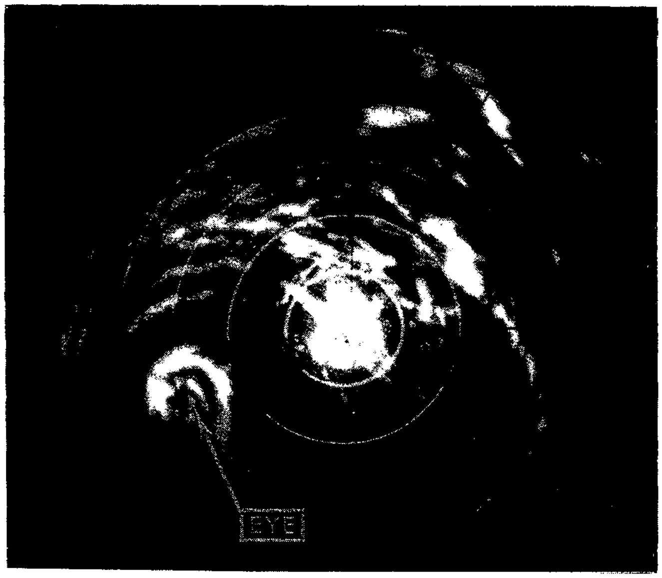

Figure 3609b. Radar PPI presentation of a tropical cyclone.

least 1 hour because the eye tends to oscillate. The tracking of individual cells, which tend to move tangentially around the eye, for 15 minutes or more, either at the end of the band or between bands, will provide an indication of the wind speed in that area of the storm.

Distance from the storm center is more difficult to determine than direction. Radar is perhaps the best guide. However, the rate of fall of the barometer is some indication.

3610. Statistical Analysis Of Barometric Pressure

The lowest-sea-level pressure ever recorded was 877 millibars in typhoon Ida, on September 24, 1958. The observation was taken by a reconnaissance aircraft dropsonde, some 750 miles east of Luzon, Philippines. This observation was obtained again in typhoon Nora on October 6, 1973. The lowest barometric reading of record for the United States is 892.3 millibars, obtained during a hurricane at Lower Matecumbe Key, Florida, in September 1935. In hurricane Camille in 1969, a 905 millibar pressure was measured by reconnaissance aircraft. During a 1927 typhoon, the S.S. Sapoeroea recorded a pressure of 886.6 millibars, the lowest sea-level pressure reported from a ship. Pressure has been observed to drop more than 33 millibars per hour, with a pressure gradient amounting to a change of 3.7 millibars per mile.

A method for alerting the mariner to possible tropical cyclone formation involves a statistical comparison of observed weather parameters with the climatology (30 year averaged conditions) for those parameters. Significant fluctuations away from these average conditions could mean the onset of severe weather. One such statistical method involves a comparison of mean surface pressure in the tropics with the standard deviation (s.d.) of surface pressure. Any significant deviation from the norm could indicate proximity to a tropical cyclone. Analysis shows that surface pressure can be expected to be lower than the mean minus 1 s.d. less than 16% of the time, lower than the mean minus 1.5 s.d. less than 7% of the time, and lower than the mean minus 2 s.d. less than 3% of the time. Comparison of the observed pressure with the mean will indicate how "unusual" the present conditions are.

As an example, assume the mean surface pressure in the South China Sea to be about 1005 mb during August with a s.d. of about 2 mb. Therefore, surface pressure can be expected to fall below 1003 mb about 16% of the time and below 1000 mb about 7% of the time. Ambient pressure any lower than that would alert the mariner to the possible onset of heavy weather. Charts showing the mean surface pressure and the s.d. of surface pressure for various global regions can be found in the U.S. Navy Marine Climatic Atlas of the World.

3611. Maneuvering To Avoid The Storm Center

The safest procedure with respect to tropical cyclones is to avoid them. If action is taken sufficiently early, this is simply a matter of setting a course that will take the vessel well to one side of the probable track of the storm, and then continuing to plot the positions of the storm center as given in the weather bulletins, revising the course as needed.

However, this is not always possible. If the ship is found to be within the storm area, the proper action to take depends in part upon its position relative to the storm center and its direction of travel. It is customary to divide the circular area of the storm into two parts.

In the Northern Hemisphere, that part to the right of the storm track (facing in the direction toward which the storm is moving) is called the **dangerous semicircle**. It is considered dangerous because (1) the actual wind speed is greater than that due to the pressure gradient alone, since it is augmented by the forward motion of the storm, and (2) the direction of the wind and sea is such as to carry a vessel into the path of the storm (in the forward part of the semicircle).

The part to the left of the storm track is called the **less dangerous semicircle**, or **navigable semicircle**. In this part, the wind is decreased by the forward motion of the storm, and the wind blows vessels away from the storm track (in the forward part). Because of the greater wind speed in the dangerous semicircle, the seas are higher than in the less dangerous semicircle. In the Southern Hemisphere, the dangerous semicircle is to the left of the storm track, and the less dangerous semicircle is to the right of the storm track.

A plot of successive positions of the storm center should indicate the semicircle in which a vessel is located. However, if this is based upon weather bulletins, it may not be a reliable guide because of the lag between the observations upon which the bulletin is based and the time of reception of the bulletin, with the ever-present possibility of a change in the direction of the storm. The use of radar eliminates this lag at short range, but the return may not be a true indication of the center. Perhaps the most reliable guide is the wind. Within the cyclonic circulation, a wind shifting to the right in the northern hemisphere and to the left in the southern hemisphere indicates the vessel is probably in the dangerous semicircle. A steady wind shift opposite to this indicates the vessel is probably in the less dangerous semicircle.

However, if a vessel is underway, its own motion should be considered. If it is outrunning the storm or pulling rapidly toward one side (which is not difficult during the early stages of a storm, when its speed is low), the opposite effect occurs. This should usually be accompanied by a rise in atmospheric pressure, but if motion of the vessel is nearly along an isobar, this may not be a reliable indication. If in doubt, the safest action is usually to stop long enough to define the proper semicircle. The loss in time may be more than offset by the minimizing of the possibility of taking the wrong action, increasing the danger to the vessel. If the wind direction remains steady (for a vessel which is stopped), with increasing speed and falling barometer, the vessel is in or near the path of the storm. If it remains steady with decreasing speed and rising barometer, the vessel is near the storm track, behind the center.

The first action to take if the ship is within the cyclonic circulation is to determine the position of his vessel with respect to the storm center. While the vessel can still make considerable way through the water, a course should be selected to take it as far as possible from the center. If the vessel can move faster than the storm, it is a relatively simple matter to outrun the storm if sea room permits. But when the storm is faster, the solution is not as simple. In this case, the vessel, if ahead of the storm, will approach nearer to the center. The problem is to select a course that will produce the greatest possible minimum distance. This is best determined by means of a relative movement plot, as shown in the following example solved on a maneuvering board.

Example: *A tropical cyclone is estimated to be moving in direction 320° at 19 knots. Its center bears 170°, at an estimated distance of 200 miles from a vessel which has a maximum speed of 12 knots.*

Required:
(1) The course to steer at 12 knots to produce the greatest possible minimum distance between the vessel and the storm center.
(2) The distance to the center at nearest approach.
(3) Elapsed time until nearest approach.

Solution: *(Figure 3611) Consider the vessel remaining at the center of the plot throughout the solution, as on a radar PPI.*

(1) To locate the position of the storm center relative to the vessel, plot point C at a distance of 200 miles (scale 20:1) in direction 170° from the center of the diagram. From the center of the diagram, draw RA, the speed vector of the storm center, in direction 320°, speed 19 knots (scale 2:1). From A draw a line tangent to the 12-knot speed circle (labeled 6 at scale 2:1) on the side opposite the storm center. From the center of the diagram, draw a perpendicular to this tangent line, locating point B. The line RB is the required speed vector for the vessel. Its direction, 011°, is the required course.

(2) The path of the storm center relative to the vessel will be along a line from C in the direction BA, if both storm and vessel maintain course and speed. The point of nearest approach will be at D, the foot of a perpendicular from the center of the diagram. This distance, at scale 20:1, is 187 miles.

(3) The length of the vector BA (14.8 knots) is the speed of the storm with respect to the vessel. Mark this on the lowest scale of the nomogram at the bottom of the diagram. The relative distance CD is 72 miles, by measurement. Mark this (scale 10:1) on the middle scale at the bottom of the diagram. Draw a line between the two points and extend it to intersect the top scale at 29.2 (292 at 10:1 scale). The elapsed time is therefore 292 minutes, or 4 hours 52 minutes.

Answers: *(1) C 011°, (2) D 187 mi., (3) $4^h\ 52^m$. The storm center will be dead astern at its nearest approach.*

As a general rule, for a vessel in the Northern Hemisphere, safety lies in placing the wind on the starboard bow in the dangerous semicircle and on the starboard quarter in the less dangerous semicircle. If on the storm track ahead of the storm, the wind should be put about 160° on the starboard quarter until the vessel is well within the less dangerous semicircle, and the rule for that semicircle then followed. In the Southern Hemisphere the same rules hold, but with respect to the port side. With a faster than average vessel, the wind can be brought a little farther aft in each case. However, as the speed of the storm increases along its track, the wind should be brought farther forward. If land interferes with what would otherwise be the best maneuver, the solution should be altered to fit the circumstances.

If the vessel is faster than the storm, it is possible to overtake it. In this case, the only action usually needed is to slow enough to let the storm pull ahead.

In all cases, one should be alert to changes in the direction of movement of the storm center, particularly in the area where the track normally curves toward the pole. If the storm maintains its direction and speed, the ship's course should be maintained as the wind shifts.

If it becomes necessary for a vessel to heave to, the characteristics of the vessel should be considered. A power vessel is concerned primarily with damage by direct action of the sea. A good general rule is to heave to with head to the sea in the dangerous semicircle, or stern to the sea in the less dangerous semicircle. This will result in greatest amount of headway away from the storm center, and least amount of leeway toward it. If a vessel handles better with the sea astern or on the quarter, it may be placed in this position in the less dangerous semicircle or in the rear half of the dangerous semicircle, but never in the forward half of the dangerous semicircle. It has been reported that when the wind reaches hurricane speed and the seas become confused, some ships ride out the storm best if the engines are stopped, and the vessel is left to seek its own position, or lie ahull. In this way, it is said, the ship rides with the storm instead of fighting against it.

In a sailing vessel attempting to avoid a storm center, one should steer courses as near as possible to those prescribed above for power vessels. However, if it becomes necessary for such a vessel to heave to, the wind is of greater concern than the sea. A good general rule always is to heave to on whichever tack permits the shifting wind to draw aft. In the Northern Hemisphere, this is the starboard tack in the dangerous semicircle, and the port tack in the less dangerous semicircle. In the Southern Hemisphere these are reversed.

While each storm requires its own analysis, and frequent or continual resurvey of the situation, the general rules for a steamer may be summarized as follows:

Northern Hemisphere

Right or dangerous semicircle: Bring the wind on the starboard bow (045° relative), hold course and make as much way as possible. If necessary, heave to with head to the sea.

Left or less dangerous semicircle: Bring the wind on the starboard quarter (135° relative), hold course and make as much way as possible. If necessary, heave to with stern to the sea.

On storm track, ahead of center: Bring the wind 2 points on the starboard quarter (about 160° relative), hold course and make as much way as possible. When well within the less dangerous semicircle, maneuver as indicated above.

On storm track, behind center: Avoid the center by

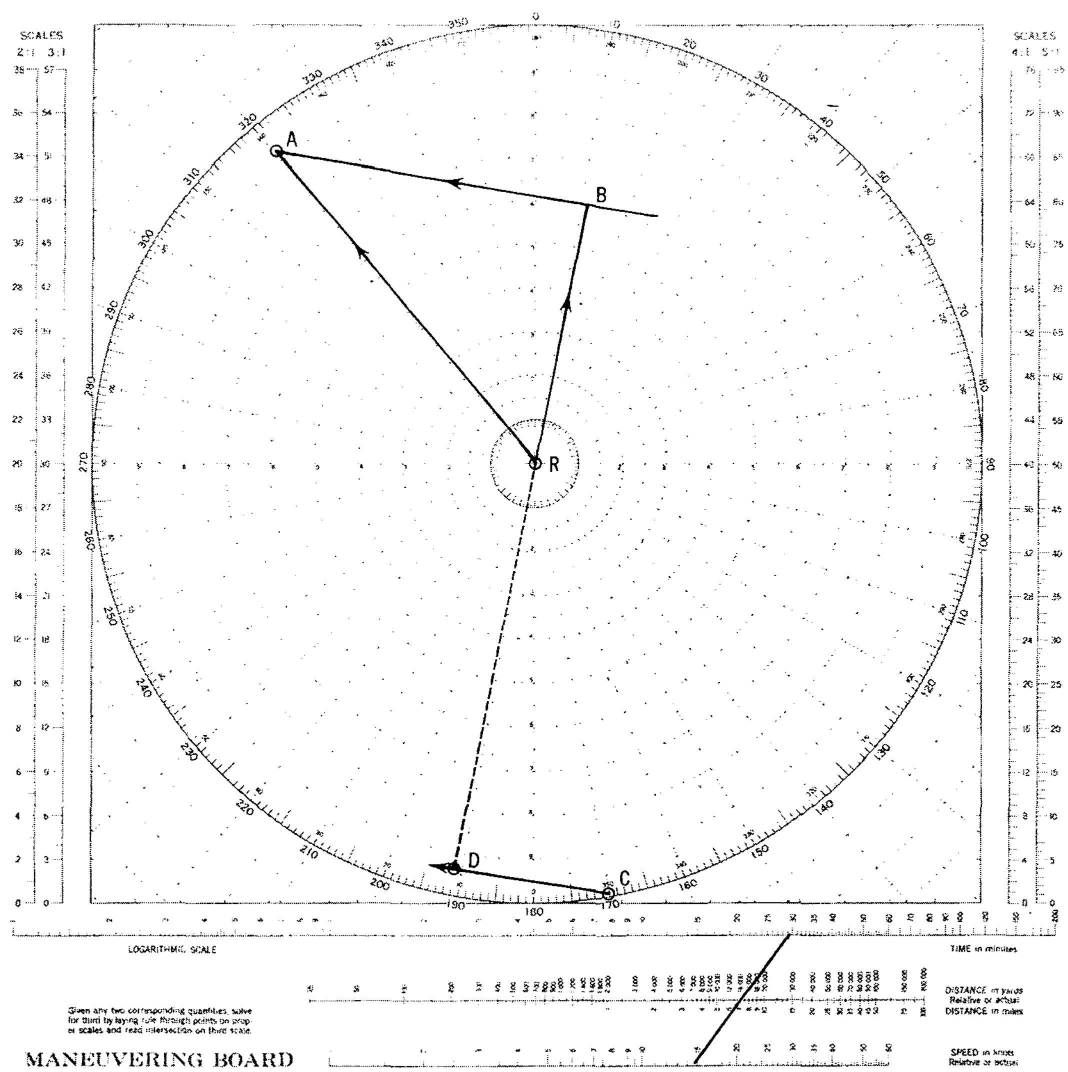

Figure 3611. Determining the course to avoid the storm center.