

1981

## The Barometer

John D. Costello

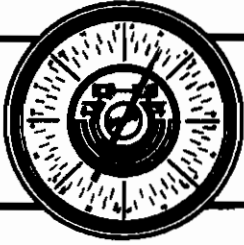
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### Recommended Citation

Costello, John D. (1981) "The Barometer," *Naval War College Review*: Vol. 34 : No. 1 , Article 7.  
Available at: <https://digital-commons.usnwc.edu/nwc-review/vol34/iss1/7>

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# THE BAROMETER

23 October 1980

Editor  
 Naval War College Review  
 Newport, RI 02840

Dear Commander Pettyjohn:

The July-August 1980 issue of the "Review" contained an article by Lieutenant Commander Edmund I. Kiley, USCG, titled "The Naval Employment of the Coast Guard 270-Medium Endurance Cutter." First I would like to commend Lieutenant Commander Kiley on an extremely well written treatise, the best I've seen published to date. As regards Naval employment of the 270' WMEC, the article was limited by the references utilized by the author. Therein lies the reason for my writing to you. Although the references appear "solid", there were minor errors which I believe are in need of correction.

The mission of the 270' WMEC is to conduct prompt and sustained peacetime or combat operations at sea in support of national policy. It contributes to the missions of sea control, with its lesser included function of sea denial, and projection of naval power from those sea areas under United States control. It supports national policy in peacetime through enforcement of laws and treaties, marine environmental protection, marine science activities, search and rescue and military preparedness operations. Additionally, it contributes to sea control and power projection in time of war as a specialized unit of the U.S. Navy and is capable of conducting ASW operations as an element of a convoy escort group, coastal surveillance and interdiction operations, and special warfare.

The WMEC-270 class is armed with a 76 mm gun and a modern fire control system. It has a sea-based aviation capability. Operating independently it is fully capable of carrying out its peacetime mission. It is capable of a sustained speed of 19 knots and is equipped with a towed array sonar and ESM suite. During convoy operations in time of war, it will be augmented by LAMPS III which enhances its ASW capability. An analysis of commercial transoceanic traffic indicates an average speed of 15.0 knots. Some ships are faster than 20 knots and convoy tactics will have to take this under consideration, but it is axiomatic that the convoy can only steam as fast as the slowest ship. That ship