

MAP BRANCH

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In the fall of 1941 an Advisory Committee met to consider the establishment of a geographic division for the Coordinator of Information. This Committee of government geographers conferred with the Chief of the proposed division and other COI officers. The group recommended a divisional organization that it considered would provide the most efficient means of integration with various programs of other agencies.

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The breakdown of the Geographic Division adopted was as follows:

(1) the Cartographic Section (Oct. 1941); (2) the Geographic Reports Section (Nov. 1941); (3) the Map Information Section (Feb. 1942). This Division was placed as a functional unit under the Research and Analysis Branch of COI. As part of its mission the R&A was "responsible for the collection and analysis of strategic information of a geographic nature...."

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The Cartographic Section was divided into two components for greater efficiency, the Compilation Unit and the Construction Unit. The latter was composed of drafting personnel, a composing shop and a design unit. This Cartographic Section was charged with the duty of preparing the maps that would fill the needs of COI. In practice this function was merely one of providing Donovan and others with presentation material and illustrative maps

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for reports. The need for specialized cartography was soon apparent, and so there was a shift to the idea of a map as an intelligence document rather than an illustration.

The second component established was the Geographic Reports Section. The name would seem to indicate the functions of this office, but at the outset the major portion of effort was centered on compiling maps. As the geographic reports began to come into being, attention was given to the collection and organization of intelligence of a topographic nature.


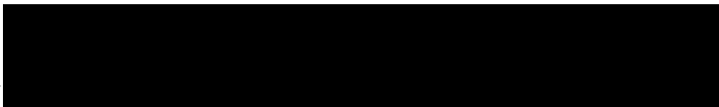
In theory the Geographic Reports Section worked with information on industrial locations, local resources, climate, weather and the like; but in practice many of these same fields were covered by the regional sections in the Division of Special Information. The line of differentiation between these two groups was difficult to determine. Yet, the Geographic Reports Section did produce geographic research of value.

The Map Information Section was primarily a division of service to other offices. Its three functions were: (1) "to evaluate published maps; (2) inventory of maps available in the United States; (3) to procure hitherto unlisted published maps from all possible sources." Since the Section "could not" at this time become a collection agency, it was necessary to have others

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receive the new maps, for example,
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At first the procurement of maps from outside sources presented problems, because previous to the establishment of the Map Information Section any individual or unit in COI procured their own maps according to their needs. These difficulties were soon relieved by an order that gave this function exclusively to this Section. All requests went through them.

The Military Order of June 13, 1942 stated that COI was to be known hereafter as the Office of Strategic Services. All activities except those of foreign intelligence were included in this action.

In a memorandum from Donovan to General W. B. Smith dated August 17, 1942, under the title General Function is listed that of collecting maps and charts, which is described as an accumulation of cartographic material to supplement G2, A2, and ONI. Much of this is gathered as the result of research for various purposes. The project was undertaken of microfilming important map collections.

OSS was organized according to, I - Administration and II - Operating. Research and Analysis was a branch of the Operating organization; one of its

functions being the preparation of maps and charts as needed by the JCS. War
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and Navy Departments. Subordinate to this Branch was the Geographic Division composed of three sections. A Map Information Section which microfilmed all large American collections in addition to gathering its own collection of maps. A Cartographic Section produced maps to be used as supplements to reports. Weather, climate, and related topics were the concern of the Geographic Reports Section. The Division was the largest and most competent group of its kind in Washington.

In January of 1943, after the general OSS reorganization of December 1942, there was a reorganization of R&A to resolve basic problems carried over from COI. Four divisions were set up that were regional in responsibility but had functional subdivisions. Each had as one subdivision a geographic unit. Personnel of the Geographic Reports Section were used to operate these subdivisions. As a further aid to these regional divisions, a new functional division was created. This was the Map Divisions. It was staffed by the personnel of the Cartographic Section of the former Geographic Division. The structure of the whole Branch was virtually unchanged thereafter.

The Map Division was composed of four sections: (1) Cartography, (2) Map Intelligence, (3) Topographic Models, (4) Special Photography. In the

Cartography Section maps were made of strategic value rather than tactical

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These maps were not merely illustrations but involved research that resulted in intelligence documents that were an essential part of R&A projects. The cartographers producing these maps were also trained as geographers and worked closely with the analysts.

The next section, Map Intelligence,¹ had an unique function. This unit had the sole responsibility of collecting in the US and abroad all types of cartographic material. As a result of this, the Section had one of the largest collections of maps. This collection was so arranged that maps were available for immediate reference. The unit also distributed copies of maps to those in need of such information.

The third Section is Topographical Models. The models turned out by this group were aids to both strategic and operational planning. Mechanical aids were used to a great extent. It was here that the most advanced methods of shadow painting were inaugurated. Such diligence produced models of great detail that represented many man hours.

The principal function of the Special Photography Section was to expand

¹ According to the ORR book, Tab A P. 19 - V - 31, "the map intelligence and geographic research functions were organized in OSS in 1944". (?)

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the usefulness of the topographic models. This was accomplished by reproducing the models in black and white and color. On these pictures the Daily Situation was based. The majority of the work was done for the JCS.

An Executive Order from H. S. Truman dated September 20, 1945, to become effective October 1, 1945, terminated OSS and disposed of its functions. The functions, personnel, property and records of R&A were transferred to the Interim Research and Intelligence Service (IRIS) which was established in the State Department. IRIS was to be abolished at the close of business on December 31, 1945, and the Secretary of State was to make provisions for terminating its affairs.

Although the Executive Order seemed to transfer the whole of the Map Division, only two Sections actually went to State. Topographical Models was taken over by the Army Map Service. Special Photography was completely abolished and its personnel went to Army. Cartography and Map Intelligence¹ were given to State. From October to December 1945 these units were under IRIS, and in January they became known as the Map Division² of State which

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I [redacted] called this section Map Library (later to be known as Map Intelligence, Geographic Intelligence etc.), but all references in OSS War Report, Vol. I identify it as Map Intelligence.(?)

² Map Division is [redacted] designation, ORR book states: these geographic activities were joined to the existing Div. of Geography of the State Department's Geography Division. Tab A P. 19-V.

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also included Map Intelligence, a newly created section.¹

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As of December 29, 1947 [REDACTED] received this as the official date upon inquiry)² the Map Division of State was transferred to CIA. This action was approved by the NIA (June 26, 1947). Thus State was without cartographic facilities. However, the Chief Geographer with a staff of approximately four persons did remain in the Department. This lack of geographic information in the Department is the basic reason for State's utilization of the CIA facilities. It was understood from the beginning by both parties that State Department needs must be met by CIA.

The Map Division first appears on a CIA chart as of October 15, 1947 (see chart book). It becomes the Map Branch of the Office of Reports and Estimates. The Branch was subdivided into three branches: Cartography, Map Library, and Map Intelligence, the same makeup as in State.

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In 1947 in accordance with its duties of coordination, a committee for the procurement of maps was formed having the title of the Inter-Agency

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¹ "newly created section" is [REDACTED] in agreement with his office titles.

² ORR Book, Tab A P. 19-V: The 3 activities cartography, map intelligence and geographic research, and map library were transferred to Central Intelligence as of 1 July 1947....

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Map Procurement Coordination Committee. This group receives all requests for foreign maps from the government agencies, as it is the only group handling these requests. This means that the group prevents duplication in this field.

According to a statement of functions for the Map Branch, ORE dated July 14, 1948, this Branch is to operate as an "interdepartmental map intelligence facility" and also provide assistance to CIA components. There are six functions given in short paragraph form. In brief, the first provides for assistance in the interpretation of geographic information and map intelligence. The second states that maps be constructed for intelligence reports and any other needs that may be required. Third, they prepare cartographic material under the coordination of Basic Intelligence as support for their (BI) programs (NIS). Fourth, this Branch coordinates interdepartmental requests for all foreign maps and the like. In connection with this, it gives its recommendations for such maps to State for procurement. The fifth paragraph states that the group maintain a CIA map collection and provide assistance in regard to this service. Lastly, the Branch represents CIA on the US Board of Geographic Names, the Joint Map & Photo Committee, JCS, and the

Committee on Geographical Exploration, RDB

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