

March 1975

CIA ORGANIZATIONAL HISTORY IN BRIEF

Summary

During the nearly three decades of its existence, the Central Intelligence Agency has continuously adjusted its organizational structure to cope with changing conditions and responsibilities. Within the pattern of constant change, however, there have been four points at which major reorganizations have occurred. In its first two years, CIA took on numerous new activities and shifted responsibilities for those activities frequently. In 1951-52, two separate entities engaged in overseas operations were merged and the rapidly growing intelligence production function was reorganized. Another massive change occurred in 1962. A new Directorate was established to take over the many projects for technical, as opposed to clandestine human source, collection of information that were already underway and to assume the responsibility for conceiving and developing future technical collection systems. Concurrently, the remainder of the Agency was reorganized and important command and control functions were centered in an Executive Director-Comptroller. In 1973 a number of activities were transferred organizationally, with emphasis on grouping together similar functions, and the Executive Director-Comptroller functions were dispersed.

Initial Organization

A Central Intelligence Group (CIG) headed by a Director of Central Intelligence (DCI) was established in January 1946 by President Truman, and it immediately began assuming intelligence functions carried out by various agencies during World War II. Concurrently, Congress was engaged in a review of the entire national security structure, including intelligence, which resulted in the National Security Act of 1947 directing establishment of a Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The CIG was accordingly transformed into the CIA, which began with an organizational structure that included a number of administrative functions and four major operating components: *

--The Office of Reports and Estimates, which was initially responsible for all finished intelligence production. The direct forerunner of all the producing offices now in existence, it was subdivided repeatedly as the

*See the 1947 organization chart.

production function grew in size and diversified in responsibility. It was initially formed in the Central Intelligence Group by personnel transferred from State and the military services.

-- The Office of Special Operations, derived from what remained of the wartime Office of Strategic Services (OSS), which had been attached to the War Department as the Strategic Services Unit in the immediate postwar period. It was responsible for espionage and counterespionage. Following OSS practice, worldwide communications and security support also were assigned to this operating Office.

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-- The Office of Operations, responsible for overt [redacted] collection of foreign intelligence. It, too, was formed partly out of the remnants of the OSS structure that had been attached to the Pentagon and included a coordinated domestic collection activity which became the Contact Division. It also incorporated

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[redacted] foreign document centers taken over from the Army and Navy and merged into the Foreign Documents Division.

-- The Office of Collection and Dissemination, responsible for establishing intelligence collection priorities, coordinating the collection efforts of the various agencies, and organizing the dissemination of both raw intelligence and finished reports. It soon assumed control of reference and records centers as well.

As additional activities and assets were transferred to CIA, they were added on to the existing structure. For example, joint military intelligence surveys became a CIA responsibility in October 1947; accordingly, the National Intelligence Survey program was organized in a Basic Intelligence Division of the Office of Reports and Estimates.

The National Security Council, established concurrently with the CIA, began issuing a series of directives in December of 1947 which shaped the subsequent structure and missions of CIA. One of the most significant ordered immediate expansion of covert operations and paramilitary activities. In response, on 1 September 1948, the Office of Policy Coordination was established.* It had an anomalous relationship with the rest of the Agency, since the NSC ordered it to remain as independent of the remainder of CIA as possible and placed it under the policy direction of the Departments of State and Defense. For OPC's first two years, policy guidance came directly from

*See the 1950 organization chart.

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State and Defense, although the chain of command was through the Director of Central Intelligence. It was during this period, under OPC, that such activities as Radio Free Europe, [redacted] Radio Liberty, [redacted] and the youth, student, and labor programs of the Agency began. STATINTL

Shortly after the establishment of OPC, a Hoover Commission Task Force began making recommendations on national security organization; they were partially endorsed by the Commission itself in February 1949. A separate National Intelligence Survey Group headed by Allen Dulles filed its own report to the NSC in January 1949. The NSC subsequently directed merger of the Office of Special Operations, the Office of Policy Coordination and the Contact Branch. This could not be accomplished under the original charter of OPC, however, and no major change was made until General Walter Bedell Smith took over as DCI in October 1950.

The existence of both OSO and OPC meant that two clandestine organizations were responding to separate chains of command while working within many of the same foreign countries. They had caused continual difficulties--especially by competing for the same potential agents--and General Smith immediately insisted that all orders to OPC be passed through him. He also designated a number of Senior Representatives abroad to coordinate the separate activities. By mid-1951, integration of the two organizations had begun; complete integration was ordered in July 1952, although some overseas stations continued to report directly to the DCI through overseas Senior Representatives until 1954. The new joint organization was renamed the Clandestine Services; within it, an International Organizations Division was activated in June 1954 to handle student, youth and labor programs.

General Smith also created two new Deputy Directors, one for Administration and one for Operations; the latter, redesignated the Deputy Director for Plans (DDP) in January 1951, headed what became the Clandestine Services.

Meanwhile reorganization of intelligence production offices was being undertaken. The Office of Research and Estimates was divided into the Office of National Estimates, responsible for national-level policy-related papers that projected analysis into the future, and the Office of Research and Reports (ORR), which handled economic and geographic intelligence and the National Intelligence Survey program. A new Office of Current Intelligence was added in January 1951. A year later, a Deputy Director for Intelligence (DDI) was named, with supervision over the above offices as well as the Office of Scientific Intelligence, the Office of Collection and Dissemination, and the Office of Intelligence Coordination which had been directly under the DCI. In March

of 1952, the Office of Operations (engaged in overt functions: [redacted] and Foreign Documents Division) was placed under the DDI. And that November the Photographic Intelligence Division was established within ORR's Geographic Research Area. A separate Office of Basic Intelligence was formed in 1955.

Between 1950 and 1952 the Agency grew markedly. Administrative support functions increased along with other activities. In February 1955, responsibilities for training, personnel administration and communications were centralized in the Directorate for Administration and the Directorate was renamed the Directorate for Support. By 1955, therefore, the basic structure of the current agency had been established.* The Director had three functional deputies, each in charge of a Directorate. Overt collection, analysis, and production of finished intelligence were centralized in the Intelligence Directorate. Other intelligence collection--both espionage and rapidly growing technical forms--was in the Plans Directorate. The Support Directorate provided administrative services of common concern as well as specialized support for the various units.

Much of this structure still exists. Over time, however, functions have been shifted from one Directorate to another, realigned within Directorates or eliminated--usually for one of two reasons:

- Decisions or recommendations have been received from other parts of the governmental structure: the President, the NSC, Congress, and a succession of special commissions and internal study groups.
- Organizational philosophy has changed as personnel have changed. Various approaches have been taken to organization--grouping similar functions, grouping organizations by common interest (such as a geographical region) or forming close organizational links between the supplier of a service and the principal customer. These changes have been shifts in emphasis; the organization has always been a combination of the three approaches.

Changes in the priorities given to particular missions or intelligence targets have also resulted in changes in the size and authority of organizational components. Growth in a substantive area has led to occasional divisions of one unit into smaller ones, providing more reasonable spans of control.

*See the 1955 organization chart.

In the half dozen years following establishment of this framework, most changes were minor. The DCI's Senior Representatives abroad were eliminated in 1957. A Photo Interpretation Center was established within the DDI in 1958, combining functions from several components including the Photo Intelligence Division. It was replaced in 1961 by the National Photographic Interpretation Center. And the personnel and responsibilities involved in the development of technical collection devices--primarily aircraft--were transferred from the office of the DCI to the Plans Directorate.

1961-1963

Late in 1961, the new DCI, John McCone, established a working group chaired by the Agency Inspector General, Lyman Kirkpatrick, to study Agency and Intelligence Community organization and activities. Final recommendations were submitted in April 1962 and led to the last major reorganization of the Agency.

Even before the study was completed, one major decision was made. Technological advances had been numerous and very rapid during the 1950's, and they had presented new opportunities for intelligence collection by machines. Reconnaissance aircraft had been developed within the Agency; collection of electronic intelligence by interception devices was another fast-growing area. Technology had also made new kinds of information available for analysis and created a need for more analysis by scientifically trained people. Mr. McCone designated a Deputy Director for Research, with initial responsibility for elements drawn from the DDP and additional responsibilities to await completion of the study, in February 1962. The Office of Research and Development, the Office of Electronic Intelligence, and the Office of Special Activities (responsible for overhead reconnaissance activities) were established immediately. The Office of Scientific Intelligence (from the DDI) and automatic data processing activities (from Support and the Comptroller) were added in 1963. With the establishment late that year of the Foreign Missile and Space Analysis Center, the renamed Directorate of Science and Technology assumed the basic form it still maintains.

The Kirkpatrick study also resulted in a major strengthening of the Office of the Director. The General Counsel's office, Audit Staff, Comptroller, Office of Budget, Program Analysis and Manpower and the US Intelligence Board Secretariat were added to it. By late 1962, the position of an Executive Director-Comptroller had been established and his role as third in command of the Agency had been delineated. And the Kirkpatrick study

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led to centralization of paramilitary activities, an organization to provide a command mechanism for future contingencies, and establishment of a

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By the end of 1963, the organization had settled into the pattern it kept for the next decade.* Four directorates existed. They were primarily differentiated by function, but units performing services frequently were co-located with their customers. Central direction was strong, with an Executive Director-Comptroller playing a major role in all Agency activities and the Board of National Estimates reporting directly to the DCI, although the supporting Office of National Estimates remained in the Intelligence Directorate for about another year.

1964-1972

Organizational arrangements remained largely static for the next decade, though growing emphasis on analysis led to further subdivision of analytical offices. The DDI's Office of Operations was reorganized and renamed the Domestic Contact Service in mid-1965. The Office of Basic Intelligence was enlarged and took over geographic responsibilities from the Office of Research and Reports. The latter was divided in 1967 into the Office of Economic Research and the Office of Strategic Research. In the DDS&T, the Office of Special Projects was established in 1965 to conduct overhead reconnaissance, a duty that had been previously handled by a Staff. Staffs to address special needs were added in the Plans Directorate. Responsibility for proprietary organizations was transferred from [REDACTED] Division to other DDP components in December 1971, and the Division was [REDACTED] the following month. Some mechanism for coordinating and evaluating national foreign intelligence activities had existed since the establishment of the Agency; in 1972, this took the form of the Intelligence Community Staff in the Office of the DCI.

Activities related to Southeast Asia grew and subsequently contracted during this period. Organizationally, such changes were reflected in the creation of a Special Assistant to the DCI for Vietnam Affairs with a supporting staff and in formation of a number of new low-level components throughout the Agency.

1973-1975

The most recent series of changes began when James Schlesinger was named DCI in early 1973. He put in train a number of organizational

*See the 1964 organization chart.

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studies and directed a number of transfers; some were accomplished during his tenure and some were carried out after William Colby replaced Mr. Schlesinger as DCI in mid-1973.

The organizational moves and personnel reductions of that time led to today's organization:

--The Domestic Contact Service was transferred from the DDI to the DDP; the staff structure was reduced, and the Directorate was redesignated the Directorate of Operations.

--Three technical activities--technical services, communications research and development, and the National Photographic Interpretation Center were transferred to the Science and Technology Directorate. S&T also merged certain functions of the Office of Scientific Intelligence with the Foreign Missile and Space Analysis Center and established the Office of Weapons Intelligence. The Office of Special Projects was transformed into the Office of Development and Engineering, which provides engineering and system development support Agency-wide.

--A new Office of Political Research was established in the DDI.

--Computer services, which had been fragmented but with their largest manifestations in S&T, were transferred to the Support Directorate. And the Support Directorate itself went through two name changes, first to Management and Services and subsequently to the Directorate of Administration.

--The Board and Office of National Estimates were abolished and replaced by a group of senior functional and geographic specialists called National Intelligence Officers drawn partially from outside the Agency. Both the senior NIO and the head of the Intelligence Community Staff were named Deputies to the DCI.

--The position of Executive Director-Comptroller was abolished. Many of its functions were redistributed within the Office of the DCI and the Directorate of Administration. A Management Committee composed of the DCI, his principal Deputy, the four Deputies in charge of Directorates, the Comptroller, the General Counsel and the Inspector General was established to advise the DCI on the management policy questions.

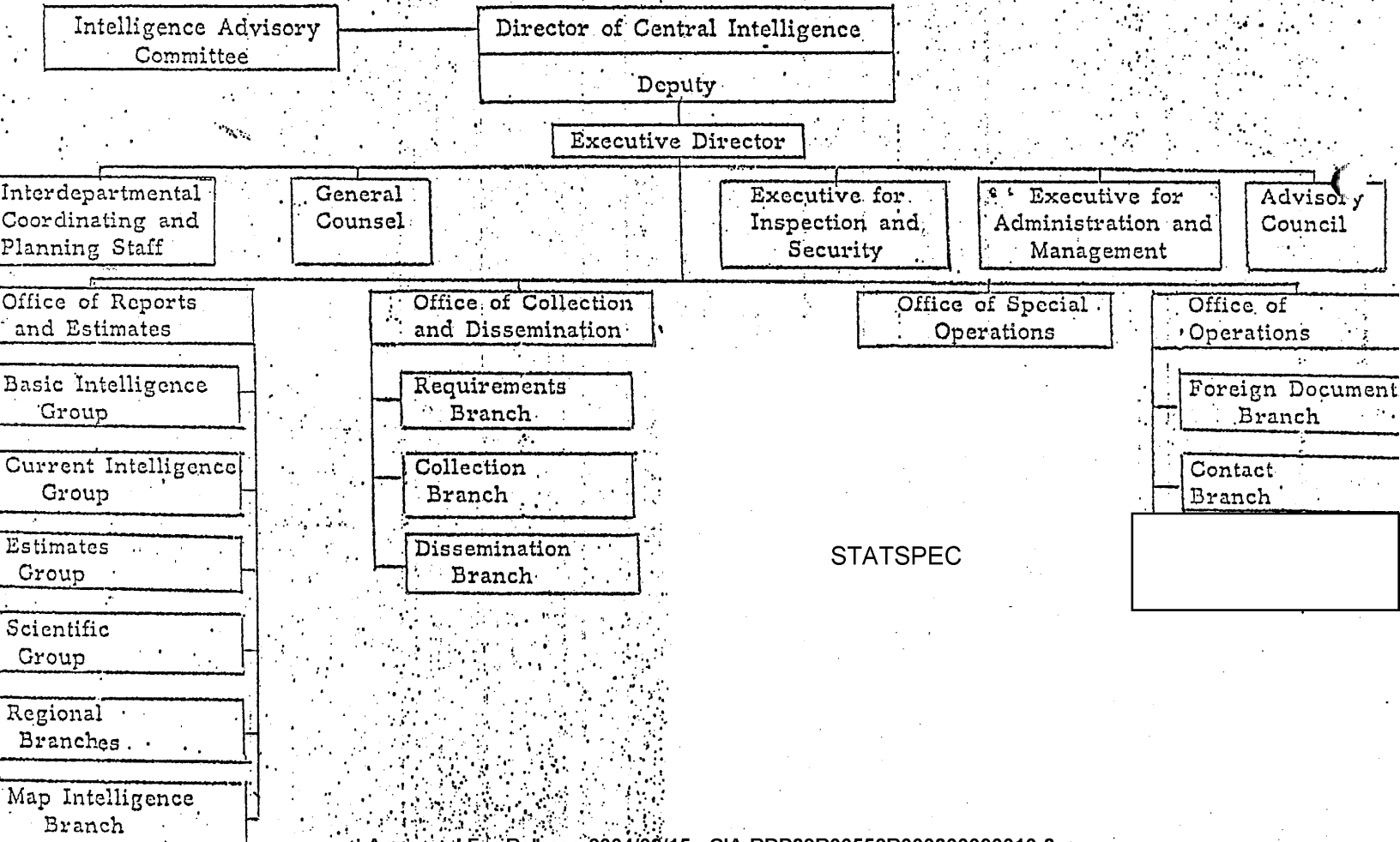
--For budgetary reasons, a decision was made to terminate the National Intelligence Survey program in the Office of Basic and Geographic Intelligence; accordingly, the geographic intelligence unit was redesignated the Office of Geographic and Cartographic Research.

As of February 1975, therefore, the directorate structure is generally the same as it was in 1965.* However, there is a stricter adherence to combining similar functions than in earlier periods. Management direction and control is decentralized. The staff structure has been considerably reduced and simplified. And the number of full time staff personnel has been reduced substantially.

*See the 1975 organization chart.

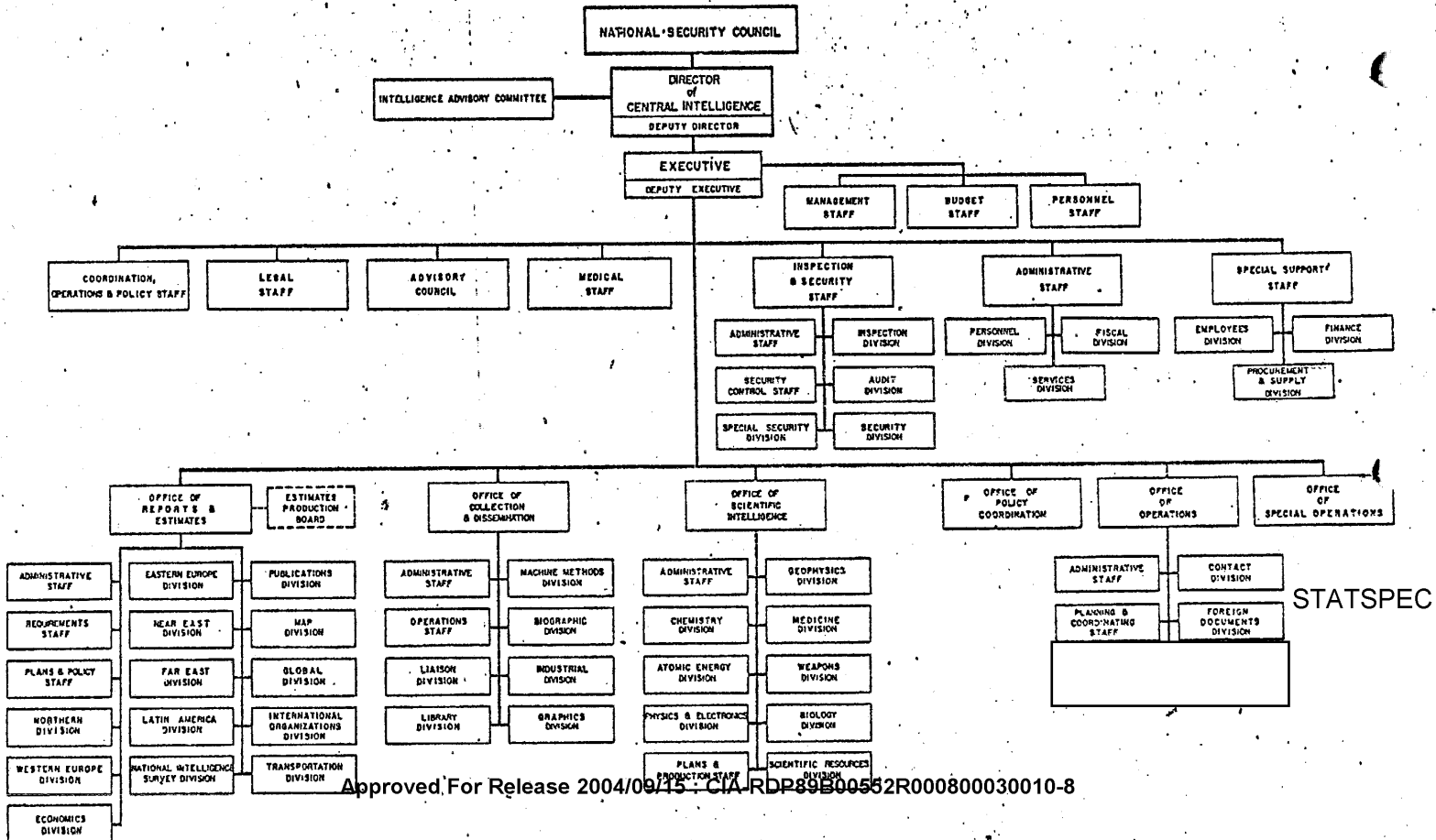
ORGANIZATION AS OF SEPTEMBER 1947

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY



ORGANIZATION AS OF JULY 1950

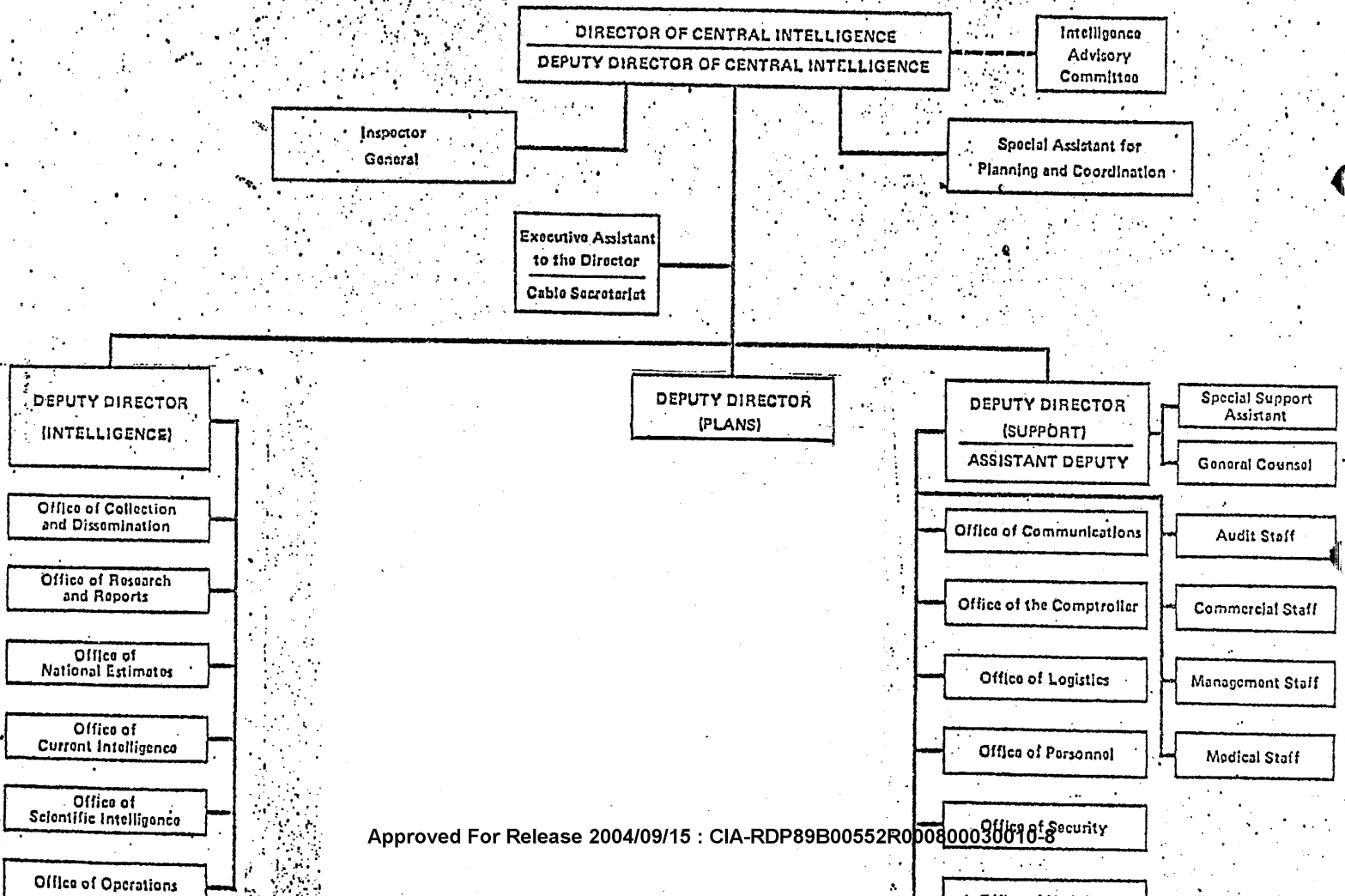
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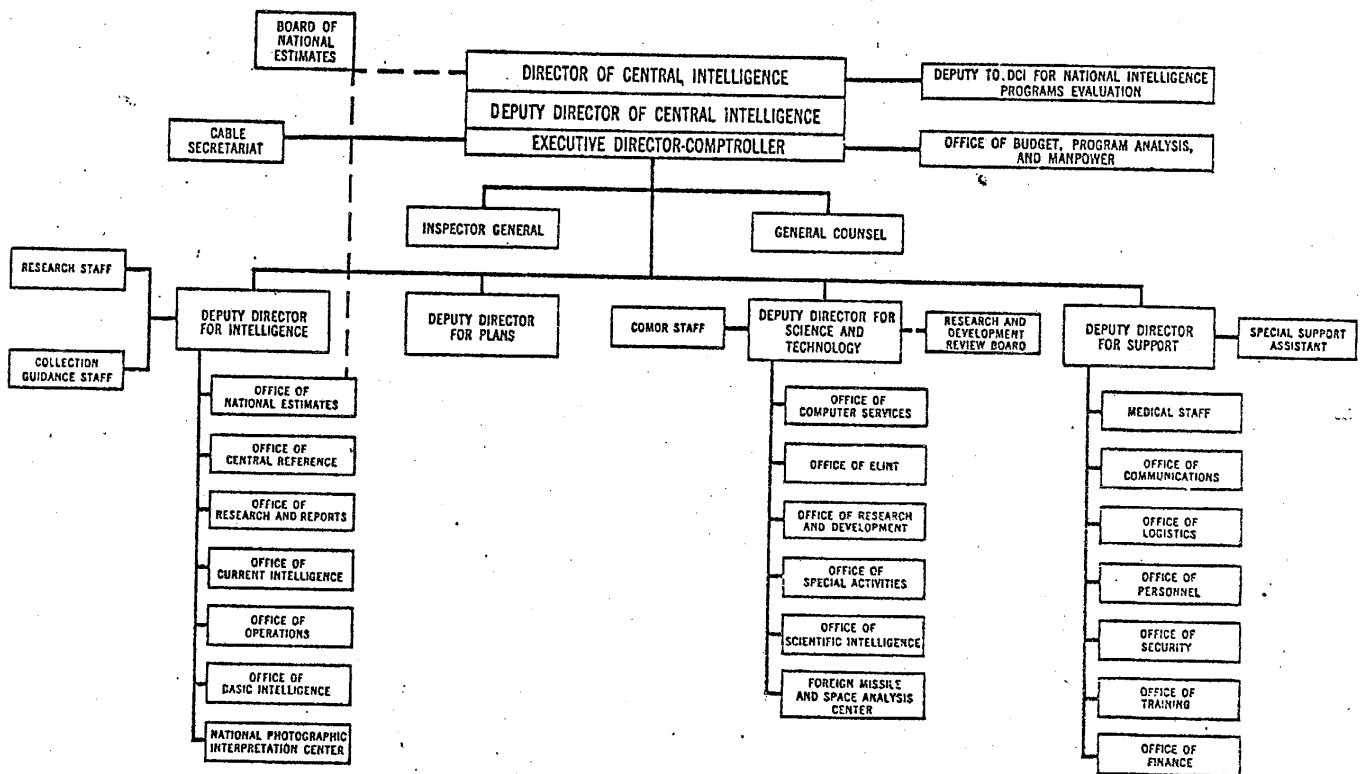
ORGANIZATION AS OF MARCH 1955

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY



ORGANIZATION AS OF MARCH 1964

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY



Central Intelligence Agency

