

# The Office of Naval Intelligence (ONI) Celebrates 133<sup>rd</sup> Anniversary

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FROM THE OFFICE OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE HISTORIAN

March 23rd marks the 133rd anniversary of ONI; the nation's longest serving intelligence organization. Established in 1882 when the Navy was undergoing the transition from sail to steam propulsion and wooden to steel hulls, ONI was instrumental in collecting information on the latest technological innovations to modernize the U.S. Navy. In World War II ONI trained hundreds of officers in operational intelligence to deploy with the Fleet and in the combat theaters, as well as Japanese language officers who were essential to the successful operations of the Navy's communications intelligence units. Reserve officers and civilian agents assigned to ONI's Special Activities Branch supported the Combat Intelligence Division on Admiral Ernest J. King's staff with intelligence on the capabilities and operations of the German U-boat fleet to help the Allies prevail in the Battle of the Atlantic.

Throughout the Cold War, ONI continued to leverage new technology to further enhance its ability to support operators at sea, contributing to a successful national strategy of strategic deterrence of the Soviet Union. Its long-standing expertise in civil maritime intelligence ensures the safety of the seas—the lifelines of international commerce.

ONI's mission continuously evolves within the context of new circumstances and new requirements. In the 21st century, the weaponization of information and the means by which it is delivered has eroded the distinction between intelligence and operations. Innovations in information technology are transforming the practice of intelligence analysis. ONI continues to lead the way in ensuring that Navy leaders have high-quality intelligence to inform acquisition decisions that will shape tomorrow's Fleet. Operational commanders rely on the special expertise of forward deployed ONI personnel to support Fleet and Navy Expeditionary and Special Warfare operations. The men and women of ONI, military and civilian continue to carry on a proud legacy of service to our Navy and our Nation.

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