

 Panama  
Canal  
Maps

NAVY DEPARTMENT  
OFFICE OF NAVAL INTELLIGENCE  
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GZ-18

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

25 June, 1941

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS

Subject: Secret Canal Zone Maps.

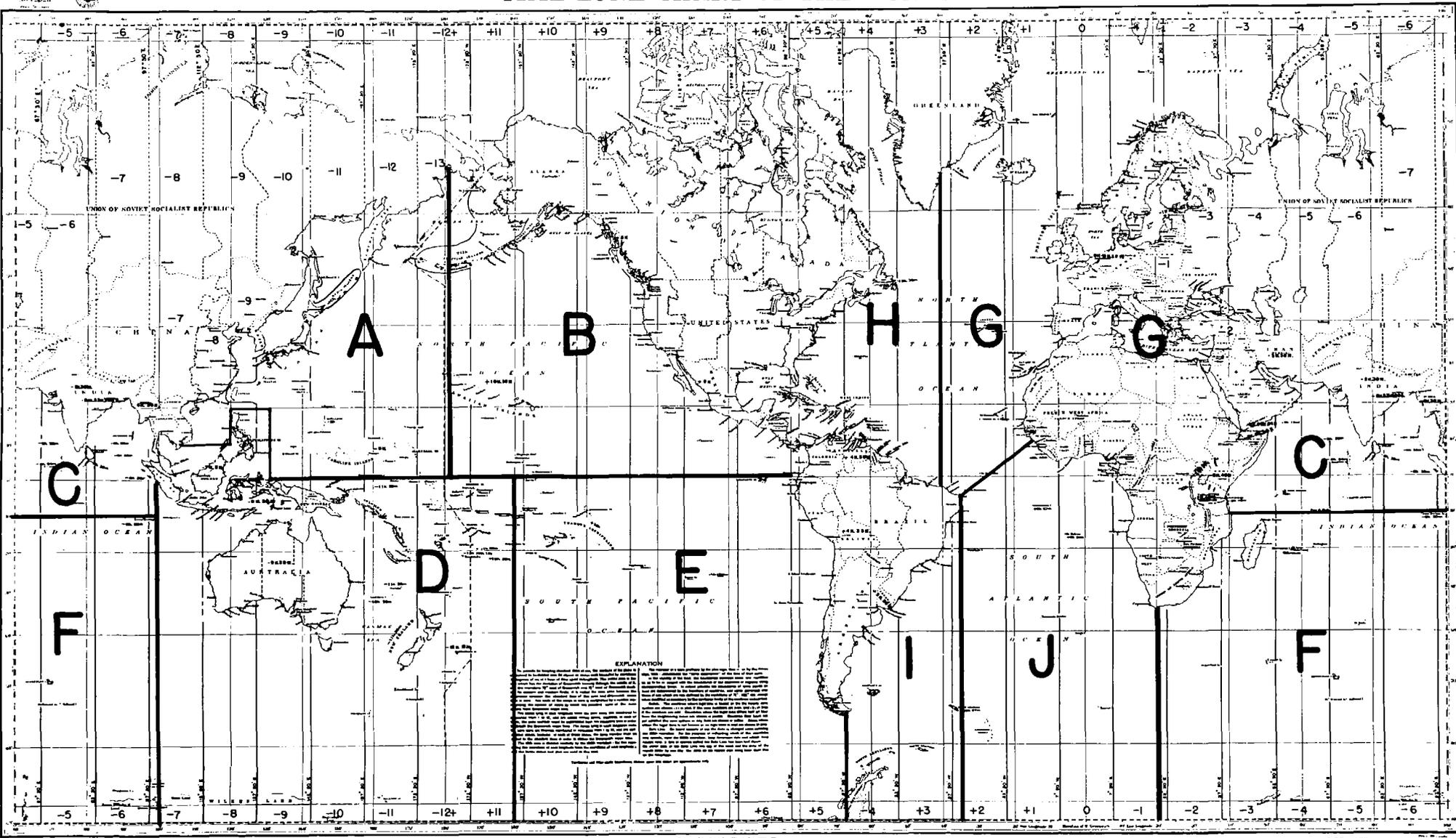
1. Acquisition of subject maps by the Italian Minister to Panama, and Japanese plans to take them by fast means to Japan, are indicated in the attached memorandum which, based on highly reliable information, gives the substance of a report, dated 17 June, 1941, from the Japanese Minister in Panama, and a directive, dated 23 June, 1941, from Foreign Minister Matsuoka to the Japanese Minister in Mexico City.

A. G. KIRK,  
Captain, U.S. Navy,  
Director of Naval Intelligence.

## Distribution:

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TIME ZONE CHART OF THE WORLD



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~MEMORANDUM  
GZ-18

Report dated 17 June, 1941  
from the Japanese Minister in Panama  
to Foreign Minister Matsuoka and  
the Japanese Ambassador in Washington

The Italian Minister showed me many secret charts made by the Canal Zone Administration, showing the locations of equipment, guns, and other military establishments in the Canal Zone.

I glanced through them, and found them to be extremely detailed. In considering the process by which these charts were obtained, I feel that it would be absolutely impossible to obtain them in the future. Accordingly, I approached the Italian Minister regarding them. It appears that he has no objections to our making copies of them, provided that this is done in Tokyo, after we have delivered them to the Italian Embassy there. However, as all ports here are being very closely watched, there is no other way of taking these charts out except by plane.

I wonder if it would not be possible to have some Japanese merchant in South America, who is either returning to Japan or is being transferred to some other country, take these charts out; or to have one of our office-staff deliver them to a designated place? At present, all the places where recent defense operations are being carried out are being marked on these charts. This work is estimated to take about one week to finish.

The Italian Minister stated that if handling of this in Japan caused too much delay, there is no other way than to take them by plane from \_\_\_\_\_ to Washington (?). In this case, he stated that he would want to have it copied (?) at Washington (?). Please send instructions without fail. Secret.

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Directive dated 23 June 1941  
from Foreign Minister Matsuoka  
to the Japanese Minister in Mexico City.

Regarding the plans for procuring maps of the Panama Canal and vicinity, please have career attache Kihara make an official trip to Panama. (It might be well to have secretary Yoshimizu accompany him.)

Have the maps taken out by plane, and then have Sato, the Naval Attache, bring them to Tokyo with him when he returns.

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Furthermore, since the Panama Legation, in their report of 17 June to me, mentioned the question of a trip, get in touch with them regarding date and time of arrival. (American surveillance will unquestionably be vigilant. There are also some suspicions that they read some of our codes; therefore, we wish to exercise the utmost caution in accomplishing this mission. Also, any telegrams exchanged between you and Panama should be very short, for security, or be in innocuous plain language.

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