

1943 - 1944

BIGOT  
BRITISH - MOST SECRET  
U.S. - SECRET

Copy No. 7

DOUBLE-CROSS

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Overview



# DOUBLE-CROSS

As the Supreme Allied Commander of the Overlord invasion, General Dwight D. Eisenhower was fortunate to learn that he would have the best spies in the world working for him: the British Secret Service. It was, in fact a German spy, code name Tate, working for the British Secret Service who reported to his controller that the new supreme commander had taken up his duties. When this intentional leak was explained to Ike, he also learned about Ultra and the workings of the Double-Cross System.

Unbelievably, the counterespionage arm of the British Internal Security Agency captured every Nazi spy that had been sent to Great Britain. These captured spies had two choices, work as a double-agent for the Allies, or be imprisoned and possibly executed. Those who chose to “cross” their loyalties to the Allies continued to report by radio to the Abwehr, but only under the direct supervision of BI-A agents working for the Twenty Committee. The name was derived from the Roman numeral twenty (XX), which is also symbolic of the term “double-cross,” which described these agents.

The Allies’ ability to break Axis cipher machines enabled them to listen in on the enemies’ conversations. Known as “Ultra,” this intelligence was undoubtedly the most powerful source of obtaining enemy information during World War II, thereby being a great help to the Double-Cross System. The ULTRA intercepts provided a constant feedback and check on how well the enemy was believing their spies’ (now working for the Allies) information.

The Double-Cross network supported Operation Fortitude by “leaking” information about the Allied troops located in southern England. Agents reported observations of some real, but mostly notional forces who were preparing for a big invasion that would be launched in July, 1944 (the real date was early June). Using the agents’ reports, Nazi intelligence was also lead to believe that the majority of Allied troops were amassing directly opposite of Pas de Calais.

The most notorious Double-Cross agent was a man named Juan Pujol Garcia, code named Garbo because he was such a great actor. He was a brilliant spy who created a rather bizarre cast of twenty-seven other double agents who supposedly

worked under him. None were real! However, Hitler and his Abwehr believed in Garbo. A momentous telegram was sent from Garbo on June 9, 1944, which told Hitler that the Normandy invasion was just a diversion from the imminent attack at Calais. This message convinced Hitler to order panzer troops that were already on their way to reinforce

Normandy, to turn around. Garbo’s deception was so successful that the German High Command kept twenty-two divisions in the Calais area in anticipation of the “real” invasion through July and August, 1944, giving Ike’s troops precious time to establish their bridgehead at Normandy and begin their liberation of Europe. Eisenhower later wrote, “The German Fifteenth Army, if committed to battle in June or July, might possibly have defeated us by sheer weight of numbers.” Without these much-needed reinforcements, the German front line collapsed.

