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Juan Garcia “Garbo” – Part II

Lead: One of the most important factors leading to the success of the Normandy invasion in June 1944 was a network of double agents, loyal to Britain, who deceived the Germans about Allied plans.

Intro.: *A Moment in Time* with Dan Roberts.

Content: During World War II, the British Double Cross system, counter espionage operations, worked successfully to mislead the German intelligence organization –

the Abwehr. One of the most successful British double agents was Spaniard Juan Pujol Garcia, codenamed Garbo, the ultimate “actor.”

Garcia began to supply a steady stream of accurate but useless information to the Abwehr. The Germans got hooked. He succeeded at first by sending a reports containing accurate information, postmarked early but sometimes conveniently arriving a little too late – such as the Anglo-American landing in North Africa in late 1942. German commanders became convinced of Garbo’s loyalty and credibility, became frustrated with “slow mail

movement,” and asked for radio contact.

Perhaps Garbo’s greatest accomplishment was Operation Fortitude, designed to convince the Germans in early 1944 of the existence of a fictitious American Army commanded by General George Patton. As a result, Hitler diverted his fifteenth Army’s tanks and infantry units from Normandy to Calais. By the time the Germans realized they had been duped, the Allies had gained a foothold in France. Ironically, while Hitler’s army was waiting for the “real” invasion at Calais, Garbo was awarded the German Iron Cross for his heroism. He was later

awarded the MBE, Member of the British Empire, the only person in World II to receive both awards.

At the University of Richmond, this is Dan Roberts.

Resources

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