

OSS Double-Agent Operations in World War II

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The intricate enterprise of recruiting and operating an enemy's clandestine agents—working with double agents—is a difficult counterintelligence tool for an intelligence service to harness. The complexity, uncertainty, and risk associated with these operations suggest that such activities would be undertaken only by well-established and experienced intelligence services. Yet during World War II, from 1944 to 1945, the United States' upstart intelligence agency—the Office of Strategic Services (OSS)—conducted its own double agent operations in France, Germany, and Italy.

Formed in 1943, the OSS counterintelligence division—known as X-2—was responsible for identifying and neutralizing German intelligence activity abroad. X-2 endeavored to penetrate the German military intelligence service, *Abwehr*, using double agents as a means of infiltration. From 1944 to 1945, X-2 officers accompanied Allied invasion forces in France and Italy to recruit German “stay-behind” agents in Allied-controlled areas. X-2's double agents—referred to as Controlled Enemy Agents (CEAs), or Wireless Telegraphy (W/T) or radio agents—operated from behind Allied lines and transmitted false reports to the *Abwehr* via radio.¹

This article examines OSS counterintelligence during World War II, and addresses the question concerning how the OSS handled double agents and the subsequent intelligence impact. The paper traces X-2's development from 1943 to 1944 as it built the apparatus to manage double agents; discusses X-2 double-agent operations in France, Germany, and Italy; and evaluates the performance of X-2's double-agent operations in counterintelligence and deception.

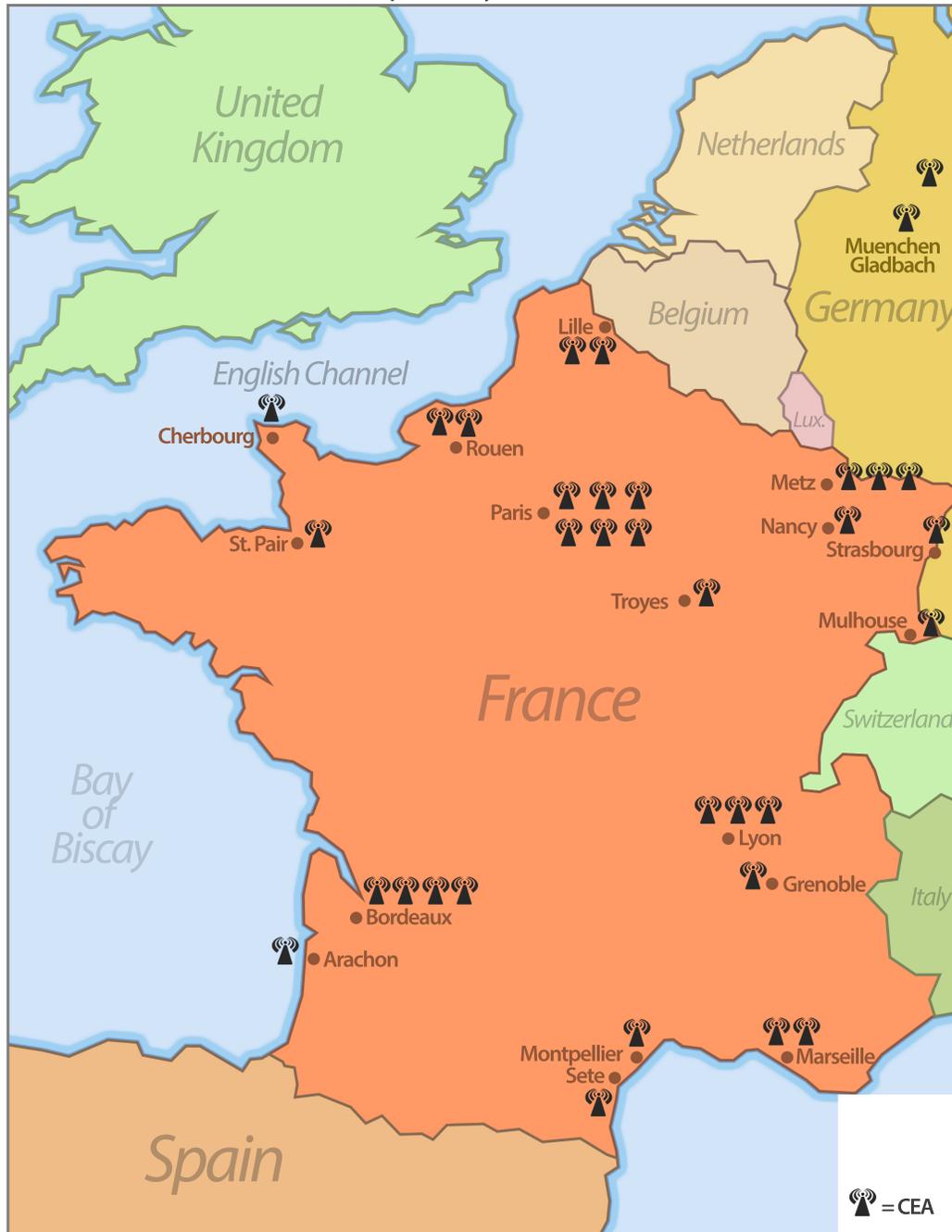
The article argues that X-2's double agent operations provided significant counterintelligence value by enabling the Allies to understand and ultimately control *Abwehr* espionage activities in France after the invasion. Secondly, the double agents also offered tactical contributions to several deception operations.

X-2's Development, 1943–1944

The history of OSS counterintelligence—and its double-agent capabilities—traces back to the British double-cross program launched after the outbreak of WWII, when British intelligence undertook a sophisticated double-agent effort that neutralized German intelligence operations in Great Britain. “We actively ran and controlled the German espionage system in this country,”² proclaimed

All statements of fact, opinion, or analysis expressed in this article are those of the author. Nothing in the article should be construed as asserting or implying US government endorsement of its factual statements and interpretations.

Distribution of X-2 and French CEAs, 1 April - 8 May, 1945



J.C. Masterman, the chief of the British double-cross system, after the war. In 1939, British intelligence—using information provided by Polish cryptologists—broke the German Enigma cipher and was then able to decrypt many German communications throughout the war. MI-5 and MI-6 used these communications intercepts—designated ULTRA—to identify and apprehend *Abwehr* agents in Britain.

MI-5's B1A Division then selected German agents to serve as double agents who continued their communications with the *Abwehr* under British direction.^a The double agents served two central purposes: counterintelligence—to identify other German spies and reveal *Abwehr* plots—and deception, most notably in support of Operation Fortitude, the effort to mislead the German military about the location of the Normandy landing in 1944.

After the US created the OSS in 1942, British intelligence set out to convince OSS head William Donovan to form a counterintelligence division akin to MI-6's counterintelligence section.³ British intelligence officials wanted a central counterintelligence office in the US that would serve as liaison with London on double-agent missions, on ULTRA traffic about German intelligence, and on the security of Allied intelligence abroad.⁴

Given the highly sensitive nature of the ULTRA intercepts, British intelligence sought to limit distribution of ULTRA traffic to a single, secure OSS counterintelligence division.

The British machinations succeeded and, on 1 March 1943, Donovan created the Counter Intelligence Division. Three months later, Donovan rescinded his order and created instead a separate Counter-Espionage branch within OSS known as X-2.^{5,6}

ULTRA

A type of communications intelligence (COMINT) obtained by Britain and the United States during World War II, ULTRA consisted of the cryptanalysis of all German radio communications employing the Enigma machine and Japanese military communications employing enciphering machines...Japanese diplomatic communications were known as MAGIC.

From *Spy Book: The Encyclopedia of Espionage* by Norman Polmar and Thomas Allen (Random House, 1998)

In order to expedite the development of X-2's counterintelligence capacity, MI-5 and Section V of MI-6 shared their counterintelligence records and expertise. A declassified US government history of counterintelligence notes the significance of this collaboration in building X-2's capability: "The United States was given the opportunity of acquiring, within a short period, extensive counterintelligence records representing the fruits of many decades of counterintelligence experience. The British offered also to train American personnel in properly using such records and in conducting counterintelligence operations."⁷

As MI-6 (V) provided training to their new American counterparts,

the X-2 office in London became the center of American counterintelligence operations. This arrangement also served British interests as it allowed British intelligence to maintain tight control over the ULTRA traffic shared with the United States and to develop relationships with its American counterparts.⁸

British authorities indoctrinated X-2 into the double-cross program and provided training for handling double agents in preparation for the invasion of Europe. In the fall of 1943, British intelligence helped X-2 create Special Counter-Intelligence (SCI) detachments that would accompany the Allied invading forces in continental Europe and perform counterintelligence operations using ULTRA intercepts. In these early stages of preparation in 1943, MI-6 remained reluctant to grant X-2 responsibility for managing CEAs. An internal X-2 history of CEA operations in France and Germany written after the war described this ambivalence during fall of 1943: "Certainly it was felt, more or less vaguely, that X-2 should logically have a hand in the [CEA] business; but CEA work was seldom, if ever, discussed by the officers of MI-6 (V) who were helping to establish their American counterpart."⁹

The mission of the OSS SCI units, however, included the operation of double agents and, in September 1943, the US Joint Chiefs of Staff approved a directive authorizing OSS activities in the European Theater, to include "the control, in collaboration with British Deception Service, of action of double agents."¹⁰ Additionally,

a. British military intelligence was and is divided between two agencies: MI-5 was responsible for domestic intelligence, while MI-6 was responsible for foreign intelligence. MI-5's B1A division was responsible for running double agents. MI-6's Section V was MI-6's counterintelligence division, which also carried out double agent missions abroad.

In preparation for the D-Day landing, X-2 requested additional personnel to augment the Special Case Unit.

a charter for the SCI units approved in December 1943 declared that one of the functions of these detachments was “to assist and advise in the local deception of the enemy through the control of enemy agents.”¹¹ In February 1944, British intelligence finally acceded to OSS involvement in CEA operations, and agreed for MI-5 and X-2 to administer CEAs on the continent.¹²

In March 1944, X-2 established Special Case Units, as subunits of SCI, to conduct CEA activities.¹³ Lieutenant Edward R. Weismiller (US Marine Corps) and radio technician Alton Adams reported to MI-5 for training in British W/T CEA technique in early March, and Captain John B. Oakes (US Army) soon joined them.¹⁴ Weismiller—a Rhodes Scholar with degrees from Cornell and Harvard—and Oakes—a Princeton valedictorian and Rhodes Scholar—offered this description of their training period with MI-5:

The first formal step in the education of case officers was the giving of a verbal introduction to the art of running CEAs by Lt. Col. T. A. Robertson and Mr. J. C. Masterman, two of the principal officers of that section of MI-5 which had been dealing throughout the war with CEAs on British territory. The American newcomers were welcomed into the inner recesses of MI-5 with utmost cordiality, and were given completely free access to the voluminous files.

It was felt that the Americans should familiarize themselves with as many of the leading British cases as possible, in order that they might realize what unforeseen problems and unimaginable complexities might—and normally did—arise in virtually every case. Officers of MI-5, some of whom were running cases in the UK at the moment, were available for questioning; and the Americans were, on occasion, even permitted to visit the actual locus of some of the British operations. Obviously, conditions on the Continent were going to be vastly different from those in England; yet this reading period was of great value as an introduction to the enormous human and administrative as well as technical problems that have to be faced by every case officer.¹⁵

In preparation for the D-Day landing, X-2 requested additional personnel to augment the Special Case Unit; however, by the time of the D-Day invasion, the CEA team included three officers and four enlisted men.¹⁶

Double Agent Operations

DRAGOMAN

The first American CEA case in France was that of Juan Frutos, also known as DRAGOMAN; the Frutos case was also X-2’s most substantial and best-documented double-agent case, and it illustrates X-2’s expe-

rience with CEAs in France.¹⁷ A Spanish national living in Cherbourg, Frutos had served as an *Abwehr* agent since 1935, reporting via radio on naval activity in Cherbourg. By late 1943, *Abwehr* suspected an Allied invasion was imminent and instructed Frutos to maintain his position in Cherbourg.

In May 1944, the *Abwehr* provided Frutos with two radio sets and instructed him to report on “the arrival of ships or commandos, the number of soldiers who disembarked, their arms and the units to which they belonged, and the number of tanks and artillery that were landed.”¹⁸ Following the Allied landing at Normandy on 6 June, Frutos issued 10 transmissions from 6 June to 20 June 1944, apprising the Germans of “vague tactical information” related to the Allied forces.¹⁹ Frutos determined that it was too dangerous to conduct transmissions after 20 June and hid his radio sets in the attic.²⁰

X-2 learned of Frutos’s presence in Cherbourg through ULTRA traffic and the recruitment of his former *Abwehr* handler, Karl Eitel, in Portugal.²¹ Eitel switched allegiances in November 1943, meeting with an X-2 officer and revealing that he knew of at least three German stay-behind agents in the Brest-Cherbourg area. ULTRA intercepts corroborated Eitel’s claim, including that one of the agents probably was Frutos. The X-2 station conveyed this information to the SCI detachment in Cherbourg, which located Frutos and arrested him on 8 July 1944. Frutos quickly confessed and agreed to work for X-2.^{22,23}

X-2’s CEA personnel arrived in France shortly after Frutos’s arrest.

Oakes traveled to Cherbourg on 14 July after learning of the case, and Weismiller and Adams followed on 25 July.²⁴ Oakes and Major Christopher Harmer of the British 104th SCI Unit interrogated Frutos to determine if his CEA status could be blown by his mistress or by two other *Abwehr* agents believed to be in the area. Though officials in London wanted to send Frutos to England for further interrogation, Oakes and Harmer concluded that Frutos would be worthwhile as a double agent and unlikely to work against them.²⁵ Moreover, the need for expediency overrode London's concerns; Frutos had been off the air since 20 June, and further delay would arouse suspicion. On 25 July 1944, Frutos resumed contact with the *Abwehr*, this time as an American CEA assigned the cryptonym DRAGOMAN.²⁶

Frutos's position as a trusted German agent stabilized in August 1944. He retained a job at the Army Real Estate and Labor Office, a position that demonstrated to neighbors in Cherbourg how he earned his living and that was closely related to the fake job of interpreter at an American port office that he presented to the *Abwehr*.²⁷ Weismiller and Adams also located a secure house from which Frutos could broadcast his radio transmissions to the *Abwehr*.²⁸

In late August, Frutos was contacted by Alfred Gabas, a German agent in the Cherbourg area for whom X-2 had been searching.²⁹ X-2 arrested Gabas, who then led them to a German agent in nearby Granville named Jean Senouque; X-2 later recruited Senouque as a CEA. The other supposed German agent in the area fled Cherbourg for Paris after the invasion and was arrested in De-

cember 1944.³⁰ Frutos was no longer at risk of being exposed by other German agents in the area.

Through the fall of 1944, Frutos's X-2 handlers worked to build his credibility and status with his *Abwehr* handlers. Frutos had previously sent terse messages and not more than one at a time. Consequently, X-2 increased volume and detail of his reporting slowly to avoid suspicion.³¹ In addition, the X-2 case officers had to gain approval from the so-called "212 Committee" for all the intelligence (known as "foodstuff") that Frutos relayed to the Germans.

Formed in August 1944, the 212 Committee was a coordinating body for authorities from X-2 and the 21st and 12th Army Groups to approve deception information for American CEAs in France and Germany. Not only was this a slow process, but the 212 Committee prohibited X-2 from using Frutos for deception and denied foodstuff that could endanger Allied operations. As a result, the case officers complained that Frutos was "forced into equivocation, circumlocution, inference, explanation, avoidance to such an extent that his messages became longer and longer and throughout the month of October we faced with helpless alarm the fact that, for all the reasons enumerated above, Frutos's outgoing traffic was reaching almost unmanageable proportions."³²

Frutos struggled to explain to the *Abwehr* why he could not provide details on activities in plain sight such as troop movements through Cherbourg harbor and blamed his deficient reporting constraints on his mobility, his subsources, and the local security.³³ Nonetheless, Frutos

received accolades from his German handlers, and he was rewarded with more in-depth questionnaires on Allied naval activities.³⁴

Frutos's role in Cherbourg increased in significance in December as the German offensive in the Ardennes and the Battle of the Bulge prompted new waves of Allied troops to arrive there, and X-2 finally elected to use Frutos for deception. At the end of November, the *Abwehr* sent Frutos a questionnaire requesting information about the anti-torpedo nets that merchant ships used to protect against German submarine attacks. British intelligence was already feeding deceptive statistics on anti-torpedo nets to the Germans through their own CEAs, and so the 212 Committee approved Frutos to participate in the deception. He delivered the false information on the anti-torpedo nets to the Germans on 27 and 28 December 1944, citing a fictional subsource on an American cargo vessel, and continued to disseminate the deceptive naval information through the winter. After the war, X-2 praised Frutos's role—passing false reports from the fictional subagent—in the naval deception operation:

He [the fictional subagent] had passed a considerable amount of important naval deception, and all the data he had notionally supplied, on the anti-torpedo nets, convoy routes and protection, Antwerp traffic, V-bomb damage, etc., had been carefully contrived and edited at the highest level to dovetail perfectly with information the Germans were already known to have, to support information supplied by other accepted agents, and to fill out and con-

The geographic distribution of CEAs convinced German intelligence it had achieved a saturation of agents behind enemy lines.

trol the picture which the Allied Naval Command wished the Germans to have of its methods and dispositions along the Atlantic coast of Europe.

At a more crucial period of the war the second mate might have had a decisive influence on the whole German U-boat campaign in American and British waters; as it was, he was as useful as the war situation permitted, and his employment came near to being a model of what high-level interservice cooperation in a deception campaign can be.³⁵

Frutos's role in the deception operation ended in March 1945, but he remained a trusted German intelligence source through the end of the war.

CEA Network in France and Germany

In addition to Frutos, X-2 developed a stable of 15 CEAs in France and Germany by the spring of 1945.³⁶ In conjunction with CEAs operated by French intelligence, a CEA network the Americans were able to establish provided geographic coverage across France.³⁷ American and French CEAs were positioned all along the French coast in every major city from the Mediterranean to the western and northern coasts. In the interior, X-2 operated several agents in Paris and a cadre of agents in northeast France.

X-2 also maintained two CEAs in Germany near the French border. X-2 established a CEA office in Paris led by John Oakes, who managed

this agent network in consultation with X-2 in London, and liaised with French double-agent authorities. The geographic distribution of CEAs convinced German intelligence it had achieved a saturation of agents behind enemy lines. German intelligence thus focused on servicing a network that was, in fact, controlled by the United States, and when it did attempt to insert new agents, X-2 was able to identify and capture them through CEA traffic and ULTRA intercepts.³⁸

The CEA case of Jean Senouque demonstrates the counterintelligence value of this CEA network. Prior to the Allied invasion of France, an *Abwehr* officer named Friederich Kaulen recruited a network of agents along the French coast to spy for the *Abwehr*'s naval division, I-Marine. One of these agents was Senouque, who was assigned to report on "the port of Granville and the surrounding area at the western base of the of the Normandy peninsula."³⁹ After the invasion, Allied forces uncovered Kaulen's network—in part through Frutos—and arrested Senouque and the other agents. Senouque agreed to work for the Americans, and by December he was joined by four other CEAs, all from Kaulen's I-Marine network.⁴⁰

X-2 used Senouque to glean information on the *Abwehr*'s handling of Frutos and the I-Marine CEAs, as well as to obtain clues about the existence of other German agents. In March 1945, Kaulen traveled to Boudreaux for meetings with Senouque and two other CEAs,

which prompted American, French, and British authorities to devise an operation to capture Kaulen.

Allied intelligence hoped Kaulen could provide insight on German intelligence plans for France, details of the stay-behind network along the North Sea coast of Germany and Holland, and designs for the post-war.⁴¹ On the night of 6 April 1945, Senouque rendezvoused with Kaulen on the banks of the Gironde River, but Kaulen was killed as French and American soldiers attempted to capture him. Though denied the opportunity to interrogate Kaulen, American authorities did find Kaulen's written instructions for Senouque. These documents demonstrated to the X-2 officers that "[Kaulen's] entire network in France is clearly under our control and always has been."⁴²

The American CEA network in France also performed deception operations, including an effort to mislead German authorities about the Allied troop presence in southern France in the spring of 1945. Paul Jeannin, a CEA in the I-Marine network in Marseille in southern France, and a CEA in Draguignan—cryptonymed FOREST—participated in Plan Jessica, a deception operation designed to "retain as many German troops as possible on the Franco-Italian border, but to discourage them from crossing into France."⁴³

The Germans were interested in Allied troop arrivals at Marseille,⁴⁴ and Allied deception authorities requested the nearby CEAs exaggerate the number of troops in Southern France to indicate a likely Allied offensive at the Italian border.⁴⁵ FOREST provided false reports on troop movements, while Jeannin—

who was not positioned to report credibly on troop movements—delivered complementary reports that supported FOREST’s accounts of troop landings and preparations for an offensive on the Italian front simply by not refuting them. The overall deception effort was successful, according to an assessment by the US 6th Army Group: “It is at least certain that two German divisions, badly needed elsewhere, were held with the Italian divisions guarding the Franco-Italian front all winter long, and that the Germans are now known to have been continually worried about this front.”⁴⁶ Jeannin and FOREST contributed to the success of this deception, though they were only one small component of the operation.

X-2 also used CEAs for tactical deception along the front in Eastern France. After the invasion at Normandy, the 12th Army Group progressed through Paris to the Eastern border of France where it engaged German forces through the winter of 1944–45. The X-2 SCI unit attached to the 12th Army Group captured a small network of German agents in the fall of 1944 and operated them as CEAs.⁴⁷

In December, at the direction of Allied military leadership, X-2 used two of the CEAs to deceive the Germans about the movement of Patton’s 3rd Army to the Ardennes during a critical point in the Battle of the Bulge. The two CEAs reported to the Germans that the 3rd Army was moving to the Ardennes in segments instead of all at once, as it actually did—reinforcing the German assumption that an entire Army would not be able to travel “so far and so fast under adverse conditions of road and weather.”⁴⁸ Not only did the Ger-

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mans fail to uncover either agent’s relationship with X-2, but they valued one of them—Henri Giallard—so highly that he was awarded the Iron Cross on 10 February 1945.⁴⁹

Double Agents in Italy

X-2 also conducted CEA operations in Italy, under the training and supervision of its British allies. Though the X-2 SCI unit in Italy did not undergo double agent training in London with M-5 as Weismiller and Oakes had, X-2 officers James Angleton—later the longtime CIA counterintelligence head—in London and Anthony Berding in Italy were able to observe MI-6’s Section V as it developed the first Allied CEA case in Italy. In January 1944, Allied forces captured three Italian aviators behind Allied lines, and an MI-6 (V) unit was able to operate one of the aviators as a CEA—cryptonymed PRIMO. Beginning with small-scale deception material, the British handlers quickly expanded the deception operation to support Operation Vendetta, a deception operation designed to keep eight German divisions in Southern France so they would not be available to combat the Allied invasion at Normandy.⁵⁰

An MI-6 (V) report in 1944 noted PRIMO’s successful contribution to the Allied deception operation: “[PRIMO] survived his early ups and downs and was a prime and most successful instrument in the implementation of all DOWAGER’s deceptive plans. MSS [Most Secret Source or ULTRA] showed how high a value the Germans put on the case up to the

very last stages.”⁵¹ This case allowed Angleton and Berding to observe a successful CEA deception operation and prepare to run their own CEAs in Italy.

X-2 undertook its first true CEA operation in June 1944 when the Allied forces arrived in Rome. Though surprised by timing of the final Allied offensive in Rome, German intelligence had prepared a network of stay-behind agents in Italy. An X-2 unit led by Berding entered Rome on 5 June 1944 and soon found one of the stay-behind agents: Cesare D’Onofrio. After Berding’s interrogation, X-2 elected to operate D’Onofrio as a CEA—cryptonymed ARBITER—in conjunction with four other German radio agents run by the British and French.⁵² The Section V report on CEAs in Italy notes that, “ARBITER ran well for three months, but was closed down in September when a courier with money visited him and was arrested.”⁵³

The report then concludes with a general assessment of the six Allied double agent operations in Italy: “Overall, double agents in Italy have paid good dividends... Most of them have made some CE [counterespionage] contribution during their DA careers and all the *Abwehr* agents have played a large part in the implementation of strategic deception to the success of which Field Marshall Alexander paid tribute.”⁵⁴

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Evaluating X-2's Performance

X-2 achieved a remarkable counterintelligence feat by capturing and controlling the German network of stay-behind agents in France. Writing after the war, X-2 double-agent case officers John Oakes, Edward Weismiller, and Eugene Waith noted that the CEA operations in France and Germany were “conducted in the nature of a pioneer experiment.”⁵⁵ None of the X-2 personnel had experience running double agents, and yet just one year after X-2's creation they performed these complex operations without German detection.

X-2's rapid development and ultimate success was in large part enabled by British training and guidance throughout the process, ULTRA intercepts to identify German agents and monitor operations, and the *Abwehr's* diminishing intelligence capabilities and inability to uncover the recruitments. Additionally, X-2 personnel from the case officers to the leadership displayed the competence, creativity, and bravado necessary for such a difficult undertaking.

The most significant intelligence contribution of X-2's CEA operations was to allow the Allies to understand and ultimately control German espionage activities in France. The X-2 history of CEAs in France and Germany concludes: “From the evidence of MSS [ULTRA] and of the interrogations of a number of leading personalities of the GIS [German Intelligence Service] it is certain that not more than two or three W/T agents succeeded in carrying on espi-

onage for any length of time without falling under our control.”⁵⁶

Interrogations of German intelligence officials after the war further revealed that the *Abwehr* did not suspect that its stay-behind agents had been doubled, although it viewed the information provided by these agents as low quality.⁵⁷ Not only did this CEA network prevent German intelligence from gleaning accurate intelligence about the Allied forces in France in 1944–45, but it also caused the Germans to waste time and resources maintaining a network controlled by their enemy.

X-2 did use its double agents for deception on several occasions, although it did not use the network in a cohesive fashion for any large-scale or strategic deception. X-2 utilized several agents in France for deception operations, including to deliver false naval information regarding anti-torpedo nets, to exaggerate the numbers of Allied troops in southern France, and to obfuscate the movement of Patton's 3rd Army to the Ardennes.

In Italy, X-2 also used its CEAs to support British deception operations. These operations succeeded in delivering false or misleading information that German intelligence accepted as credible and reinforced broader Allied deception operations against the Germans. X-2 did not, however, use the agents for deception on a consistent basis beyond these few cases, nor did it apply the French CEA network to an overarching deception mission.

Allied authorities opted not to use X-2's CEAs on a larger scale because the Allies did not have broad deception plan for France at this time. After the invasion, the campaign moved so quickly that there was not time to develop and implement strategic deception operations.

Historian Michael Howard explains that in the latter months of the war, “Allied strategy itself was so opportunistic, so lacking in long-term plans for developing enemy points of weakness and then exploiting them, that no serious cover plans could be made... the Allies were so strong that they effectively dispensed with strategy altogether and simply attacked all along the line, much as they had in the closing months of 1918.”⁵⁸ In addition, a double agent must generally build up his credibility over a period of time before he can deliver deception material. X-2 had neither the benefit of time nor high-quality foodstuff material as it attempted to build its agents' credibility.

X-2 acquired its CEAs in France in the late summer and fall of 1944; by the spring of 1945, *Abwehr* disbanded and the war ended. Furthermore, deception operations would risk exposing the CEA network, and Allied officials did not want to lose the counterintelligence value of this network. British intelligence was also wary that the American novices would expose the British double-cross system or, worse, expose the ULTRA secret.

Thus, despite X-2's success in developing and implementing the CEA program, the operations did not have a significant strategic impact on the overall campaign in Europe. With the invasion at Normandy in June 1944,

the Allies achieved a decisive victory and began their conquest of Germany on the continent. Though X-2's capture and control of the German stay-behind network weakened the *Abwehr's* intelligence capabilities in Allied-controlled areas of France and concealed information about Allied troop landings and movements, it was hardly a decisive feature of the campaign.

The Allies almost certainly would have defeated the Germans in Europe even without X-2's double agent network. Moreover, X-2 could likely have achieved a satisfactory counterintelligence situation even without doubling the enemy agents, simply by using ULTRA to capture the German agents and glean further information through interrogation. This analysis is not to discount the contribution of the X-2 CEA operations, but instead to recognize that at this stage in the war, Allied forces had gained the momentum against the retreating German armies and victory was close at hand.

X-2's Legacy

X-2 was disbanded in 1946 as President Truman reorganized the national security bureaucracy. The

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organization's legacy nonetheless persisted, and X-2's development during the war formed the basis for centralized counterintelligence at the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). Many X-2 veterans went on to serve in prominent roles in the CIA, establishing counterintelligence practices and operations in the new organization.

Most notably, James Angleton personally guided CIA counterintelligence for much of the Cold War, serving as chief of the CIA's counterintelligence staff from 1954 through 1974.⁵⁹ Historian Timothy Naftali observes that Angleton's X-2 experience working with double agents shaped his hypervigilant approach to countering Soviet Union deception during the Cold War because he realized that, if Britain and the Allies could undertake large-scale deception using double agents during World War II, so too could the Soviet Union.⁶⁰

X-2's training from British intelligence in double-agent tradecraft and operations during World War II also provided a doctrinal foundation for

future CIA double-agent operations. X-2's internal double-agent history after the war documented X-2's CEA cases, as well as the theory and tradecraft taught by the British and lessons learned from these cases for future practitioners to use. For example, the study advocated the use of high-quality "foodstuff" to develop a double agent's bona fides based on X-2's observations that a lack of viable foodstuff in some cases prevented them from convincing *Abwehr* of the CEA's utility.⁶¹

Finally, X-2's legacy was not confined to the intelligence realm: X-2 CEA case officers Oakes, Weismiller, and Waith went on to distinguished civilian careers after the war: Oakes, as a longtime *New York Times* editorial writer and editor;⁶² Weismiller, as a poet and English professor at George Washington University;⁶³ and Waith, as a scholar of Shakespeare and English renaissance drama at Yale University.⁶⁴ Though short in duration, X-2's pioneering experiment with double agent operations over just two years during World War II left behind a lasting legacy.



Endnotes

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32. *Ibid.*, 117.
33. *Ibid.*, 118.
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39. *Ibid.*, 158-159.
40. *Ibid.*, 160.
41. *Ibid.*, 178.
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