

MR. JOSEPH P. LUONGO
Department of the Army Civilian, Retired (Deceased)



Prior to the invasion of Italy during World War II, the yet unproven Counter Intelligence Corps (CIC) selected and trained eight men to be assigned to the 88th Infantry Division, commanded by MG Kendall. One of these eight was Joseph P. Luongo. On the morning of 8 March 1944, Special Agent Luongo and his colleagues captured, debriefed, and turned nine Nazi espionage agents.

The 88th Infantry Division's CIC Detachment was among the first American units to arrive in Rome. They immediately established official contacts and clandestine sources that ensured the security of the forces and the accomplishment of the intelligence mission. As the battle line moved north, the CIC Detachment discovered a cache of sacred Hebrew artifacts the Nazis had stolen from the synagogue in Rome. Using contacts established only months earlier, Mr. Luongo had the priceless artifacts returned to Rome's Chief Rabbi.

With the war's ending, Special Agent Luongo's efforts shifted to the de-Nazification of the new Italian government. This process allowed him to build working relationships with several senior Italian officials.

Due to his experience and linguistic capabilities, Mr. Luongo was next assigned to the 430th MI Detachment in Austria. His participation was crucial in various Human Intelligence (HUMINT) operations as the Cold War intensified.

In 1956, Mr. Luongo returned to Rome where he served as the first Military Intelligence Liaison Officer. Utilizing his special relationship with the Italian government, he ensured that the Commander in Chief of the US Army Europe was always abreast of the tumultuous political landscape. After serving as an Instructor at the US Army Intelligence School from June 1961 to December 1962, he was assigned to the 513th MI Group in Frankfurt, Germany. There, he supervised the HUMINT exploitation of the Soviet Military Liaison Mission. Upon completion of this assignment in 1969, he was assigned to US Army Southern European Task Force Italy as the Senior Civilian Intelligence Officer.

In 1972, Mr. Luongo assumed the responsibilities of the Senior Intelligence Advisor and Assistant Operations Officer of the 430th MI Detachment. His duties included the overall supervision of six subordinate offices that targeted the entire Eastern Bloc.

Mr. Luongo was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1994. He passed away 31 May 1999.