



Eisenhower's Guerrillas: The Jedburghs, the Maquis, and the Liberation of France

Benjamin F. Jones

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The challenges facing General Dwight Eisenhower before the Invasion of Normandy were not merely military but political as well. He knew that to liberate France, and to hold it, the Allies needed local help, which would necessitate coordinating with the highly independent French resistance groups known collectively as the maquis. The Allies' objective was to push the Germans out of France. The French objective, on the other hand, was a France free of all foreign armies, including the Allies. President Roosevelt refused to give full support to Charles de Gaulle, whom he mistrusted, and declined to supply the timing, location, and other key details of Operation Overlord to his Free French government. Eisenhower's hands were tied. He needed to involve the French, but without simultaneously involving them in operational planning.

Into this atmosphere of tension and confusion jumped teams consisting of three officers each -- one from the British Special Operations Bureau, one from the U.S. Office of Strategic Services, one from the Free French Bureau Central de Renseignement -- as well as a radioman from any one of the three nations. Known as the Jedburghs, their primary purpose was to serve as liaisons to the maquis, working to arm, train, and equip them. They were to incite guerilla warfare.

Benjamin Jones' *Eisenhower's Guerillas* is the first book to show in detail how the Jedburghs -- whose heroism and exploits have been widely celebrated -- and the maquis worked together. Underscoring the critical and often overlooked role that irregular warfare played in Allied operations on the Continent, it tells the story of the battle for and liberation of France and the complexities that threatened to undermine the operation before it even began.

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