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**FRENCH POLICY TOWARDS TUNISIA AND MOROCCO:
THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS OF DECOLONISATION, 1950-1956**

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**A thesis submitted to the University of London for the Degree of Doctor of
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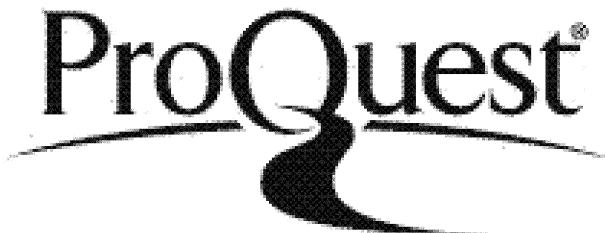
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Abstract

FRENCH POLICY TOWARDS TUNISIA AND MOROCCO: THE INTERNATIONAL DIMENSIONS OF DECOLONISATION, 1950-1956

This thesis deals with French decolonisation policy towards Tunisia and Morocco and international impacts on the decolonisation process. It is very important to deal with the two countries at the same time, because nationalist movements in each country and French policy responses were closely related.

So far, research on French decolonisation has examined the reason why France was forced to retreat from their overseas territories and indicated that nationalist and international pressures largely contributed to this process. This thesis rather aims to clarify how the French tried to maintain their influence in Tunisia and Morocco. In terms of international impact, the existing research has stressed the role of American pressure towards decolonisation but has not referred to British policy. The thesis also focuses on Britain's role in determining French attitudes especially in the UN. Furthermore, this work aims to locate the decolonisation process of both countries in a broader context of post-war French policy towards their overseas territories.

The thesis argues that the French accepted Tunisia's internal autonomy because they realised that the Tunisian people's consent was essential to retain influence. Hitherto, the French had been controlling Tunisia through puppet governments, which had been legitimised by the Tunisian sovereign's traditional authority. Now the French understood that they had to secure collaborators who could rally popular support.

The thesis also argues that the French decision on Morocco's independence was aimed at preserving the unity of Morocco, whose opinion had been seriously divided. Indeed, France was aiming to produce pro-French moderate nationalism, thereby maintaining France's interest and influence. However, Morocco, and then Tunisia achieved independence without the framework of the French Union, the organisation grouping French overseas territories. Soon after Morocco's independence, France decided to give internal autonomy to the African territories, a move which paved the way to those territories' independence.

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Abbreviations

CARAN	Centre d'Accueil et de Recherche des Archives Nationales
CDF	Central Decimal File
CSTT	Commandement Supérieur des Troupes de Tunisie
DST	Direction de la Surveillance du Territoire
EDC	European Defence Community
FO	Foreign Office (UK)
FRUS	Foreign Relations of United States
GA	UN General Assembly
IPMF	Institut Pierre Mendès-France
LA	Latin America
MAE	Ministère des Affaires Étrangères (France, Quai d'Orsay)
MDAP	Mutual Defense Assistance Program
MRP	Mouvement républicain populaire
NARA	National Archives and Records Administration (US)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NSC	National Security Council (US)
ONU	Organisation des Nations Unies (United Nations)
PDI	Parti démocratique de l'indépendance
PRO	Public Record Office (UK)
PTT	Poste Télégraphe et Télécommunication
SC	UN Security Council
SFIO	Section Française de l'Internationale Ouvrière
SHAT	Service Historique de l'Armée de Terre
UDSR	Union Démocratique et Socialiste de la Résistance
UGTT	Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens
UGSCM	Union Générale des Syndicats Confédérés du Maroc
UN	United Nations

Introduction

The Aim of the Thesis and Historiography

This thesis examines the decolonisation process of Tunisia and Morocco. They were French protectorate states in North Africa and obtained French recognition of their independence in March 1956. France dealt with them as sister countries, and in fact, nationalist movements in each country developed hand in hand. There are not many works that pay primary attention to Tunisia and Morocco, arguably because of the predominance of works on the Algerian war. However, the fact that the two countries did not experience wars during their decolonisation process suggests that they are more appropriate cases in which to examine France's diplomatic activities. Indeed, epitomised by the Algerian and Indochinese wars, French decolonisation policy is sometimes notorious for its oppressive character, especially in comparison with British decolonisation policy. However, what is interesting to note is that the two countries achieved independence before Ghana gained independence from Britain in March 1957 as the first of Britain's colonies in Africa. It can be argued that France had adopted a more liberal decolonisation policy by March 1956 and that the independence of Tunisia and Morocco marked a major turning-point in the history of decolonisation in Africa.

The existing research on these countries' decolonisation process can be categorised into two groups: the first puts the principal focus on bilateral relations, either between France and Tunisia, or France and Morocco. The second category, which can be found among more recent works, puts emphasis on international influences and US pressure in particular. Among the first category, Charles-André Julien's work is a classic and comprehensive explanation of the decolonisation of North African countries including Algeria.¹ Stéphane Bernard's book traces the detail of Franco-Moroccan relations towards independence.² On the whole, the studies that had been done before primary sources were declassified tend to describe the decolonisation process of the two countries in bilateral terms, and therefore to focus on the role of nationalist pressure. The works of the second category assert that the US pressurised France to give self-government to the Tunisians and Moroccans, either in the United Nations (hereafter UN) or through bilateral diplomatic channels, and sometimes refer to French suspicions

¹ Julien, Charles-André, *L'Afrique du Nord en Marche: Nationalismes Musulmans et Souveraineté Français*, (Paris: René Julliard, 1972).

² Stéphane Bernard, *Le Conflit Franco-Marocain 1943-1956*, (Bruxelles: l'Université Libre de Bruxelles, 1963). Translated by Marianna Oliver et al., *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict 1943-1956*, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1968).

that the US might have wanted France to be driven out from North Africa in order to make the local economy open to US products. Annie Lacroix-Riz's book, Samya El Mechat's works and Martin Thomas's study fall into the second group.³ Thomas's other study focuses on UN pressure on French decolonisation policy towards North Africa.⁴

Thus the existing research has mainly examined the reasons why French influence retreated from North Africa. There is no doubt that both nationalist activities and international opinion played significant roles in the French retreat. Two decisions of the French government marked a significant diminution in French influence, i.e. the decision to allow Tunisia internal autonomy in July 1954 and that on Morocco's independence in November 1955. However, despite these retreats, it must be emphasised that Tunisia and Morocco remain pro-French countries even today. This thesis therefore poses a different question from that of the existing research: namely, in what way did the French try to maintain their influence in both countries, when they were resisting nationalist and international pressures? In fact, it was this concern to try to minimise the loss of influence that determined the timing of the above decisions.

In answering this question, this study firstly examines why the French kept ignoring nationalist demands and international opinion until July 1954. Indeed, this was related to the French Union, an organisation which post-war French decolonisation policy was initially based on, and which previous research does not mention. Secondly, the thesis analyses the reason why the French decided to allow Tunisia internal autonomy, at a time when the authority of the Bey, Tunisia's sovereign, was being attacked by Tunisian nationalists. Why did this campaign lead the French to take the decision to accept Tunisia's internal autonomy? In addition, the thesis examines why this decision was accepted by the nationalists and international opinion. Thirdly, this study investigates to what extent and in which sense international opinion affected the decolonisation process of Tunisia and Morocco. Indeed, as shown below, international opinion was not unanimous in calling for the two countries' independence before 1956. What the US was calling for was the introduction of self-government in the two countries and, above

³ Annie Lacroix-Riz, *Les Protectorats d'Afrique du Nord entre la France et Washington, Maroc et Tunisie 1942-1956*, (Editions L'Harmattan, Paris, 1988); Samya El Mechat, *Tunisie, Les Chemins vers l'Indépendance (1945-1956)*, (Paris, L'Harmattan, 1992); Samya El Machat, *Les Etats-Unis et la Tunisie : de l'ambiguité à l'entente, 1945-1959*, (Paris; L'Harmattan, 1997); Samya El Machat, *Les Etats-Unis et le Maroc : le Choix Stratégique, 1945-1959*, (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997); Martin Thomas, "Defending a Lost Cause? France and the United States Vision of Imperial Rule in French North Africa, 1945-1956", *Diplomatic History*, Vol.26, No.2 (Spring 2002). El Mechat's *Tunisie, Les Chemins* mainly focuses on relations between the Tunisian nationalists and the Arab League.

⁴ Martin Thomas, 'France Accused: French North Africa before the United Nations, 1952-1962', *Contemporary European History*, vol.10 part 1, 2001. Connelly emphasises the role of international opinion in Algerian independence process. Matthew Connelly, *A Diplomatic Revolution: Algeria's Fight for Independence and the Origins of the Post-Cold War Era*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002).

all, Britain on the whole supported the French position in the UN, a point which most previous research on North African affairs failed to underline.⁵ Britain did not agree to oppressive French decolonisation policy, but nevertheless supported their position. Fourthly, why did France decide to grant Morocco independence, which was not necessarily what the majority of international opinion had requested France to do? Furthermore, shortly before this French decision, Moroccan opinion was seriously divided, and the nationalist forces who demanded the country's independence were not dominant. There is a related puzzle to be solved: why was Morocco's independence decided upon before that of Tunisia, who had gained internal autonomy first? Lastly, the thesis examines how both countries' independence affected French decolonisation policy as a whole.

As two countries are dealt with, the thesis is not organised in a chronological fashion. However, political developments in each country will be explained chronologically and the order of the chapters is so arranged as to clarify the interaction between the two countries' affairs. The distinction between the terms 'internal autonomy', or '*autonomie interne*' in French, and 'self-government' is important. The French used '*autonomie interne*' in two ways, and both of them were crucially different from the Anglo-Saxon term 'self-government'. Firstly, until July 1954, the French repeatedly stated that they intended to lead Tunisia and Morocco to '*autonomie interne*' but actually they had no intention of giving them any kind of autonomy. Secondly, the internal autonomy to which the French started to commit themselves in Tunisia after July 1954 had much substance, but it still had no logical connection with future independence. In contrast, 'self-government' in British colonies always had the likelihood of leading to independence. In relation to this, French plans before July 1954 will sometimes be referred to as 'reform plans' in accordance with French insistence, although they were in fact not aimed at introducing greater autonomy to local people and therefore it is very difficult to call those plans 'reform'. However, for the sake of convenience, the French plans prior to July 1954 will be referred to as such from time to time, because other Western governments including the US government also called them reform plans.

⁵ Although Martin Thomas's *The French North African Crisis; Colonial Breakdown and Anglo-French Relations, 1945-62* (London: Macmillan Press Ltd, 2000), focuses mainly on Algerian independence, this is the only work which sheds light on Anglo-French relations over North African affairs.

Background History

Tunisia became a French protectorate when the Treaty of Bardo was concluded on 12 May 1888. This treaty allowed France to control certain geographical areas under the guise of re-establishing order and protecting the Bey from internal opposition, and also allowed French diplomatic agents to protect Tunisian interests in foreign countries. Then the Convention of Marsa of 8 June 1883 gave France a right to intervene in Tunisia's domestic affairs. Morocco became a protectorate as a result of the conclusion of the Treaty of Fez on 30 March 1912. This Treaty gave France the right to occupy certain parts of Morocco under the guise of re-establishing order and protecting the Sultan, the sovereign, from internal opposition, and also to intervene in domestic affairs. The Treaty of Fez also provided that only the French Resident-General was capable of representing Morocco in foreign countries.⁶ Thus the two countries lost almost all autonomy not only in external but also internal affairs and were to be governed by Resident-Generals, the French representatives. The Resident-Generals had strong powers to formulate specific plans, the outline of which was decided by Paris, and to make decisions on the methods by which to negotiate with local representatives. Tunisia and Morocco would henceforward absorb a great number of settlers from European countries and mainly from France, but for the most part Tunisia remained an Arabic country and Morocco Arabic and Berber.

The fact that France made Tunisia and Morocco protectorate states led to several important consequences. Firstly, France started to commit itself to modernising the two countries. Under the French protectorate regime, both countries were to be equipped with certain modern political institutions like the Grand Council in Tunisia and the Government Council in Morocco. However, the real French aim was to institutionalise the rights and interests of French settlers. Secondly, unlike Algeria, both countries did not become France's departments and preserved indigenous state machinery. The sovereigns of the two countries retained the right to sign the decrees, called *dahirs*, which were submitted by the Resident-Generals. This was an important right, because in the post-World War II era, it enabled both sovereigns to resist French attempts to impose their projects on their countries. Thirdly, as a certain indigenous hierarchy remained, the French had fewer difficulties in finding a group or an individual to whom they would be able to transfer power in the future decolonisation process than in the Algerian case. This partly explains why the two countries' decolonisation process was not to be as violent as Algeria's.

⁶ For the text of these agreements', see the Appendix.

After 1881, France moved into key positions at all levels of government in Tunisia while carefully maintaining a semblance of Tunisian rule but forcing the Tunisian prime minister to have a French adviser. The process of French infiltration continued as the commander of the French occupation forces became minister of war in the Tunisian government. In the provinces, *caïds*, who were the head of each tribe, held a semi-independent status, but a system of French civil controllers was established in 1884 who introduced central government supervision over the *caïds*.⁷ Overall, the French protectorate met no serious opposition from the Tunisians.⁸

Undoubtedly encouraged by US President Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points of 1918 which referred to national self-determination, the Destour party, or *le Parti Libéral Constitutionnel*, was established in Tunisia in February 1920. The party demanded the termination of the protectorate but did not exclude negotiations with France.⁹ In April 1922, Nanceur Bey demanded a constitutional guarantee for the Tunisian people, but was forced to withdraw this request by the French Resident-General.¹⁰ This event prompted the French authorities to react in two ways: firstly, the French government started to encourage the emigration of French people to Tunisia. Secondly, in July 1922, the French decided to establish the Grand Council at the national level and the *Conseil des Caïdat* at local levels.¹¹ This represented French concessions in the sense that now the Tunisians were allowed to voice their opinion in making decrees, but both types of assemblies were consultative in character. In March 1934, the Destour party broke up into the Neo-Destour and the Vieux-Destour. The former recruited its members mostly from moderate intellectuals, while the latter did so from the religious bourgeoisie. Led by Habib Bourguiba, the Neo-Destour tended to be moderate but the Vieux tended to be radical, putting more emphasis on pan-Arab solidarity.¹² Especially after World War II, the Neo-Destour was inclined to seek independence through negotiations with the French whereas the Vieux-Destour came to denounce the Neo-Destour for close collaboration with the French.¹³

⁷ Dwight L. Ling, *Tunisia: From Protectorate to Republic*, (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1966), pp.50-55.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.67.

⁹ Roger Stéphane, *La Tunisie de Bourguiba*, (Paris: Plon, 1958), p.72. 'Destour' means constitution.

¹⁰ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, Mon Oeuvre, 1952-1956*, (Paris: Plon, 1987), p.327.

¹¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.385, Note relative aux Conseils de Caïdat, undated. *Caïdat* meant prefectures. The Grand Council held an ordinary session each year to examine the budget, and one or several sessions to express its opinion on the legislative decrees in the financial, economic and social fields, which the Tunisian government submitted. MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.384, Note sur les réformes en Tunisie depuis la Guerre, 1.2.1952; *Ibid.*, Note pour le Ministre, 8.5.1950.

¹² Julien, *L'Afrique du Nord*, pp.74-76.

¹³ Ling, *Tunisia*, pp.139-144.

Unlike in Tunisia, the Sultan's agreement to establish the protectorate in Northern Morocco did not mean a French conquest of the whole territory. France wasted no time in penetrating into Southern Morocco, populated mostly by the Berbers, and started the suppression of the opposition through military operations called *pacification*. In this process, the French authorities distributed the captured lands to warlords who collaborated with them. The French appointed them as pashas and *caids*, with almost a free hand in each area,¹⁴ and armed these tribal overlords with modern weapons.¹⁵ There were four phases of *pacification*: the first was 1912-1914, intended to subjugate an area called *bled Maghzen*, which had traditionally been under the Sultan's control. The second was to subjugate the Middle Atlas from 1914 to 1920, and the third was to suppress the Rif rebels, an armed revolt led by Abd al-Krim which lasted from 1921 to 1925.¹⁶ The final stage lasted from 1930 to 1934, which conquered the High Atlas, the Anti-Atlas and the edge of the Sahara. The conquest of Southern Morocco did not destroy its feudal social structure which was based on tribes. Si T'hami el-Glaoui, Pasha of Marrakech and the head of these Berber tribes, was at the top of this structure with enormously concentrated power.¹⁷ Importantly, French troops in Morocco were recruited among the Berber people. This was indeed a classic example of French 'divide and rule' policy,¹⁸ because the French greatly helped el-Glaoui to establish his own position with the purpose of making him a counterforce to the Sultan. As a part of this policy, the Berber *dahir* had been issued in May 1930, in which the Berber populations were administratively divided from the Arab ones, and were allowed to be governed by their own customary tribunals and courts of appeal instead of the Islamic *shari'a* courts.¹⁹ In other words, this *dahir* was meant to drive a wedge between the Arabs and the Berbers, thereby facilitating French control. This aroused harsh opposition from the Arab population, and marked an awakening of Arab nationalism in Morocco.²⁰

After the outbreak of World War II and France's surrender, Vichy France and the Gaullist France were subject to international pressure for the liberation of their colonies, as the Atlantic Charter in July 1941 stated the Anglo-American wish 'to see sovereignty

¹⁴ Gavin Maxwell, *Lords of the Atlas; the Rise and Fall of the House of Glaoua, 1896-1956*, (London: Century Publishing Co. Ltd., 1983), p.136.

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.155.

¹⁶ Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa*, (London: Longman, 1996), p.7.

¹⁷ Two or three villages formed a sub-faction, and several sub-factions a canton. Then two or three cantons composed a tribe. Maxwell, *Lords*, pp.139-143.

¹⁸ *Foreign Relations of the United States* [hereafter FRUS], 1952-1954, XI, pp.131-142. Memorandum for the NSC Senior Staff, 12.9.1952.

¹⁹ <http://www.c3.hu/scripta/scripta0/replika/honlap/english/02/02silver.htm>, accessed on 20 September 2005.

²⁰ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp.10-11.

and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them.²¹ On 30 May 1942, the Soviet Union approved the principle of putting all the European colonies under international supervision. Faced with violent protests from the British, however, the US suggested at the conferences of Cairo and Teheran that an international trusteeship be applied only to the French colonies.²² These developments made the French suspicious that the Anglo-Americans might intend to eject France from its overseas territories. This suspicion was to be strengthened by the events of the summer of 1945 when French troops would be forced to withdraw from Syria and Lebanon by the British.²³

After Anglo-American forces landed in North Africa in November 1942, US President Franklin D. Roosevelt gave a dinner party in January 1943 in honour of Sidi Mohammed Ben Youssef (Mohammed V), the Moroccan Sultan, in Anfa, in the suburbs of Casablanca.²⁴ There was a rumour that Roosevelt promised the Sultan independence, but irrespective of whether the US promise of independence was true or not, this event was bound to encourage nationalist sentiment. The awakening of Arab nationalism culminated in the establishment of the Istiqlal, the largest nationalist party in Morocco, on 10 December 1943 with Allal el-Fassi as President and Ahmed Balafrej as Secretary-General. It issued a manifesto reclaiming Morocco's independence, to the Sultan, the French, the British and the Americans on 11 January 1944.²⁵ This act angered the French authorities in Morocco, who arrested the Istiqlal leaders. Significantly, soon after its foundation, the party already aimed to attract international support to the nationalist cause.

The *Comité française de Libération nationale* opened the Brazzaville Conference on 30 January 1944, under the chair of Charles de Gaulle to 'déterminer sur quelles bases pratiques pourrait être progressivement fondée une communauté française englobant les territoires d'Afrique noire'.²⁶ However, its result turned out to be very disappointing for the nationalists. The Brazzaville recommendations stated: 'the objectives of the work of civilisation accomplished by France in the colonies exclude any idea of autonomy, any possibility of evolution outside the French imperial bloc; the constitution of 'self-

²¹ <http://usinfo.state.gov/usa/infousa/facts/democrac/53.htm>, accessed on 11 October 2005.

²² Charles-Robert Ageron, *France coloniale ou parti colonial?*, (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1978), p.276.

²³ Irwin M. Wall, *The United States and the Making of Postwar France, 1945-1954*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991), pp.32-33.

²⁴ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.15.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.19-20. The Russians also received this manifesto through their ambassador at Algiers. 'Istiqlal' means independence.

²⁶ Charles de Gaulle, *War Memoirs*, Vol. II, Unity, 1942-1944, (Paris: Plon, 1956), quoted in Charles-Robert Ageron, *France coloniale ou parti colonial?*, p.276.

governments' [sic] in the colonies, even in the distant future, is to be excluded'.²⁷ Indeed, this position was to constitute the original framework of French policy towards their overseas territories, not only in Black Africa but also in North Africa in the post-war era.

After the liberation of Paris in August 1944, the *Comité française de Libération nationale* implemented a series of reforms in Tunisia in February 1945 so that the population in North Africa should not be alienated. The composition of the Tunisian cabinet was modified, but even the most moderate Arabic journal did not accept that this was a reform sufficient to get the Tunisian people into the higher ranks of their own government. The Tunisians reacted in two ways. First, The Neo-Destour decided to send its own leader Habib Bourguiba to Cairo, where he clandestinely arrived by an American aeroplane in April 1945.²⁸ He was to appeal to international and Arab opinion through the Arab League, which had been founded in March 1945 and whose original goal was Arab unity.²⁹ Second, on 22 February 1945, the various Tunisian parties published 'the manifesto of the Tunisian front' which reclaimed Tunisia's internal autonomy under the regime of a constitutional monarchy.³⁰

In September 1945, the Grand Council of Tunisia was reorganised into the French and Tunisian sections, each of them consisting of fifty-three members. The French section was elected indirectly by French adults through universal suffrage, and the Tunisian section was elected separately through a double college system.³¹ Dissatisfied nationalists including both the Neo-Destour and the Vieux-Destour clandestinely gathered in August 1946 in Tunis and advocated Tunisia's independence. Salah ben Youssef, who was the Neo-Destour's Secretary-General and leader during Bourguiba's absence, took the initiative in this gathering. Indeed, this was the first time in which a meeting of nationalists from all classes in Tunisia proclaimed the country's independence.³²

In France, the Constituent Assembly accepted the Constitution of the French Republic

²⁷ La Conférence Africaine Française, Algiers 1944, quoted in Edward Mortimer, *France and the Africans 1944-1960; A political history*, (London; Faber and Faber Limited, 1969), p.51.

²⁸ El Mechat, *Les Chemins*, pp.15-54.

²⁹ Tawfig Y. Hasou, *The Struggle for the Arab World; Egypt's Nasser and the Arab League*, (London: KPI Limited, 1985), Introduction.

³⁰ In May 1945, the UGTT (Union Générale du Travail Tunisien) was created and attracted almost all Tunisian workers. Under its leader, Ferhat Hached, the UGTT was to succeed in getting the Neo-Destour to take into consideration social problems. Louis Périllier, *La Conquête de L'Indépendance Tunisienne*, (Paris: Robert Laffont, 1979), pp.55-56.

³¹ Julien, *L'Afrique du Nord*, p.160.

³² El Mechat, *Les Chemins*, p.80.

on 13 October 1946. This provided the structure of the French Union under Title VIII.³³ Reflecting the spirit of the Brazzaville Conference, the French still had no intention of granting internal autonomy to their overseas territories.³⁴ The Union consisted of Metropolitan France, overseas departments, overseas territories on the one hand and associated states and associated territories on the other. As central organs, the Union had the High Council and the Assembly but both were consultative, not legislative. Article 65 provided that the High Council functioned to assist the French government in general management of the Union. The French said that this article in practice meant assistance in the fields of economics, diplomacy and defence, but in reality, the Council represented strong control exerted by Paris. The Assembly was designed to give a voice to overseas territories in drawing up legislation directly affecting their areas.³⁵ All the constituent territories and associate states of the French Union sent representatives to the Assembly, but the associate states were also allowed to send delegations to the Council. The French Union was thus a highly centralised organisation unlike the British Commonwealth. However, the two North African protectorate states did not participate in the Council or the Assembly, because the Bey and the Sultan refused to join the Union and Tunisia and Morocco were not associate states. Thus Tunisia and Morocco were a very big deviation from post-war French policy towards their overseas territories and, hence, securing the two countries' membership became France's primary goal. Although the French Union primarily consisted of Black African territories, this organisation would greatly affect French policy towards North Africa.

In February 1946, the liberal-minded Eirik Labonne had been appointed as Resident-General in Rabat, and el-Fassi and Balafrej were released soon after that. Then Labonne announced his own reform plan, which had political, economic, and social aspects.³⁶ However, the Istiqlal publicly opposed these reforms in July 1946, and started trying to win the Sultan over to its side. In a letter to Mohammed V, charging that the Labonne plan 'consolidated the bases of a colonialist policy', Balafrej demanded the constitution of an authentic Moroccan government that could enter into negotiations, under the Sultan's leadership, for the conclusion of a new treaty with France. The Sultan, for his

³³ As for the texts of the preamble and Title VIII of the Constitution, see the Appendix.

³⁴ The establishment of a territorial assembly was not allowed and it was only in January 1952 that its establishment was recognised by Paris. Mortimer, *France and the Africans*, p.173.

³⁵ NARA, RG59, Lot58 D48 Records of the Office of Near Eastern, South Asian and African Affairs, Subject Files of the Officer in Charge of North African Affairs, 1945-1956, Box 2 [25 French Union].

³⁶ His plan was based on the establishment of joint companies in which the Moroccan state would be associated with European and Moroccan private capital.

part, told the Resident-General that he did not authorise his plan and left unsigned the six *dahirs* that would have put the reforms into effect.³⁷

Early 1947 witnessed an upsurge of North African nationalist movements. The *Congrès du Maghreb Arabe* was held with North African nationalist participation from 15 to 22 February 1947 and obtained verbal support from Azzam Pasha, the Arab League's Secretary-General.³⁸ In Morocco, the Casablanca riot broke out on 7 April 1947 in which eighty-three people were killed. Three days after, Mohammed V visited Tangier and made a speech calling for Morocco's unification within the Arab World indicating clear support for the Istiqlal and the Arab League.³⁹ In addition, the visit to Tangier by the Sultan actually encouraged Moroccan nationalist sentiment in favour of territorial unity because the city was controlled by an international committee.⁴⁰ Having realised the failure of his liberal policies, Paris decided to dismiss Labonne and appointed General Alphonse Juin as the Resident-General in May 1947.⁴¹ Juin quickly made it clear that independence for the Maghreb was not on any French agenda.⁴² Juin was given instructions authorising him to threaten the Sultan with deposition if he continued to resist French plans.⁴³

Nevertheless, the rise of nationalist sentiment made Paris understand the necessity of introducing superficial reforms in North Africa to dodge nationalist criticism. In Morocco in June 1947, Juin set up a new organ, the *Conseil des Vizirs et Directeurs*, within the Maghzen. This meant that through *directeurs* or French advisers inside the Maghzen, the Residency was able to exercise direct control over the viziers, whereas hitherto the Grand Vizier⁴⁴ had controlled to a certain extent the implementation of the *dahirs* submitted by the Residency for the Sultan's signature. Thus, the Residency was aiming to deprive the Maghzen of its vestiges of power. In October 1947, Juin changed the procedure for recruiting members of the Moroccan Section of the Government Council, which were now to be elected by restricted suffrage. As this reform meant granting the right of suffrage to the bourgeois merchants, a door to the Government

³⁷ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp.42-58.

³⁸ El Mechat, *Les Chemins*, pp.37-38.

³⁹ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.57.

⁴⁰ In 1945, Britain and France, with the support of the US and the USSR, ousted Spain from Tangier and forced her to accept even less than her pre-war role. A new committee of control was formed to represent the US, the UK, France, Italy, Belgium, The Netherlands, Portugal, and the USSR. However, the USSR did not exercise its right to participate. *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, p.138, 'The Current Situation in North Africa', 12.9.1952.

⁴¹ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.59.

⁴² Hargreaves, *Decolonization in Africa*, p.151.

⁴³ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.65.

⁴⁴ The Maghzen was equivalent to the Moroccan government, which was composed of the Grand Vizier as its head, Vizier of Justice and Vizier of Habous. *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.268. The Grand Vizier was the head of the Maghzen. Habous meant religious charities. Maxwell, *Lords*, p.154.

Council was now opened to Istiqlal members. However, the Residency's real purpose was to pave the way for representatives of the French settlers in the contemplated municipal assemblies. Juin also tried to force the Sultan to accept the municipal assembly projects which planned to secure French settler representation, but the Sultan refused this proposal.⁴⁵ The elections to the Government Council took place in February 1948, and the Istiqlal obtained fifteen seats out of seventy-seven.⁴⁶

In Tunisia, Mustapha Kaâk was appointed as Prime Minister in July 1947. However, he was only regarded as a French puppet, and a strike which took place in Sfax on 5 August had a political character. The decree of 9 August 1947 put Tunisia's general administration under the prime minister's authority, but the prime minister's primacy was only superficial: there was no significant transfer of substantive powers to Tunisians, although even this superficial reform was condemned by the French settlers.⁴⁷ The death of Moncef Bey, the ex-Bey, in September 1948 resolved the dynastic problem,⁴⁸ which had dominated Tunisian politics ever since General Juin had dethroned him in May 1943.⁴⁹ This event helped the Tunisian nationalist movement establish better relations with his successor, Lamine Bey. In June 1949, the Neo-Destour adopted the principle that Tunisia should become a constitutional monarchy with representation for the people in a future national assembly. This was clearly aimed at obtaining Lamine Bey's support for the nationalist cause.⁵⁰

In 1948 and 1949, the North African situation was relatively calm, partly because of the outbreak of the Palestine War and the sharp divisions of opinion among the Arab League member states over this problem which had diminished the League's strength.⁵¹ Nevertheless, North African nationalists had created the Arab Liberation Committee in Cairo on 6 January 1948. The Committee decided that it would be prepared to negotiate with France if it recognised the independence of the three countries (Tunisia, Morocco and Algeria) beforehand, but permitted each nationalist party to deal with France.⁵² This Committee would to some extent affect the tactics adopted by North African

⁴⁵ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan conflict*, pp.68-71. Bernard's book did not mention Juin's project of municipal assemblies but later developments showed that Juin submitted this plan for the Sultan's signature.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p.75-76.

⁴⁷ Julien, *L'Afrique du Nord*, p.162.

⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.164-165.

⁴⁹ The reason for the deposition was the Bey's collaboration with the Axis, according to the French. Juin was then the acting Resident-General. The Bey's deposition naturally angered the Tunisian people and stimulated nationalist sentiment.

⁵⁰ El Mechat, *Les Chemins*, pp.88-89.

⁵¹ FRUS, 1950, V, p.1744, Policy Statement Prepared in the Department of State, 9.1950; El Mechat, *Les Chemins*, Chapter 2 and 3.

⁵² *Ibid.*, pp.46-47.

nationalists, as will be shown later. However, the overall indifference of the Arab countries to North African nationalist movements disappointed Bourguiba,⁵³ so he returned to Tunisia in September 1949 and the Neo-Destour started a vigorous campaign for independence.

At the end of 1949, the French goal was still to incorporate Tunisia and Morocco into the French Union. Both countries were supposed to participate *de jure* in the Union as associate states; namely, they would voluntarily participate while preserving their indigenous institutions. However, the Union *de facto* signified nothing but a centralised organisation controlled by Metropolitan France, and consequently, the sovereigns of the two countries refused to join it. Thus in reality, Tunisia and Morocco, if they moved towards self-government, would deviate significantly from French policy based on the French Union. The French were aware that the largest stumbling block for their goal of making Tunisia and Morocco associate states of the Union was the sovereigns' right to sign decrees. As will be described below, the French started to persuade them to accept French proposals, but these proposals were in fact designed to nullify this right despite their insistence that they would lead the two countries to internal autonomy. In order to persuade the sovereigns, the French also considered it imperative to sever their links with the nationalists.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, p.75.

Chapter 1: The French Announcement on Tunisian Internal Autonomy; Tunisia, January 1950 to December 1951

1.1 The French decision on Tunisian Reform and Bourguiba's demands

On 14 January 1950, the Council of Ministers of the French government decided 'dans le cadre des traités du Barde et de la Marsa... à conduire à la gestion autonome de ses affaires internes la Tunisie'.¹ This decision was motivated greatly by the UN resolution in November 1949, which promised Libyan independence in January 1952. Wary that possible nationalist fanaticism in Libya might make their control of Tunisian affairs difficult, the French were determined to accomplish their plan before 1952.² In fact, the French had already started formulating reform projects at the end of 1949. However, this decision did not mean that the French government had engaged in comprehensive reforms which would ultimately lead Tunisia to internal autonomy, let alone total independence. On the contrary, as will be shown below, the French aim lay in avoiding substantive reforms in Tunisia and ultimately adhering Tunisia to the French Union. It was considered out of the question to alter the foundations of its protectorate regime at least at this stage by replacing or modifying the Treaty of Bardo and the Convention of Marsa.

In formulating these reform projects, the French government had three points to take into consideration:

- 1) la personnalité propre de la Régence de Tunis n'a jamais été constatée. Les réformes des dernières années l'ont renforcée et celles de l'avenir, nécessairement, l'accentueront encore.
- 2) pour tenir compte de l'importance et du rôle essentiel de la colonie français dans la Régence ainsi que pour sauvegarder ses intérêts moraux et matériels, il est indispensable que les Français aient accès... aux fonctions publiques... La Tunisie autonome doit conserver une administration franco-tunisienne.
- 3) le Gouvernement français tient des traités certains pouvoirs réservés qui échappent à la compétence du Gouvernement tunisien (Affaires Etrangères, Défense).³

¹ Ministère des Affaires Étrangères [hereafter MAE]. Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.380, Note, 14.1.1950.

² MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.380, Lettre au Président, 3.3.1950. The British had also observed that the UN resolution on Libya had made a deep impression on both French and indigenous people in Tunisia. Public Record Office [hereafter PRO], FO371/80619, J1018/2, Tunis to FO, 22.12.1949. For this UN resolution, see John Wright, *Libya*, (London; Ernest Benn Limited, 1969), pp.205-207. Note that the degree of political evolution in Libya was considered to be far behind that in Tunisia. See for instance, MAE, 1944-1955 vol.337, Tunis to Paris, no.2850, 16.10.1951.

³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol. 380, Note pour le Cabinet du Ministre, 10.1.1950.

The first point suggested that France had respected, and would respect the character of Tunisia, but not its sovereignty as had been demanded by the nationalists. French hypocrisy was conspicuous particularly in the second point, for the preservation of ‘une administration franco-tunisienne’ was incompatible with internal autonomy. This point illustrated that Tunisia’s internal autonomy as envisaged by the French did not have substance, since the French deemed the Tunisians alone incapable of administering the country. French settlers’ participation in the country’s administration must be kept, also because their existence had contributed to Tunisia’s political and economic development. The third point meant that the French were not intent on allowing the Tunisians to exert the rights in relation to foreign affairs and defence, and therefore refused the idea of granting complete independence to Tunisia.

The French went on to argue that these three basic points entailed the following five elements. Firstly, Tunisia would have to uphold the monarchy, although the French envisaged that the Bey’s privileges would be modified as democracy evolved. This was presumably because the Treaty of Bardo and the Convention of Marsa were concluded with the Bey, whose consent the French considered essential to guarantee legally their presence. Second, with regard to governmental organisation, the Council of Ministers of the Tunisian government would be presided over by the Prime Minister, not by the Resident-General as hitherto. Parity would be established between the number of Tunisian ministers and French ministers within the government, although this did not exclude a possibility of forming a government composed only of Tunisian members in the future.⁴

Third, in return for the alleged enhancement of the Tunisian government’s powers, both national and local assemblies would have to be reformed, as these would guarantee the prevention of any single political party from having a thorough hold on the state. That is, by making use of those assemblies the French aimed to hinder the Neo-Destour’s monopoly of power in the Grand Council⁵ and in the government in general. Fourth, the Tunisian administration would have to be composed of both French and Tunisian people. Its legitimacy could not be doubted ‘quel que soit le degré d’autonomie intérieure ou d’indépendance’. Finally, the Resident-General and the CSTT (Commandement Supérieur des Troupes de Tunisie) would cease to belong to the

⁴ It was planned that the Ministers of Tunisian Justice, Agriculture, Labour, Public Health, and Commerce and Crafts would be allocated to Tunisians while the Ministers of Finances, Public Work, Public Instructions and the Under-Secretaries of PTT [Poste Télégraphe et Télécommunication] and Reconstruction would remain French.

⁵ Introduction, footnote 11.

Tunisian government in their capacities as the Ministers of Foreign Affairs and of Defence, since their authority corresponded to the powers reserved to France. However, it was emphasised that the Resident-General would continue to exert French control on the Bey and the government. Hence, it should be concluded that the real French purpose was, contrary to their own insistence, avoiding real reforms for Tunisia's internal autonomy. Only the second point can be regarded as a development for greater autonomy, but in any case there was no change to the Resident-General's monopoly of power.

At the same time, the Neo-Destour had been engaged in energetic activities in order to realise their wish for independence, since September 1949.⁶ As well as appealing to France, their efforts lay in internationalising the problem, stimulated by the Libyan case in the previous year. In February 1950, Mongi Slim, a leading member of the Neo-Destour, asked the Arab League to examine the Tunisian question with the aim of bringing it to the UN, although two months later the Arab League decided not to discuss the problem.⁷ Bourguiba's effort was, on the other hand, rather aimed at gathering support for the nationalist case among Tunisian people. For this reason, he travelled throughout Tunisia making speeches and holding meetings with local people.⁸ Confident of popular support, he landed in France on 12 April 1950 with the purpose of publicising his demands. Tahar Ben Ammar, the president of the Tunisian section of the Grand Council, also visited Paris to back Bourguiba's action and, in Tunisia, several meetings were held proclaiming support for Bourguiba.⁹

These nationalist movements pressurised the Bey to side with the nationalists. On 11 April 1950, he sent a letter to Vincent Auriol, the President of the French Republic, to draw attention to the importance of reforms by indicating his fear that 'les manifestations de lassitude du peuple tunisien ne dégénèrent en un désespoir susceptible de provoquer ce que nous désirons éviter'.¹⁰ However, it seemed that as a successor of the deposed Moncef Bey,¹¹ who had been popular because of his nationalist stance, the Bey's concern was more his own popularity than promoting the nationalist cause. Regarding his position, Jean Mons, the French Resident-General in Tunisia, noted:

⁶ Introduction, p.18.

⁷ El Mechat, *Les Chemins*, p.92. On 3 April 1950, Slim also wrote to Eleanor Roosevelt, Chairman of the UN Commission on Human Rights, protesting that the French authorities were preventing Bourguiba from visiting Southern Tunisia. *FRUS*, 1950, V, p.1776, footnote 2.

⁸ Habib Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, (Paris: Plon, 1987), p.261.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.265.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.330.

¹¹ Introduction, p.17.

le Bey a été saisi par le démon de la popularité... Si son changement d'attitude est plus grave de conséquences que l'agitation du Destour c'est parce que ce parti est dans l'opposition... tandis que le Bey se place à l'intérieur du mécanisme institutionnel du Protectorat; plus précisément, le Bey dispose du seul véritable pouvoir que le régime du protectorat ait laissé aux Tunisiens, c'est-à-dire le sceau des décrets.¹²

In this sense, Mons rightly commented to the Americans: '[the] Bey is not supporting Bourguiba'.¹³ Nevertheless, he was afraid, it was possible that the Bey would seek further popularity by siding with the nationalists. In that case the Bey's retention of a right to veto decrees by refusing to sign could threaten French plans. Hence, both the French and the nationalists would, more than ever, compete in obtaining the Bey's collaboration.

On 14 April 1950 in Paris, Bourguiba submitted to *l'Agence France-Presse* the following seven demands:

1. 'résurrection de l'exécutif tunisien dépositaire de la souveraineté tunisienne...'
2. constitution d'un gouvernement tunisien homogène, responsable de l'ordre public, présidé par un premier ministre tunisien désigné par le souverain...
3. suppression du secrétaire général...¹⁴
4. suppression des contrôleurs civils qui faisaient de l'administration directe
5. suppression de la gendarmerie française qui consacrait l'occupation militaire du pays.
6. institution des municipalités élues avec la représentation des intérêts français dans toutes les agglomérations...
7. création d'une Assemblée nationale élue au suffrage universel qui aura... d'élaborer une constitution démocratique qui fixera les rapports futurs franco-tunisiens sur la base du respect des intérêts légitimes de la France et également dans le respect de la souveraineté tunisienne.¹⁵

Points 1-6 were, according to his declaration on 3 June 1950, aimed at restoring Tunisia's sovereignty to the Tunisian people. He reasoned that the Protectorate Treaty had recognised it, but that 'la souveraineté tunisienne [est] étouffée par une pratique abusive et envahissante du contrôle français'. Only after French acceptance of points 1-6, would Tunisia, with a democratic regime, be able to negotiate with France with a

¹² MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.336, Mons to Schuman, no.579, 25.4.1950.

¹³ FRUS, 1950, V, p.1775, Tunis to Acheson, no.61, 21.4.1950.

¹⁴ This post was nominally to support the Prime Minister but allocated to the French, in fact having dominant power over the budget and personnel in the Tunisian government. The Secretary-General was appointed by the Bey at the Resident-General's recommendation. At the beginning of 1950, the Secretary-General had the power of veto over all the decrees of the ministries.

¹⁵ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, pp.301-302. The Treaty of Bardo provided for a temporary occupation of Tunisia by the French military authorities. This provision had not yet been lifted at this stage.

view to concluding something like an alliance treaty.¹⁶ He also wrote to his comrade: ‘ces 7 points doivent consacrer notre indépendance.’¹⁷

Importantly, Bourguiba was willing to cooperate with France as long as the latter worked for Tunisia’s internal autonomy and independence, and he never intended to eliminate France and French people from Tunisia. In this sense his basic position was pro-French. Nevertheless, he later pointed out: ‘j’ai voulu dissocier la notion d’intérêts français ou d’intérêts des Français de la notion de domination politique ou de souveraineté de la France, en montrant que la deuxième n’est pas nécessairement une conséquence inévitable de la première.’¹⁸ Namely, he insisted that Tunisia, as a sovereign country, would guarantee the interests of France and French people and that this guarantee be given in place of direct French control. The above demands were rather moderate and gradual if compared with the immediate independence that the Moroccan nationalists claimed in October 1950,¹⁹ but here lay Bourguiba’s strategy. He considered that his moderate programme ‘nous aura servi à démasquer les intentions de la France, à réaliser l’unanimité du Peuple et l’appui du Souverain, à nous gagner une grande partie de l’opinion française sans parler de l’opinion internationale (Arabes, musulmans, Anglo-Saxons).’²⁰ That is, his tactics were to obtain as much sympathy as possible from French opinion without having to appeal to international opinion. However, it is also essential to note that recourse to diplomatic means was not his only strategy. As he wrote to another party leader in May 1950, he had already started preparing for ‘la lutte armée’ if the French made no concessions.²¹

As had been expected, Bourguiba’s demands triggered stark opposition from French settlers, represented by their pressure group, *le Rassemblement français*, resisting all suggestions of modifications to their privileges in Tunisia. Their leaders, such as senator Antoine Colonna,²² sent a memorandum to Foreign Minister Robert Schuman dated 25 May 1950, arguing that the problem posed by Bourguiba was related to all territories of French North Africa, and rejected even minor concessions on the part of the French:

Il s’agit de restaurer en Tunisie l’autorité française... [L]es Tunisiens, qui nous aiment encore, ont besoin... de la manifestation tranquille, pacifique, mais tangible,

¹⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.353-354.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, p.309.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p.305.

¹⁹ Chapter 2, Section 1.

²⁰ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, pp.310.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.313.

²² He was a member of the Senate in Paris, representing Tunisia.

de la force française... [L]a Tunisie doit strictement rester un pays de co-souveraineté française et tunisienne.²³

It was this *principe de co-souveraineté*, sometimes also called the *principe de parité*, that the French settlers and consequently the French government had advocated, and would continue to advocate in Tunisia and Morocco. This referred to the principle that the French and Tunisians should have an equal say in Tunisia's administration but ultimate power was reserved for the French, a principle already embodied in the composition of the Grand Council where the French had the same number of representatives as the Tunisians. Clearly, this principle effected a tremendous discrimination against the Tunisians, given the different population sizes. Naturally, this principle thoroughly contradicted Tunisia's sovereignty, which logically meant that Tunisia's political community must be constituted by indigenous people alone.²⁴ The French always regarded this principle as a very effective brake with which to prevent a future national assembly from passing a resolution to sever Franco-Tunisian links.²⁵

On the other hand, Resident-General Mons was advocating a more liberal approach. He reported to Paris at the end of April 1950 that the situation was calm and that it was impossible to find any troubles stirred up by Bourguiba's visit to Paris, as against Colonna's claims. Concerning French settlers, Mons observed that whereas their political leaders 'gardent une attitude de combat', the masses of settlers preferred to accept the idea of reforms. Finally he stressed: 'Une chose est certaine, c'est qu'il est impossible de revenir en arrière'.²⁶

The Quai d'Orsay argued that three possible courses were open to the French: (1) to adopt the line of the *Rassemblement français*, reversing 'la politique libérale pratiquée an Tunisie depuis 3 ans', (2) to do nothing major for the time being but to examine minimal reforms, (3) to adopt Mons's line, examining 'un nouvel aménagement des institutions tunisiennes qui romprait avec la co-souveraineté de fait actuelle et tendrait à dégager, sous la tutelle de la France, la personnalité de l'Etat Tunisie'.²⁷ The Quai agreed with Mons that the Tunisian situation was calm, though it noted that the Bey's

²³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.336, Mémorandum au Sujet de la Tunisie par la Délégation de la Colonie Française, 25.5.1950.

²⁴ Referring to Alexandria where Greek, Italian, and French minorities attended the municipal council, Bourguiba accepted a moderate number of minority people's membership in municipal councils. This was what he meant by the 6th point of his demands in April 1950. Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, p.310. What he rejected was the participation of a substantial number of foreign people in municipal councils, let alone in a national assembly.

²⁵ This was also the case in French policy towards Morocco. Chapter 2, Section 1.

²⁶ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.336, Mons to Schuman, no.579, 25.4.1950.

²⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.380, Notes Schématiques sur la Situation Politique en Tunisie, undated.

support enhanced the Neo-Destour's influence among the bourgeoisie. It even pointed out that the party was willing to cooperate with France by ceasing to demand independence. However, the Quai categorically rejected examining Mons's proposal to abandon co-sovereignty. Thus, as a compromise between pressures from the settlers and from the nationalists, it decided to take the second course. Consequently, the French government dismissed Mons and announced on 1 June 1950 that Louis Périllier would succeed him as the Resident-General.²⁸

1.2 The Announcement of the French Plan

June of 1950 turned out to be a major turning point in French policy towards Tunisia since the end of World War II. For the first time, the French government publicly pronounced its intentions to launch a plan that would lead Tunisia to internal autonomy. On 10 June 1950, Schuman declared in Thionville: 'M. Périllier aura pour mission de conduire la Tunisie... vers l'indépendance qui est l'objectif final pour tous les territoires au sein de l'Union Française'.²⁹ On 13 June, he made a statement to a private session of the Foreign Affairs Commission of the National Assembly that the reform would be based on the following points.

1. In future, the Tunisian government will consist of 9 Tunisian Ministers and 3 French Counsellors-General...
2. The Council of Ministers will be presided over by a Tunisian, instead of the Resident-General of the French administration as hitherto.
3. The appointment of French advisers to the Tunisian Ministers will be discontinued.
4. While the position of French officials will be safeguarded, Tunisians will in future be eligible for all posts in the administration.
5. Tunisians will be encouraged to take part in local government as a preparation for greater political responsibility at a later date.³⁰

On 10 June 1950, Bourguiba had announced his support for Schuman's declaration in Thionville in the name of the Neo-Destour.³¹ However, Bourguiba had reservations

²⁸ Ibid.; NARA, RG59, Central Decimal Files [hereafter CDF], 772.00/1-951, the US Consulate General in Tunis (Jernegan) to the State Department, no.237, 9.1.1951.

²⁹ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, pp.354-355. Schuman referred to 'l'indépendance', but soon retreated. Two days later, he announced in Paris: 'La France a la mission de conduire les populations (des territoires d'Outre-Mer) vers une gestion indépendante de leurs propres affaires au sein de l'Union Française. C'est ce que j'ai précisé à Thionville.' *Le Monde*, 13.6.1950.

³⁰ PRO, FO371/80619, J1018/18, Harvey to FO, 16.6.1950. It is not clear why Schuman mentioned that the number of Tunisian Ministers would be greater than French Ministers, while the Quai d'Orsay planned that the parity was to be established. Schuman's stance was slightly more liberal than that of other leading figures to get Tunisian support and to avoid any meaningful internal autonomy.

³¹ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, pp.355-356.

about the French Union. He wrote to Salah Ben Youssef that the possibility of Tunisia's adherence to the French Union could arise only after Tunisian independence although the French expected it inside the Union. He did not abandon a hope that the French would finally accept the Tunisian demands, but added that 'de faire pencher la balance en faveur du clan Schuman par une attitude ferme, digne, inexpugnable où se manifestera l'unanimité du people, Bey compris.'³²

On 13 June 1950, the new Resident-General arrived in Tunisia and made a radio announcement explaining the broad outline of French intentions.³³ The French plan was composed of three areas: firstly, a governmental reorganisation, secondly, the opening of more public service posts to Tunisians, and thirdly, municipal reforms, although details had not yet been examined concerning the latter two points.³⁴ The first point was that the Tunisian Council of Ministers would no longer be presided over by the Resident-General but henceforward by the Tunisian Prime Minister, and the Foreign Minister and the CSTT would no longer be members of the Council of Ministers. The French advisers to Tunisian ministers would be removed and the Secretary-General's endorsement of all the acts of the Tunisian government would be discontinued.³⁵ Jean Vimont was appointed as a new Secretary-General of the Tunisian government. Regarding the third point, the French planned to start assembly reforms at local levels, not the national level. Fearing that their plan of forming a national assembly, which would be based on the *principe de co-souveraineté*, would provoke fierce opposition from the nationalists, the French perhaps considered that starting at a municipal level would arouse less resentment.

In June and July 1950, Périllier had a series of conversations with the Bey and the Tunisian Prime Minister Si Mustapha Kaâk, but on 8 July, the Bey and Kaâk complained that 'la subordination du Secrétaire Général au Premier Ministre n'était pas assez nettement marquée' in the French plan. They also demanded the immediate dismissal of French advisers to Tunisian Ministers. Périllier flatly rejected such a subordination, and instead emphasised that the Secretary-General 'conserve... des pouvoirs propres de gestion sur les services de contrôle du personnel et des dépenses'.³⁶ In the French plan, the Secretary-General's power was to be constrained and yet remain dominant, and at any rate, there would be ultimately little change to French control of

³² *Ibid.*, pp.316-318.

³³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.336, untitled, undated.

³⁴ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre, Schuman, vol.101. Note pour le Ministre, 17.10.1951.

³⁵ FRUS, 1950, X, pp.1780-1781, The Consul General at Tunis (Packer) to Acheson, no.7, 10.7.1950; *ibid.*, pp.1806-1807, The Ambassador in Paris (Bruce) to Acheson, 7.12.1950.

³⁶ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.380, Périllier to Schuman, no.953, 11.7.1950.

Tunisia. In view of Kaâk's opposition, Périllier concluded that it was impossible to start negotiations with the Kaâk Government and decided that he should be replaced by a new prime minister. Périllier states in his memoirs that he had wished to form a government which would represent all shades of Tunisian opinion, and consequently would include Neo-Destour members.³⁷ After negotiating with the Neo-Destour, Périllier chose as a successor M'Hamed Chenik, a former prime minister in the era of Moncef Bey.

Meanwhile, Schuman's declarations in June 1950 intensified tension between French settlers and Tunisian nationalists. The French section of the Grand Council resigned on 10 July 1950 to protest at the introduction of the French plan. Tahar Ben Ammar reacted by putting forward a motion ten days later to the French Residency to complain about the French unwillingness to accept internal autonomy, emphasising: 'aucun effort n'a été fait pour donner satisfaction à une des plus vieilles revendications tunisiennes'.³⁸ However, the Residency did not accept the motion.

Nevertheless, Schuman was adamant in moving forward. He declared on 20 July 1950 before the Council of Republic 'la nécessité de rompre l'immobilisme'. Périllier, on his part, after obtaining from Paris approval for the formation of the Chenik Government including several Neo-Destour members,³⁹ began consultations with the party. The French were worried that Bourguiba might refuse to sanction his party's participation unless a new government could be liberated from having its decrees endorsed by the Secretary-General and if the Resident-General's control still remained while the Council of Ministers continued to contain French representatives.⁴⁰ However, Salah Ben Youssef accepted his participation in the government, a decision to which Bourguiba agreed.⁴¹ At Bourguiba's initiative, the Neo-Destour Enlarged National Council approved that decision on 4 August 1950.⁴² This was a significant decision, considering the opposition by the North African Liberation Committee and by other nationalist parties at home and abroad including the Istiqlal in Morocco.⁴³

³⁷ Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.78.

³⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.380, Réunion Extraordinaire du 20 Juillet 1950, Motion. Julien, *L'Afrique du Nord*, p.175.

³⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.336, Note pour Schuman, 24.7.1950.

⁴⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.381, Circulaire no.197, Paris to Tunis, 4.9.1950.

⁴¹ Périllier reported to Paris that Bourguiba had seemingly not been consulted beforehand. MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.336, Périllier to Schuman, no.1055, undated. However, Bourguiba implied in his memoirs that he had long been in favour of the idea of the Neo-Destour's participation.

⁴² Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, pp.363-364. Bourguiba returned to Tunisia on 2 August 1950.

⁴³ On 12 August 1950, a ministerial committee on North Africa was held in Paris with the participation of the French representatives in Algeria, Morocco and Tunisia. It concluded: 'Il ne saurait... être question d'opérer, au sien de l'Empire chérifien ou de la Régence, de profondes transformations de structure' and

It was announced on 17 August 1950 that Chenik would form a new Tunisian government with the membership of Salah Ben Youssef as the Minister of Justice and Mohammed Badra, another Neo-Destour member, as Minister of Social Affairs.⁴⁴ A communiqué was issued on the same day, stating that the new government's mission was 'à négocier au nom de Son Altesse le Bey les modifications institutionnels qui... doivent conduire la Tunisie vers l'autonomie interne.'⁴⁵ This was a distinctive event in the history of French policy in Tunisia in the sense that the French authorised the Neo-Destour, which had been banned a few years before, to participate in the government. The French judged it possible, with the Bey's authority behind them, to make the nationalist party accept their reform plan, which contained nothing substantive so that French settlers could accept it. In contrast, however, the Neo-Destour's involvement was aimed at impressing French opinion about its sincerity for negotiation, thereby strengthening the pro-Schuman group and making the French withdraw their plan for French participation in the country's political institutions and instead present a more realistic one.

Périllier was optimistic that he could soon start negotiations with the Tunisians. He even announced on 19 August: 'des réformes substantielles seront opérées avant la fin de l'année.'⁴⁶ He issued a decree on 7 September 1950 relating to the abolition of the posts of the French advisers to Tunisian ministers.⁴⁷ The Neo-Destour welcomed this decision, although it correctly regarded this as leaving intact the French veto power at a higher level. The Vieux-Destour's opinion was entirely dismissive and the views of the French settlers were adverse.⁴⁸

However, the prospect of the commencement of negotiations was rapidly disappearing. Prime Minister Chenik, having accepted office, was now convinced that the French purpose was nothing but avoiding substantive reforms to give Tunisia

that 'L'évolution promise aux Tunisiens ne pourra être conduite qu'avec une extrême prudence.' *L'Année Politique*, 1950, p.173.

⁴⁴ The other Tunisian ministers were Dr Mohammed Materi as Minister of State, Mohamed Salah Mzali as Minister of Commerce, Industry and Crafts, General Saadallah as Minister of Agriculture and Dr Mohamed Ben Salem as Minister of Public Health.

⁴⁵ Victor Silvera, 'Les réformes tunisiennes de février 1951', p.2, cited in Julien, *L'Afrique du Nord*, p.176.

⁴⁶ *L'Année Politique*, 1950, p.174.

⁴⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.381, Tunis to Paris, no.429/432, 7.9.1950. Shortly after the formation of the Chenik Government, Bourguiba started a new stay in France. He had a series of conversations with the representatives of Arab countries in order to gather political support. El Mechat, *Les Chemins*, pp.105-106.

⁴⁸ In accordance with the Beylical decree of 1947, these advisers had hitherto exercised a considerable measure of control within the Ministries to which they were attached, but now they were to be transferred to the Secretary-General. PRO, FO371/80621, JF1018/55, Tunis to FO, 1581/551/58, 20.9.1950.

internal autonomy. As early as 12 September 1950 he wrote a letter to Périllier requesting:⁴⁹

- 1) - la suppression du visa secrétariat;
- 2) - la dévolution au Premier Ministre;
 - a - des attributions incombant jusqu'ici au Secrétaire Général tant en ce qui concerne la coordination et le contrôle de l'activité des Services administratifs que la centralisation des affaires civiles et administratives;
 - b - de l'élaboration et de l'exécution du Plan économique;
 - c - du contrôle du personnel et des dépenses publiques des administrations civiles;

Simply put, Chenik demanded that all important powers be transferred from the Secretary-General to the Tunisian Prime Minister. These demands were natural, since the French had already announced their intention to give internal autonomy to Tunisia. However, the Resident-General's reply was simple: 'cette note ne saurait en aucun cas être admise comme base de discussion, celle-ci demeurant ma déclaration du 13 juin'. On 30 September the Tunisians put forward a second note repeating the same conditions.⁵⁰ As John Jernegan, the American Consul General later put it, the Tunisian reluctance to accept the French plan echoed the formers' deep-rooted distrust of the French, if taking into consideration the fact that the French plan's first and second points were aimed at alleviating French control as a matter of formality.⁵¹

The Tunisian notes smashed Périllier's optimism. He announced on 7 October 1950 that it appeared to him 'temps d'accorder une pause à la politique' and that instead Tunisia should address '[les] problèmes humaines de reconstruction économique et sociale'.⁵² This announcement, however, did not mean that he had given up the June 1950 plan. Realising the difficulties with the governmental reorganisation, he decided to open negotiations on the second and the third points of the plan: the recruitment of civic officials and the municipal reforms. Two days later, he proposed to Chenik the establishment of two mixed commissions in order to examine the two issues.⁵³ On 30 October, Périllier explained to Schuman the necessity of a pause in realising the

⁴⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.381, Note, Chenik to Périllier, 12.9.1950.

⁵⁰ Ibid., Périllier to Schuman, no.1356, 25.10.1950; Ibid., Périllier to Schuman, 12.11.1950.

⁵¹ Jernegan wrote: 'Even this program... might have been accepted willingly and promptly if the Tunisians had believed the French would implement it faithfully and in a liberal spirit.' NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/1-951, Jernegan to the State Department, no.266, 9.1.1951.

⁵² Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, p.380.

⁵³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.381, Périllier to Schuman, no.1356, 25.10.1950. The mixed commissions were to be composed of the same number of French delegates as Tunisian delegates who were to be appointed by the French authorities. This clearly reflected the French intention of making no substantive concessions. In fact, this was a measure which the French had often adopted and would adopt both in Tunisia and in Morocco.

envisioned reforms due to fierce opposition to the plan both from French settlers and Tunisian nationalists.⁵⁴

The Tunisian government rejected the proposed mixed commissions. In his letter dated 4 November 1950, Chenik explained to Périllier the reasons for his refusal:

Des décisions de cet ordre ne pouvant être valablement arrêtées que par les Parties en présence, à savoir le Gouvernement français et le Gouvernement tunisien, seules des conversations directes entre les représentatives qualifiées de ces Autorités pourraient être engagées.⁵⁵

This was an outright challenge to a fundamental principle of French control of Tunisia, for its protectorate status meant that France's representative was the Resident-General in Tunis, and logically the Tunisian government was not entitled to negotiate directly with the French government. Perhaps seeing Périllier's unwillingness to negotiate on substantive reform, Chenik considered that no means was left but to appeal to Paris. Stimulated by the Moroccan Sultan's memoranda in October 1950, he probably also calculated that direct Franco-Tunisian negotiations at a governmental level would greatly attract French and international attention, thereby pressurising the French government to make concessions. However, Périllier replied that Franco-Tunisian negotiation in Paris was out of the question.⁵⁶

Unlike Périllier, the French government did not want to wait.⁵⁷ It ordered him to visit Paris at the beginning of December 1950 with the purpose of discussing the programme with Schuman in detail. Then on his return to Tunis, Périllier submitted a new plan to the Bey on 13 December 1950.⁵⁸ The first point stated that the number of French ministers would be reduced in the Council of Ministers, which would be presided over by the Tunisian prime minister but by the Resident-General in the case of decisions on economic and financial affairs. This reservation indicated that French concessions would be restricted as compared with that of the summer of 1950. Instead, on the second point the French agreed to the nationalists' request to abolish the Secretary-General's endorsement: regarding the decrees of technical Ministries, the Secretary-

⁵⁴ Ibid., Périllier to Schuman, no.1361, 30.10.1950.

⁵⁵ Ibid., Prime Minister Chenik to Resident-General, 4.11.1950.

⁵⁶ Ibid., Tunis to Paris, no.537/538, 10.11.1950. Schuman later confirmed this point; Schuman to Tunis, no.592, 16.11.1952.

⁵⁷ Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.92. He points out that the Socialists criticised the plan as insufficient. André Julien argues that an incident in Enfidaville, a city in the northern part of Tunisia, forced the Quai d'Orsay to implement the plan hurriedly. On 20 November, the police opened fire against agricultural workers who threw stones at them protesting against bad economic conditions. Seven people were killed and around fifty injured. Julien, *l'Afrique du Nord.*, p.177.

⁵⁸ *L'Année Politique*, 1950, p.264.

General's endorsement would no longer be required.⁵⁹ The decrees of the Prime Minister and the other Ministries would be submitted to the Resident-General's endorsement instead of that of the Secretary-General. The reduction of the Secretary-General's power was considered important to give the impression he no longer played an important role as represented by France in the Tunisian government. The third point stated that the number of Tunisian and French officials would be the same among higher posts in the administration.

Seeing that French control on virtually all the administration of the Tunisian government would remain untouched, the Tunisians were not satisfied at all. On his receipt of the French plan, the Bey's first impression was 'qu'il tenait à étudier attentivement les décrets, qui, à première vue ne lui paraissaient pas comporter des réformes aussi substantielles qu'il l'avait espéré.'⁶⁰

In the months that followed, Chenik continued his opposition but Bourguiba, who returned from Paris and himself talked with Périllier over this issue several times, agreed to the French plan as part of what he called 'un recul tactique'⁶¹ and the Tunisian government followed his position. The Neo-Destour, though, publicly maintained its opposition when the party's National Council, held under Bourguiba's presidency on 31 January and 1 February 1951, concluded that the negotiations 'n'ont pas encore permis de dégager les bases d'un régime d'autonomie interne.'⁶² It was announced on 1 February that both sides had achieved agreements which contained minor modifications to the December 1950 French position, and over which Secretary-General Vimont had offered his resignation, opposing the envisaged restriction of his post's attributions.⁶³ On 7 February 1951, Périllier put forward the draft of the plan to the Tunisian Council of Ministers, which approved it on the same day. On the following day, the Bey signed the decrees related to the February 1951 accords. However, aware of French unwillingness to make substantive concessions, Bourguiba had already left Tunisia on 2 February 1951 in order to continue his efforts to appeal to international opinion.⁶⁴ Nevertheless, Bourguiba announced in Karachi on 13 February that the agreements

⁵⁹ 'Technical Ministers' refer to those of Labour, Agriculture, Commerce and Industry, and Public Health.

⁶⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.381, Tunis to Paris, no.596/598, 14.12.1950.

⁶¹ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, pp.274-275.

⁶² *Ibid.*, p.412.

⁶³ The new agreements stated that the Resident-General would preside over a commission composed of all the Tunisian ministers only when it discussed serious problems relating to the Protectorate Treaties themselves and when the Grand Council could not make a decision over budgetary issues. MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.382, Note, 6.2.1951; *Le Monde*, 1.2.1951, 2.2.1951. Raymond Pons was appointed as the new Secretary-General on 23 March 1951. *L'Année Politique*, 1951, p.81.

⁶⁴ He was to visit Cairo, Karachi, New Delhi, Jakarta, and so on.

‘constituent une étape bien timide, mais significative de la volonté [française] d’acheminer la Tunisie vers son autonomie.’⁶⁵

Thus, of the three main points listed in the June 1950 plan, the first and the second were accomplished. What remained was the third point, i.e. the problem of municipal assemblies, but the Tunisians also made concessions on this issue. They agreed that it should be entrusted to a mixed Franco-Tunisian commission, which would be held under the presidency of Dr Materi (the Tunisian Minister of Interior).⁶⁶

1.3 La Note sur la Co-souveraineté

Despite the accords of February 1951, the Quai d’Orsay was aware that the results accomplished were far from what the Tunisians were demanding, whereas French settlers would be highly unlikely to accept steps to transfer substantial powers to the Tunisians:

[Les chefs du Néo-Destour] revendiquaient... la prépondérance de l’élément tunisien au sein du Conseil des Ministres, l’exercice par le Premier Ministre ou pour le Ministre d’Etat du contrôle des dépenses et du personnel, ainsi que de la direction des services de sécurité, l’obligation de posséder la nationalité tunisienne pour accéder aux emplois administratifs. Il n’est donc pas exclu que... de nouvelles revendications ne se manifestent dans un avenir plus ou moins proche...

[C]es concessions nouvelles ont déjà suscité certaines appréhensions de la colonie française de Tunisie...⁶⁷

In fact, on 20 February 1951, Bourguiba instructed his party leaders to take the next step. After pointing out French avoidance of devolving substantive powers to the Tunisians, he listed the following points.

- Suppression du Secrétaire Général ou son remplacement par un fonctionnaire tunisien;
- Conseil des Ministres homogène...;
- Suppression du Comité du Budget;
- Rattachement des services de sécurité au Ministère d’Etat ou à un Ministère de l’Intérieur;
- ...
- Assemblée Nationale Tunisienne;
- Municipalités élues;
- Suppression des territoires militaire et remplacement de la gendarmerie française par un corps de gendarmes tunisiens.⁶⁸

⁶⁵ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, p.414.

⁶⁶ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.381, Périllier to Schuman, no.1356. Note that this mixed commission was different from those proposed in October 1950.

⁶⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.382, Note de la Direction d’Afrique Levant. 10.2.1951.

⁶⁸ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, pp.415-418.

Bourguiba now added new demands concerning internal security and the establishment of a Tunisian national assembly. The Tunisians would henceforward increase their demands about the latter point in particular.

The conflict between the Tunisians and the French intensified rapidly. On 10 March 1951, the Neo-Destour and the UGTT⁶⁹ launched a general strike as a protest against French oppression of the Moroccan people's aspiration for autonomy.⁷⁰ This decision reflected Tunisian nationalists' irritation with the French unwillingness to make substantive reforms. Minister of Justice Salah Ben Youssef himself took part in the preparation of the order to strike, so the Resident-General protested to the Bey and the Prime Minister the following day.⁷¹ Besides, the Tunisian ministers boycotted the first session of the Grand Council, which was held on 31 March. Périllier reported to Paris that they were following the order of Chenik, who himself was inspired by Salah Ben Youssef.⁷²

The Resident-General warned Chenik on 21 April 1951 that the Tunisian Ministers' absence at the Grand Council was illegal.⁷³ The latter objected on the following day that their absence could be justified by the fact that the French Section of the Grand Council expressed hostility against the Tunisian government. He also complained that the posts of Ministers allocated to the Tunisians were insufficient in number and that he had expected that 'des élargissements progressifs [des portefeuilles] jusqu'à la totale homogénéité [tunisienne] et même jusqu'à la participation au Cabinet de Me Habib Bourguiba'.⁷⁴ Chenik's position finally made Périllier conclude that a new Tunisian government should be formed. He underlined to Schuman that the Neo-Destour's involvement in the government should be terminated in order to implement the February 1951 agreements.⁷⁵

On 24 April, the Bey protested to the French government over the French Senate's vote on that day to give French people in Tunisia the right to elect two members to the French National Assembly.⁷⁶ In the nationalists' views, naturally, this resolution lost those French people the right to vote in the Grand Council, whose term was expiring in December 1951. The Tunisian nationalists immediately increased their calls for the

⁶⁹ Introduction, footnote 30.

⁷⁰ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, pp.419-420.

⁷¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.337, Visit to the Bey, 11.3.1951.

⁷² MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.382, Périllier to Schuman, undated.

⁷³ Ibid., Périllier to Schuman, undated.

⁷⁴ Ibid., Chenik to Périllier, 22.4.1951.

⁷⁵ Ibid., Périllier to Schuman, undated.

⁷⁶ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, pp.428-429.

establishment of a national assembly elected by universal suffrage. Nationalist newspapers started criticising the French government and on 12 May 1951, the Neo-Destour established the 'Comité d'action pour les garanties constitutionnelles et la représentation populaire'.⁷⁷ On the same day, the Vieux-Destour formed a new group named 'le Front National Tunisien pour l'Indépendance', refusing negotiations with France before a promise of independence.⁷⁸

These developments made the Bey incline more decisively to the nationalist side. On the occasion of the Throne Festival on 15 May 1951, he declared that Tunisia should have a constitution and that he had decided 'de passer à la seconde étape des réformes... et confié à ses Ministres le soin de préparer les textes qui établissent une représentation élue comprenant toutes les classes du peuple'.⁷⁹ The Quai d'Orsay observed that he was influenced by Prince Chedly, 'dont la collusion avec le néo-destour est bien connue'.⁸⁰ The Resident-General protested to the Bey four days later that it was no longer possible to have conversations with the incumbent Tunisian government.⁸¹ The Bey did not yield, however. On 20 May, he demanded that Périllier transmit his letter to Auriol calling for intervention against Périllier's move.⁸²

Yet another confrontation was arising out of the budget of 1951-1952. After being approved in general by the two sections of the Grand Council, it was supposed to be considered by the Mixed Delegation to reconcile minor differences between their versions. However, the Tunisian ministers refused to participate in this work and, moreover, dissuaded the Tunisian section's members from doing so, on the grounds that French control exercised through the Resident-General's endorsement was more severe than before, despite the French claim to the contrary. The French members of the Mixed Delegation, therefore, met alone on 19 May 1951 and approved a budget based on the French section's version. The nationalists publicly said that the Prime Minister would decline to present it for the Bey's seal and that he would refuse his approval in any case. However, the crisis was averted when the Bey finally sealed the budget on 1 June 1951, perhaps to avoid further trouble.⁸³

⁷⁷ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre, Schuman, vol.101, Note pour le Ministre, 17.10.1951.

⁷⁸ *L'Année Politique*, 1951, p.138.

⁷⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.337, Note pour le Ministre, undated; Julien, *L'Afrique du Nord*, p.183.

⁸⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.337, Circulaire no.138, Paris to Tunis, 3.6.1951.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, Tunis to Paris, no.226/228, 19.5.1951.

⁸² The French government's official reply was handed over to the Bey on 3 June. It simply demanded that the Bey behave in accordance with the spirit of the accords in August 1950 and in February 1951. Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.104.

⁸³ The Mixed Delegation was composed of representatives of both sections. The Americans commented that this corresponded to the system of conference committees in the US Congress. *FRUS*, 1951, V,

In July 1951, the Moroccan Sultan's refusal to permit French participation in local assemblies⁸⁴ was moderating Périllier's attitude: he became willing to negotiate with the Chenik government, perhaps beginning to doubt the viability of the *principe de co-souveraineté*.⁸⁵ In August 1951, he proposed to Schuman that he invite the Tunisian ministers to Paris to discuss the basis of a new action plan, a proposal to which Schuman immediately agreed, probably from the fear that the Tunisian problem might be brought before the UN General Assembly (hereafter UNGA), into which Arab countries were likely to put the Moroccan problem at that time.⁸⁶ Chenik accepted this invitation, and suggested that it be a few months later.⁸⁷ Meanwhile, he continued to demand a nationally-elected assembly and in August 1951 announced his opposition to the convening of the Grand Council.⁸⁸

In the autumn of 1951,⁸⁹ as the proposed Tunisian ministers' visit to Paris was coming closer, the Quai d'Orsay worried about the hardening of Tunisian attitudes, whose nationalist sentiment was given impetus by the failure to reach agreement between Britain and Egypt in October 1951.⁹⁰ Likewise, Tunisian attitudes could have been encouraged by the Egyptian placement of the Moroccan problem on the UNGA agenda on 6 October.⁹¹ On 17 October, one day before the Tunisian Ministers' visit, the Quai d'Orsay examined French responses to Chenik's expected demands:

1. le Gouvernement français entend rester seul juge du rythme selon lequel des réformes seront introduites dans la Régence en vue de la conduire progressivement à la réalisation de son "autonomie interne".
2. le Gouvernement français désire voir aboutir, par priorité, la réforme municipale, comprise dans le programme de juin 1950... [C'est dans le cadre municipal que les Tunisiens doivent faire l'apprentissage...]⁹²

The French did not intend to allow any deviation from the June 1950 programme.

pp.1402-1405, Jernegan to the State Department, no.442, 22.5.1951; MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.382, Note, 28.6.1951; vol.337, Note pour le Ministre, 7.1955.

⁸⁴ Chapter 2, p.48.

⁸⁵ However, in mid-July 1951, Dr Materi expressed his optimism to a French official: 'en dépit de l'échec d'un texte analogue au Maroc, il gardait l'espoir de faire accepter ce projet après les vacances lorsque l'incident marocain serait un peu oublié.' MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.337, Note pour le Ministre, 7.1951.

⁸⁶ Chapter 2, pp.48-49.

⁸⁷ Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.108.

⁸⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.337, Note de M Périllier pour le Président Schuman, undated.

⁸⁹ After visiting Arab-Asian countries, Bourguiba visited the UK in August 1951, where he met Foreign Minister Herbert Morrison, and the USA in the following month, where State Department officials received him. Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, p.484, p.491.

⁹⁰ MAE, 1944-1955 vol.337, Tunis to Paris, no.2850, 16.10.1951. Early in October 1951, Egyptian Prime Minister Nahas Pasha introduced legislation to abrogate the 1936 treaty, which authorised the British government to station troops in the Canal Zone.

⁹¹ Chapter 2, p.51.

⁹² MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.383, Note pour le Ministre, 17.10.1951.

Namely, they would accept the establishment of an elected national assembly only after that of local assemblies.

Then the Department of Africa and Levant of the Quai d'Orsay drafted a note that discussed the future regimes of both Protectorates after the establishment of the local assemblies designed in the French plans.⁹³ It clearly reflected French adherence to the *principe de co-souveraineté*. It began by emphasising: 'le moment semble venu d'examiner objectivement les problèmes posés par le fonctionnement des Protectorats du Maroc et de la Tunisie et de rechercher les formules qui permettraient de concilier la permanence de la présence française avec les réformes réclamées par les Autochtones et par une large fraction de l'opinion internationale'. However, they did not try to make the French position in the two countries more acceptable to indigenous people and international opinion. It was argued that the *principe de parité* would be very difficult to obtain once abandoned and that if both countries obtained internal autonomy without this principle, 'il est hors de doute que les Européens... sont l'objet de mesures discriminatoires et se trouvent parfois même en danger de leurs personnes, victimes d'un véritable racisme', judging from the situation in other Arab countries.

The Tunisian ministers, headed by Prime Minister Chenik, left Tunis on 16 October 1951 and had a series of conversations with the French in Paris. The memorandum, tabled by Chenik under the Bey's signature on 31 October 1951, simply defined the 'internal autonomy' which the Tunisians wanted, using an Anglo-Saxon term 'self-government'.

L'autonomie interne veut dire une Tunisie intérieurement souveraine, jouissant du 'Self Government' et faisant évoluer ses institutions selon sa propre vocation...

Sur le plan gouvernemental, l'homogénéité du Gouvernement tunisien s'est révélée une nécessité...

Sur le plan législatif, l'institution d'une assemblée représentative tunisienne, élaborant les lois et contrôlant la gestion et la politique générale du Gouvernement, sera un pas appréciable dans la voie de la démocratie...

Enfin, sur le plan administratif, tout en sauvegardant aux fonctionnaires français... il est indispensable de doter la fonction publique tunisienne d'un statut compatible avec le nouveau régime.⁹⁴

The Tunisians called for the removal of all French control over internal affairs, not just for the establishment of a national assembly. Their demands were more comprehensive than the French had expected.

⁹³ Ibid., Note pour le Ministre, 10.1951.

⁹⁴ Ibid., Chenik to Périllier, 31.10.1951.

Tunisia's internal autonomy or 'self-government' was what the French simply could not accept, despite their insistence to the contrary. Having examined this note, the Department of Africa and Levant pointed out: 'Souscrire à une évolution aussi rapide des rapports franco-tunisiens aurait pour effet... de susciter les plus vives inquiétudes dans la colonie française'.⁹⁵ Of the three points listed by Chenik, the Department commented that the demand for a Tunisian assembly presented the gravest danger to French interests. It argued: 'Comme le montre l'expérience des divers Etats arabes, une Assemblée purement tunisienne, élue au suffrage universel, constituerait un redoutable foyer d'agitation nationaliste.' The Department highlighted the importance of 'l'idée de parité', which 'constitue sans nul doute une garantie beaucoup plus efficace que le veto, toujours difficile à utiliser face à une assemblée élue'.⁹⁶

Meanwhile, the French government was seriously divided as to how to respond to the Tunisian demands. Schuman and Périllier opposed the dismissal of the Chenik Government at this stage.⁹⁷ Périllier addressed a confidential report to Schuman on 17 November 1951, arguing: 'Nous devrions reconnaître le principe de la peine souveraineté interne tunisienne et la mettre en œuvre progressivement sur le triple plan de l'exécutif, du représentatif et de la fonction publique.' Schuman proposed an appeasing reply when the Council of Ministers met on 22 November, but was criticised by Henri Queuille and George Bidault. Harsh opposition to Chenik's demands was also raised by Senator Colonna, who submitted to the Quai d'Orsay a memorandum four days later, requesting Périllier's dismissal, the constitution of a new Tunisian government and the maintenance of French settlers' privileges. Périllier objected in his letter to Schuman on 13 December 1951 that '[c]e serait une erreur politique... de laisser repartir les Tunisiens les mains vides', and emphasised the danger of removing the Neo-Destour, 'élément le plus actif et le mieux organisé, qui a depuis trente ans pénétré profondément tous les milieux sociaux'.⁹⁸

On 15 December 1951, the French government submitted to the Tunisians a note signed by Schuman. Reflecting the harsh opposition by the Quai and French settlers, this note presented an outright refusal of the Tunisian demands for internal autonomy. It stated:

⁹⁵ Ibid., Note pour le Ministre, 15.11.1951.

⁹⁶ Ibid., Note pour le Ministre, 26.11.1951. Undoubtedly, the Egyptian abrogation of the 1936 Treaty was regarded as a sinister precedent.

⁹⁷ MAE, 1944-1955 vol.337, Tunis to Paris, no.2850, 16.10.1951.

⁹⁸ Périllier, *La Conquête*, pp.97-133. He opposed the immediate establishment of a Tunisian assembly, though.

1. se fondant sur le rôle essentiel joué par les Français de Tunisie dans le développement du pays, le Gouvernement français jugeait indispensable de maintenir le principe de leur participation du fonctionnement des institutions politiques du Protectorat.
2. le Gouvernement français se déclarait disposer à donner pour instructions à son représentatif à Tunis de convoquer en janvier 1952 une Commission Mixte franco-tunisienne chargée d'étudier les modalités d'un nouveau système représentatif.
3. la réalisation de la Réforme municipale devait précéder la mise en application de toute autre réforme.⁹⁹

This note so clearly showed the French government's adherence to the *principe de co-souveraineté* that it was called '*la note sur la co-souveraineté*'. It evidently demonstrated a firm determination on the French part that they would not release complete control over internal Tunisian affairs. For Tunisian nationalists, this note definitely denied the Tunisian people's right to self-determination by giving French nationals the right to vote.¹⁰⁰ This note was so startling to the Tunisians, it was for this reason that the French could not hand it in before the closure of the GA debates on Morocco on 13 December 1951.¹⁰¹ Then Paris nominated Jean de Hauteclocque as the successor to Périllier on 24 December.

The consequence of this note turned out to be very profound. As Jernegan deplored, 'the note must be taken as a definite set-back for the moderate Tunisian nationalists.' This was because the Tunisian ministers obtained virtually nothing after the long negotiations in Paris and therefore suffered serious damage to their prestige.¹⁰² This meant that the moderates such as Bourguiba would henceforward have to change their approach and resort to drastic action. One day after the French note, Bourguiba announced in Paris: 'le Néo-Destour doit faire face à une épreuve de force qui met en danger son existence et l'avenir de la nation', and publicly spoke of recourse to the UN.¹⁰³ Consequently, Bourguiba abandoned his previous attitude with which to obtain internal autonomy through collaboration with France.

⁹⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955 vol.384, l'Evolution politique de la Tunisie depuis Juin 1950 et la Crise de Janvier-Avril 1952, 4.1952.

¹⁰⁰ Bourguiba later recalled: 'depuis le 15 décembre 1951, il s'agit de la vie ou de la mort politique d'un peuple, de la persistance ou de la disparition d'un Etat, du statut politique d'une nation.' Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, p.352.

¹⁰¹ Chapter 2, p.53.

¹⁰² He rightly deplored the fact that 'the Tunisians were led to expect something, only to get worse than nothing.' *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp.1425-1426, Jernegan to the State Department, 19.12.1951.

¹⁰³ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1944-1951*, p.564; *l'Année Politique*, 1951, p.338.

Chapter 2: The Sultan's memoranda and the Internationalisation of the Moroccan Problem; Morocco, October 1950 to December 1951

2.1 The Sultan's memoranda

As in Tunisia, Moroccan nationalist sentiment was encouraged by the UNGA resolution of November 1949, which promised Libya's independence in 1952.¹ The French government's announcement of its intention to lead Tunisia to internal autonomy gave further impetus to the rise of nationalism in Morocco. In September 1950 Mohammed V set up the Imperial Moroccan Cabinet at the Palace. This was designed to secure a vital liaison between the Maghzen and the sovereign so as to offset the partial absorption of the Maghzen into the *Conseil des Vizirs et Directeurs*.² The nationalists were soon heavily represented in the Imperial Cabinet, and the Sultan's refusal to sign decrees thus appeared in its true light as the concerted policy of the Sultan and the Istiqlal.³ Despite French hopes, the positions of the Istiqlal and the sovereign were growing nearer.

In October 1950, the French government invited the Sultan to Paris. The French had aimed to re-create the facade of harmonious cooperation which had gradually been deteriorating,⁴ but this turned out to be a crucial moment in which the Sultan determinedly turned to the nationalist side calling for independence. To French surprise, he refused to sign a joint communiqué and instead, on 11 October 1950, submitted a memorandum stating: 'le problème marocain qui se pose aujourd'hui n'est plus une affaire de réforme fragmentaires ou de remaniements superficiels'.⁵ Specifically, he called for: (1) greater educational facilities for Moroccans; (2) fuller Moroccan participation in the administration; and (3) permission for Moroccans to form their own trade unions.⁶ This memorandum was drafted by the Sultan's entourage, but was actually approved by the nationalists, who had worried whether he would really present the memorandum to the French.⁷ It was recognised that the nationalists were pressurising the Sultan to take a firm stance towards the French. In fact, the nationalists had opposed his visit to France, for his acceptance of the invitation could have been

¹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.67, Juin to Schuman, 33/C, 21.1.1950.

² Introduction, p.16.

³ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.82.

⁴ FRUS, 1950, V, pp.1760-1762, The Consul at Rabat (McBride) to Acheson, no.169, 6.11.1950.

⁵ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.84, note, La Crise Marocaine, undated.

⁶ FRUS, 1950, V, p.1752, The Chargé in France (Bonsal) to Acheson, no.2124, 19.10.1950.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.1752-1753, McBride to Acheson, no.147, 23.10.1950.

taken as a sign of his reconciliatory attitude towards the French.⁸

The French reply of 31 October 1950 to this memorandum proved disappointing to the Sultan because it merely hinted at a possible lifting of censorship and recognition of the Moroccan people's right to form a trade union, which would be discussed at a mixed commission to be established at Rabat, and side-stepped the problem of Moroccan sovereignty.⁹ On 2 November 1950, he made a clear demand that the abolition of the Protectorate Treaty of Fez should be negotiated. This stunned the French, who had thought: 'the Sultan would be loath to abrogate the Treaty of Fez which guaranteed the throne to him and his heirs'.¹⁰ The French had never dreamt that the Sultan, whose position they considered was warranted by France, would call for independence.

There was no longer room for compromise between the position of the French government and the Residency on the one hand, and that of the Sultan and the nationalists on the other. As later developments showed, as in Tunisia, French policy was aimed at incorporating Morocco into the French Union, while keeping intact the interests of France and French settlers. Independence was ruled out, since it was incompatible with the Union. The French government insisted that they aspired to lead the Moroccan people to internal autonomy through modernisation and democratisation but, clearly, their purpose was to avoid any significant transfer of power to the indigenous people, as was the case in Tunisia. The political regime that they tried to introduce was to be built on the *principe de co-souveraineté*: while keeping French nationality, French settlers were to have the right to vote in assemblies, at either national or local level. This was considered an effective brake with which to prevent a future national assembly from severing Franco-Moroccan legal links. This French stance was totally irreconcilable with Morocco's independence as demanded by the Sultan and the nationalists.

In parallel with the Sultan's initiative, the Istiqlal started anti-French broadcasting in Morocco under the initiative of el-Fassi. This party's strategy lay, firstly, in showing that 'la position prise par le souverain à Paris répondait au vœu unanime de la population' and secondly, in internationalising the problem. The Istiqlal sent pamphlets to the UN and the Arab League, arguing: 'l'œuvre de la France dans l'Empire chérifien tendait seulement à l'accaparement des ressources matérielles et humaines de l'Empire chérifien au bénéfice d'une classe privilégiée de Français résidant'. The same pamphlets

⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.1760-1762.

⁹ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.78; *FRUS* 1950, V, p.1761; MAE, Cabinet du Ministre, Schuman, vol.96, Note 'La Crise Marocaine de Février 1951', undated.

¹⁰ *FRUS* 1950, V, pp.1762-1764, Bruce to Acheson, no.1244, 17.11.1950.

were distributed by two Istiqlal members during a session of the Moroccan Section of the Government Council in December 1950. General Juin reacted by purging them from the Government Council.¹¹

The Istiqlal's activities also alerted traditionalist *pashas* and *caids*. In particular, el-Glaoui felt threatened because of his belief in traditional values and his loyalty to France. As a Berber chieftain, he hated Arab nationalism inspired by the Istiqlal, and also disliked the Sultan who had previously granted an audience to trade union members, including communists, and who was favourable to the country's modernisation.¹² The antagonism between the Sultan and el-Glaoui intensified and finally on 21 December 1950, el-Glaoui publicly condemned the Sultan for his connection with the Istiqlal.¹³

On the other hand, Juin was considering renewing an attack on the Sultan, taking advantage of the latter's conflict with el-Glaoui. Perhaps he believed that the time was ripe to get the Sultan to accept his projects of October 1947¹⁴ and to abandon the latter's close relations with the Istiqlal. However, a divergence of views was growing between Paris and Juin, although this was rather related to the method to be employed than to the aim to be pursued. The Quai d'Orsay was afraid that his position was too favourably disposed towards the Pasha of Marrakech and therefore that 'quelle que soit la manière dont il cherche à exploiter la situation, il tendra à se heurter au Souverain'. It argued:

le Pacha Marrakech... prend ouvertement position d'opposant rallie autour de lui l'adhésion de beaucoup de notables marocains... [L]a vieille opposition entre les tribus et leurs chefs traditionnels d'une part, la bourgeoisie arabe citadine et le sultan d'autre part, semble prendre quelque réalité. Cet état de chose transforme, à notre avantage, un antagonisme franco-marocain, qui commençait à devenir fort gênant, en une rivalité entre deux clairs marocains... [Mais alors] que nous souhaitons prendre une position de réformateurs en but à l'obstruction d'un souverain plus désireux de rétablir la monarchie absolue que de faire évoluer son peuple, nous risquons... de passer, aux yeux du monde, pour appuyer notre politique sur les derniers vestiges de la féodalité locale.¹⁵

The Quai believed that Juin's policy could be criticised by external forces unless his proposal for political reforms was based on 'principes suffisamment démocratiques'. Finally, the Quai noted that 'en raison du tempérament de [Juin], nous pourrions nous trouver obligés de choisir entre un recul grave pour notre prestige... ou une crise

¹¹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.67, Circulaire no.18, 15.3.1951.

¹² Conversely, the Sultan was furious as the French authorities and el-Glaoui deliberately failed to inform him of the visit of American officials to Morocco, while they held a welcome party. NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/1-451, Rabat to the State Department, Despatch no.243, 4.1.1951.

¹³ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.82.

¹⁴ Introduction, pp.16-17.

¹⁵ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre, Schuman vol.96, Note pour le Ministre, undated.

dynastique', which was a fundamental dilemma in France's rule of Morocco.

On 26 January 1951, the Resident-General met the Sultan. Juin, after stating that he was going to the US with French Prime Minister René Pleven, urged Mohammed V, firstly, to condemn publicly the Istiqlal's methods such as anti-French broadcasting, if not its ideology, and secondly to sign the *dahirs* on Juin's October 1947 projects. By referring to the trip, Juin implied that the Americans would agree with his plan. However, the Sultan refused both of his demands, on the ground that 'Sa qualité de Souverain, [le Sultan] restait au dessus des partis' and that he had not yet fully examined Juin's projects.¹⁶ His demands apart, what was remarkable was Juin's menacing attitude towards the Sultan. The former reported to Paris about this meeting: 'Je lui ai indiqué que ma mission, en arrivant ici, me permettait d'envisager, soit son abdication, soit sa déposition, s'il persistait à faire échec aux réformes que la France a mission de promouvoir dans l'Empire chérifien'.¹⁷ Thus Juin explicitly threatened the Sultan with deposition.

Both the nationalists and the French believed it essential to approach the Americans, who were considered very influential in determining other countries' attitudes, either in the UN arena or outside. The Istiqlal told the US Consulate in Rabat on 29 January 1951, firstly, that the French government should deny its intentions on the Sultan's abdication or deposition, secondly, that it was essential for the French government to appoint a new Resident-General in place of Juin and, thirdly, that there was no collusion between communism and the Istiqlal.¹⁸ Two days later, in Washington, Juin met George McGhee, the Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs. Juin insisted on the necessity of forcing the Sultan to denounce the Istiqlal's methods. He also pointed to the threat from the possible expansion of communism, which would profit from the troubles. However, McGhee displayed a cool attitude and asked him instead whether the French could not collaborate with the party.¹⁹ As the French were soon to find out more clearly, the Americans were seeking rapprochement between the French and the nationalists.

The Americans were concerned with Morocco's political stability. Firstly, support for the French position was considered vital not only because France was one of the most

¹⁶ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.76, Rabat to Paris, Résumé de l'audience du 26 janvier 1951.

¹⁷ SHAT, Fonds Juin, Télégramme résident général à Diplomatie Paris, du 26 janvier 1951, cited in Bernard Pujo, *Juin, Maréchal de France*, (Paris : Albin Michel, 1988), p.271. However, Juin did not state in his memoirs that he had contemplated deposition. Alphonse Juin, *Mémoires 2*, (Paris, Librairie Arthème Fayard, 1960), pp.197-204.

¹⁸ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.76, Paris to Rabat, no.71/78, 1.2.1951.

¹⁹ Ibid., Washington to Paris, no.946/958, 1.2.1951. McGhee was the head of the US officials' mission to North Africa in the autumn of 1950.

important American allies, but also because its disappearance could cause political instability. Secondly, however, the French authorities' suppression of Moroccan nationalism would inevitably make the Moroccans hostile to France and the Western countries, including the US, thereby causing further instability. The US government, feeling itself in a dilemma, was to pursue a 'middle-of-the-road policy'²⁰ towards Morocco. Besides, the Americans had been deeply involved in Moroccan affairs especially since December 1950 when Moroccan base treaties were signed between France and the US, which authorised the latter to construct aerial and naval bases.

A rumour was spreading that Juin had previously received US approval when he met McGhee. Seriously embarrassed, Dean Acheson, the US Secretary of State, sent warnings to the French: (1) Juin did not have US unqualified support; (2) the US would dissociate itself from French action to depose the Sultan and might be forced to state so publicly; and (3) if French action of such a kind resulted in the matter being raised in the UN, the US would not support France.²¹ In fact, as the French Embassy in Washington correctly noted, the US government was desperate to avoid a situation in which it would have to side with either party in the UN.²² The British, too, approached the French. On 2 February 1951, Sir Oliver Harvey, the British Ambassador in Paris, was instructed that after reaching agreement with the Americans, he should inform Robert Schuman of their concern about possible disturbances caused by a deposition. Harvey was also instructed to make it clear to the French that the British government did not wish to intervene in this matter. On that day Harvey met David Bruce, the US Ambassador in Paris, who replied that American reactions had been exactly the same as the British, but the British found the State Department's line somewhat stiffer than that of the FO.²³

The Anglo-American moves made Paris aware of the necessity of avoiding the impression that France was seeking deposition. On 5 February 1951, after informing Juin of the governmental approval of his demands, Schuman warned him:

Il faut donc éviter tout ce qui pourrait accréditer l'idée que la France cherche à déposer le Sultan... L'intervention de l'Ambassade des États-Unis est caractéristique à cet égard... Il y a lieu de marquer... très fermement notre volonté

²⁰ See below for the details of this term. The US took the same attitude to Tunisian affairs.

²¹ *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp.1371-1373, Acheson to the Legation at Tangier, no.260, 2.2.1951.

²² MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.76, Washington to Paris, no.988/996, 2.2.1951.

²³ PRO, FO371/90243, JF1022/5, FO to Paris, no.96, 2.2.1951; JF1022/7, Harvey to FO, no.38, 2.2.1951; JF1022/12, Franks to FO, no.352, 3.2.1951. Harvey talked with Schuman over this issue on 3 February 1951.

de faire aboutir les réformes immédiates envisagées.²⁴

Having returned from Washington, Juin once more met Mohammed V on 17 February 1951 and demanded that the latter accept his points of 26 January, emphasising: ‘il n’était plus possible de différer une solution indispensable au rétablissement dans le pays d’un climat de détente’.²⁵ In addition, the *Ulama*²⁶ in Morocco also began to oppose the Sultan and to request the election of a new ruler. The Sultan turned to Paris on 21 February, writing to Auriol for arbitration. His reply arrived on 25 February, which only recommended the sovereign to accept the reform plans that Juin had tabled.²⁷ Moreover, information began arriving at Rabat on the same day that the French civil controllers in the Middle-Atlas areas had instructed Berber tribes to despatch their troops to Rabat, in order to demonstrate against the Sultan. Perhaps these two factors obliged the Sultan to succumb.²⁸ On 25 February 1951, he agreed: (1) to let the Grand Vizier, Hadj Mohammed el-Mokri, condemn ‘les méthodes d’un certain parti’; (2) to remove from the Imperial Moroccan Cabinet the Istiqlal members who were deemed responsible for the policy of ‘obstruction’; and (3) to seal the *dahirs* to realise the reforms presented by Juin in October 1947, i.e. the establishment of the municipal assemblies with French settlers’ representation.²⁹

Thus the February 1951 crisis ended. This was certainly a retreat for the Sultan, but not a total surrender, as it was agreed that the Grand Vizier, not the Sultan himself, would condemn the Istiqlal without naming it.³⁰ Besides, this crisis was not necessarily indigenous, since it was to a large extent caused by the initiative of the French Residency including Juin, if not the French government. The threatening attitudes that the French authorities adopted to get this result proved radical enough to provoke furious reactions from the Arabs.

2.2 Arab Moves and Franco-American talks

Juin’s attitude towards the Sultan was harshly condemned by journalists in Arab countries, the US and Britain. Above all, Arab journalists launched an anti-French

²⁴ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.2, Entretien avec M. Général Juin, undated. See also Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.111.

²⁵ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.77, Rabat to Paris, no.147/149, 17.2.1951.

²⁶ This was the orthodox religious council in Islamic society.

²⁷ *Le Monde*, 27.2.1951; *l’Année politique*, 1951, p.48.

²⁸ *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp.1377-1380, McBride to the State Department, no.325, 28.2.1951.

²⁹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.68, Paris to Rabat, Circulaire no.18, 15.3.1951; *Le Monde*, 28.2.1951.

³⁰ The Sultan signed a *dahir* relating to the third point on 20 March 1951. Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.90.

campaign, and on 1 March 1951, the Arab media started broadcasting false news such as the French bombardment of Fez and the French incarceration of the Sultan. The following day, Azzam Pasha convened the Arab League Political Committee to examine the Moroccan problem and on 4 March the Egyptian parliament adopted a motion to denounce French policy.³¹ Moreover, Azzam Pasha asked the British and American Ambassadors in Cairo for their governments' opinion in the event that the Arab League brought the problem to the UN Security Council (hereafter UNSC). The Egyptian move caused different reactions from the Anglo-Saxons. The British Ambassador responded that 'il s'agissait d'une question qui ne regardait que le Gouvernement français et le Gouvernement marocain', whereas the American counterpart did not reply.³²

The Americans regarded their reaction to the Moroccan crisis as a touchstone of their good intentions towards the Arab-Asians.³³ Therefore the US government declared in a press conference, on 5 March 1951, that it had already advised both parties on moderation. The French were quite dissatisfied with this American attitude, which, to their mind, 'contribue à accréder le bruit que le Gouvernement des États-Unis est favorable à la cause de l'Istiqlal'.³⁴ Moreover, it was reported to Paris two days later that with the help of the 'Rhodes group',³⁵ the Istiqlal had been allowed by the US authorities to begin anti-French broadcasting activities in the US.³⁶ However, on 9 March, the State Department instructed the Ambassador in Cairo to dissuade the Egyptians from supporting the submission of the problem to the SC.³⁷ No wonder that the Americans did not want to be put in a position of having to choose between the French and the Arabs. They considered it paramount to show, presumably to the Soviet Union, that there was no wedge between the Western powers and the Arabs, by indicating their willingness to arbitrate between France and the Moroccan nationalists.

The British had a different view: they argued that 'the only people who would profit from a public discussion would be the Russians, [who] would of course back the Arabs,

³¹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.79, télégramme circulaire, Paris to Rabat, 9.3.1951.

³² MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.78, Couve de Murville to Paris, no.184, 4.3.1951.

³³ PRO, FO371/90244, JF1022/46, Washington to FO, no.682, 7.3.1951.

³⁴ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.78, Bonnet to Paris, no.1871/1872, 5.3.1951.

³⁵ This was a group of American businessmen in Morocco which rallied around Senator Rodes, engaging in activity in the US Congress to lift the restriction on exports from the US to Morocco. The French government had promulgated a decree for this control in December 1948, to which the US government agreed as a temporary measure. *FRUS*, 1950, V, pp.1754-1759, Acheson Memorandum to the President, 27.10.1950.

³⁶ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.78, New York to Paris, no.1129, 7.3.1951.

³⁷ PRO, FO371/90244, JF1022/52, Washington to FO, no.706, 9.3.1951.

to the detriment of peace in North Africa and the position of the Western Powers.³⁸ For this reason, the British Foreign Office had persuaded the State Department not to publicly condemn Juin's stern policy against the Sultan.³⁹ Interestingly, the FO was motivated to show that there was no wedge between the Western powers, 'which could only benefit the Soviets.'⁴⁰ Therefore, the British did not tell the Arabs that they could induce the French to come to a settlement in Morocco. As Roger Allen, the head of the FO African Department, put it, they aimed to avoid giving impression to the Arabs that 'they can drive a wedge between [the British] and the French over Morocco.'⁴¹

On 13 March 1951, the Arab League Political Committee recommended that the member states bring the Moroccan problem to the UNGA, which it considered was preferable because of the American and British attitudes and the French veto in the UNSC.⁴² This Arabs' decision was shocking to the British, who were now fearful of possible repercussions in their overseas territories caused by a UN debate. Nonetheless, they did not choose to persuade the French to adopt a more liberal policy, which could moderate the Arab countries' attitude. On the contrary, the FO concluded that 'whatever we may feel about French motives in Morocco, it seems best to leave the question alone',⁴³ seeing that the joint Anglo-Saxon approach to the French in early February 1951 had resulted in this awkward incident.

This situation forced Paris to realise that they should immediately present a reform plan to Mohammed V, who had just accepted the sealing of the municipal project of October 1947. In order to induce him to accept their plan, the French now proposed to establish a new type of assembly which would be exclusively composed of the Moroccans. That is, the French were now planning to set up two types of consultative assemblies at a local level: *djémaas* in rural areas and municipal assemblies in town areas. A *djémaa* was a traditional assembly in local communities and the French were intent on transforming this into a new consultative institution consisting of representatives appointed by each tribe and having a certain degree of budgetary autonomy. A municipal assembly was to be composed of French and Moroccan

³⁸ PRO, FO371/90244, JF1022/46, FO to Washington, no.929, 9.3.1951. 'A public discussion' was meant to be US arbitration between France and the Moroccan nationalists.

³⁹ PRO, FO371/90243, JF1022/32, Washington to FO, no.594, 26.2.1951; FO to Washington, no.798, 28.2.1951.

⁴⁰ Schuman agreed with the British on this point. PRO, FO371/90244, JF1022/46, Harvey to FO, no.80, 12.3.1951.

⁴¹ PRO, FO371/90245, JF1022/71, Furlonge Minute, 11.3.1951, Allen Minute, 12.3.1951.

⁴² MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.79, Couve de Murville to Paris, no.250, 14.3.1951.

⁴³ PRO, FO371/90246, JF1022/113, Harvey to FO, no.204, 11.4.1951. Harvey argued that giving advice to the French was counter-productive because of their deep-rooted suspicions about the Anglo-Saxon intentions in North Africa.

members.⁴⁴

Meanwhile, the Arabs were continuing their efforts to internationalise the problem. On 9 April 1951, the Moroccan National Front, which had just been established in Tangier among major nationalist parties,⁴⁵ issued a manifesto demanding Moroccan independence and rejecting association with the French Union. General Juin noted: 'Cette union était réalisée sous la pression de journalistes égyptiens et sous l'égide de la Ligue des États Arabes groupe'.⁴⁶ On the same day, the Egyptian ambassador in Paris, together with other Arab countries' ministers, submitted a note to the Quai d'Orsay, calling for practical recognition of Morocco's independence and expressed that otherwise they would raise the issue in the UN.⁴⁷

The prospect that the Moroccan problem would be debated in the UNGA that autumn was becoming certain. The French wanted the US to oppose UN discussion of the problem, so believed that the Americans must be convinced that France was really intent on leading Morocco to internal autonomy. On 13 April, Henri Bonnet, the French Ambassador in Washington, pointed out that the US reservations about French policy would be likely to be aggravated in the course of a few months, due to the American press reports and comments on the Moroccan crisis in February 1951. Therefore, he continued, the French should approach not only US diplomats and consuls but also press correspondents and agencies,⁴⁸ a proposal upon which the Quai agreed. One week later, Bonnet explained the French position to McGhee: France was, he said, attempting to prepare the Moroccans for eventual 'self-government' through its democratisation which would be launched at local levels, and that the Istiqlal was nothing but a few members of the privileged classes. However, McGhee replied that US information indicated the Moroccans were supporting the Sultan, and that 'the progress being made in Morocco is negligible compared to that in India and Pakistan'.⁴⁹ Thus the French did not achieve their goal.

In early May 1951, Bonnet reported to Paris that the Istiqlal was planning to establish a broadcasting bureau in New York, receiving encouragement from the Rodes group.⁵⁰ Therefore he suggested that the Quai d'Orsay ask the US not to grant such facilities to

⁴⁴ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.79, Etude sur la situation au Maroc en Mars 1951.

⁴⁵ Those who participated in this pact were the Istiqlal, the Democracy Independence Party (PDI), the Reformist Party and the Party of Moroccan Unity.

⁴⁶ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.68, Juin to Paris, no.325/329, 10.4.1951.

⁴⁷ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.83, Note, Direction Général des Affaires Politiques, 29.6.1951; PRO, FO371/90246, JF1022/120, FO Minute by Stewart, 8.5.1951.

⁴⁸ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.82, Washington to Paris, no.2920, 13.4.1951.

⁴⁹ FRUS, 1951, V, pp.1381-1384, Memcon, by the Officer in Charge of Northern African Affairs, 23.4.1951. According to this record, Bonnet used the term 'self-government'.

⁵⁰ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.68, Washington to Paris, no.3313/3318, 2.5.1951.

the Istiqlal. The Quai immediately agreed upon this proposal,⁵¹ and in the following month, the State Department informed Bonnet that they had postponed their decision on this issue.⁵²

Perhaps the Arab countries' moves, coupled with unsupportive US attitudes, persuaded Paris to present their plans to the Sultan. In May 1951 the French plan for local assemblies was transmitted to him,⁵³ though its details cannot be found in French archives. Probably this was not made public until Mohammed V expressed disapproval two months later.⁵⁴ In any case this was the first occasion that, as a response to the Sultan's demand for independence, the French government had officially proposed French settlers should have the right to vote in local assemblies. On 6 July 1951 the Sultan announced his refusal to sign it, because this plan provided that the French and Moroccan representatives in the municipal assemblies would no longer be appointed by the authorities, but elected henceforward.⁵⁵ Like Bourguiba, the sovereign considered the plan 'incompatible avec la souveraineté marocaine',⁵⁶ because granting this right to French settlers would prevent the formation of a Moroccan political community, which must be composed of indigenous Moroccan people alone. Instead, he signed a decree concerning *djémaas* on the following day.⁵⁷

Subsequently, General Augustin Guillaume was appointed as the new Resident-General in Morocco on 28 August 1951. In fact, the Quai d'Orsay had already considered Juin's dismissal at the end of 1950 because his attitude was too coercive and therefore unpopular. However, the French were keen to avoid the impression that they disapproved of Juin's policy since it could cause 'un grand trouble dans les esprits de ceux, très nombreux parmi les Marocains, qui... ont mis toute leur confiance en nous'. For the purpose of showing their firmness to these Moroccans, they thought that a successor should be a military officer.⁵⁸

On the other hand, el-Fassi announced on 14 August 1951 that he was going to visit Middle Eastern countries, the UK and the US in order to undertake a 'grande tournée de propagande pour la cause marocaine', to use an expression of a French source. Then on

⁵¹ Ibid., Note pour le Secrétaire Général, 5.5.1951. It was even argued that the collusion between the Moroccan nationalists and the Rodes Group was more dangerous than that between the Istiqlal and the communists.

⁵² Ibid., Washington to Paris, no.4388, 11.6.1951.

⁵³ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.85, Projet de Réponse au Mémorandum du Sultan du Maroc, 21.8.1952.

⁵⁴ *Le Monde* reported no articles on this plan in May 1951. On 9 May the State Department instructed the Consul in Rabat to tell the French to inform them of the French plan. *FRUS*, 1951, V, p.1384, footnote 7.

⁵⁵ *Le Monde*, 8-9.7.1951. In the meantime, general elections were held in France on 17 June 1951. Pleven was elected as a prime minister on 8 August 1951 but Robert Schuman remained as a foreign minister.

⁵⁶ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.86, Situation Politique (mars 1953).

⁵⁷ *L'Année Politique*, 1951, p.189.

⁵⁸ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.83, Comité Central de la France d'Outre-mer, 18.7.1951.

31 August the Arab League started to discuss his proposal of bringing the Moroccan question to the UNGA session in 1951.⁵⁹

The French strongly felt the importance of approaching Washington once again with the aim of securing firmer support. In late August 1951, Bonnet had argued that there were advantages in discussing Moroccan affairs with Acheson, because the State Department still adhered to the idea of French collaboration with the Istiqlal, whom the Americans considered would otherwise turn to the communists. He also pointed out that State Department officials continued to meet Moroccan nationalist leaders to show US neutrality 'dans le conflit qui nous oppose à ces derniers que pour sauvegarder l'avenir des relations suivies qui nous sont, au plus haut degré préjudiciable.'⁶⁰ Bonnet, therefore, suggested that a paper should be prepared to indicate the extent of possible collusion between the Istiqlal and the communists. However, perhaps the French themselves were not sure of this connection, for papers circulated in the Quai merely suggested that only the communists were attempting to establish collaboration with the nationalists, whereas the latter distanced themselves from the former.⁶¹ The French wanted to use communism to persuade the Americans of the necessity of oppressing the Istiqlal, but in any case the Americans did not believe in such a connection.⁶²

At that time, the State Department drafted a paper for the forthcoming Franco-American discussions, entitled 'To harmonize French and US views on Morocco'.⁶³ It explained that the US objectives were:

- a) To maintain stability in Morocco so that Morocco can make the maximum contribution to Western security and our air bases may be utilized and protected.
- b) To assist the French in making necessary economic and social reforms and in guiding Moroccan political evolution toward self-government at a sufficiently rapid rate to forestall nationalist uprisings.
- c) To cooperate with the French in the promotion of friendly relations with the Moroccan people.

This paper continued that an evolutionary policy in Morocco must be accompanied by restraint and moderation on the part of not only the Moroccans but also of the French. In order to follow this stand the Americans felt it necessary to be informed of the French plans in detail so that they could refute charges by Arab countries that French policy in

⁵⁹ *L'Année Politique*, 1951, p.208. El-Fassi was in Cairo at the end of August 1951.

⁶⁰ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.159, Washington to Paris, no.6023/6028, 23.8.1951.

⁶¹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.67, Note, Nationalistes et communistes au Maroc, 4.7.1951.

⁶² For example, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, Memorandum for the NSC Senior Staff, 12.9.1952.

⁶³ *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp.1384-1386, Paper Prepared in the State Department, 29.8.1951.



Morocco was repressive.⁶⁴ Thus for the Americans, the only solution lay in Moroccan self-government in agreement with France. To achieve this, the Americans were determined not to side with either side and in this sense they adopted a 'middle-of-the-road policy'. This paper was of much significance, because US attitudes towards the Moroccan questions would continue to be based on the points listed in it.⁶⁵

On 11 September 1951, Schuman-Acheson conversations were held in Washington and Schuman explained:

le Gouvernement français entend établir au Maroc un état moderne, stable, démocratique, capable d'assumer lui-même une part de plus en plus grande des responsabilités... [L]e succès de ces efforts dépendra dans une certaine mesure de la compréhension que les partenaires occidentaux de la France montreront à l'égard de la politique qu'elle a entreprise... Un débat à l'O.N.U. sur le problème marocain ne saurait... qu'être préjudiciable au progrès du Maroc... Si toutefois un tel débat ne pouvait être évité, il conviendrait alors d'étudier en commun l'attitude.⁶⁶

Once again, the French presentation was somewhat hypocritical since they never intended to give significant powers to Moroccan people. The Americans did not know details of the French plan but, as had previously been the case, the French argument did not persuade them to take the same stance with the French: opposition to UN debates on the Moroccan question. However, Acheson admitted that 'Morocco was not ready for independence'. Concerning the forthcoming UN debates, when Schuman asked Acheson to discourage Arab countries' action, the latter promised to discourage the Arab League countries' raising the problem in the UN. He also agreed to examine the case together with the French if the problem was put to the UN.⁶⁷

Failing to obtain American support, the French turned to a new tactic. Taking advantage of the NATO Council meeting at Ottawa later in September 1951, Schuman asked Acheson to exchange letters in which the US would mention that it supported the French position in Morocco and had no interest in its internal political affairs. However, Acheson did not make a clear reply.⁶⁸

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*

⁶⁵ A 'middle-of-the-road policy' was also taken in the Tunisian case although the US did not have military bases in Tunisia.

⁶⁶ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.164, Conversations bilatérales Tenues entre Ministres des Affaires Étrangères de France et des États-Unis, 11.9.1951.

⁶⁷ *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp.1387-1389, US Minutes of the First meeting of the Foreign Minister of the US and France, 11.9.1951.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, p.1390, footnote 4.

2.3 The UN debates in 1951

The Egyptian government brought the Moroccan problem before the UNGA on 6 October 1951.⁶⁹ Importantly, this was the first occasion that the North African problem had been put to the UN. The French had already decided in July 1951 that their delegation must not accept the UN's competence to intervene in Tunisian and Moroccan affairs which were exclusively French internal matters. It had also been decided that 'nos Délégués devraient sinon se retirer, du moins se refuser à participer au débat' if the UN opened discussions on Franco-Moroccan relations.⁷⁰

The Egyptian move made the French government both take action in Morocco and approach the Anglo-Saxons. Firstly, on 7 October 1951, four days after his arrival in Morocco, French Resident-General Guillaume met the Sultan and raised the question of the election of the Moroccan Section of the Government Council.⁷¹ Ten days later, a decree of the Vizier announced that elections for those Chambers would be held on 1 November 1951, a measure aimed at depriving the nationalists of time for preparation.⁷² This decree expanded the Moroccan electorate from 8,000 to 220,000, but more than half of the increase was designed to cover rural areas, where the Istiqlal's influence was weak. As the French had anticipated, on 27 October, the National Front announced its refusal to participate in the elections.⁷³ The Moroccan people supported this, so the percentage of abstentions was extremely high: 95.9% in Casablanca at its highest, and 60% on average. However, the Quai d'Orsay was pleased with this result, commenting: 'Cette proportion est très satisfaisante si l'on tient compte de la violente campagne d'intimidation des nationalistes, des manœuvres de l'Istiqlal en vue de susciter des incidents et troubler l'ordre public.'⁷⁴

Secondly, the French made contact with the Anglo-Saxons to ensure their support in the UN. On 9 October 1951, under Schuman's instructions, Bonnet told Acheson that 'the French government had decided to fight the placing of this item on the agenda on the grounds that this was an internal matter under the UN Charter', emphasising 'the very great importance which the French government attached to obtaining [US] full support.' Bonnet asserted that if the UN agreed to discuss the Moroccan question, Egypt

⁶⁹ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre, Schuman vol.97, Untitled, 6.10.1951. On 19 September 1951 Azzam Pasha had announced that the Egyptian government would take the initiative in presenting the problem to the UNGA. *L'Année Politique*, 1951, p.235.

⁷⁰ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.646, Note pour le Ministre, 31.7.1951.

⁷¹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.83, Rabat to Paris, no.810/814, 8.10.1951. This was an issue upon which the Sultan had agreed in February 1951.

⁷² Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.95.

⁷³ *Ibid.*, p.96; MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.68, Note, undated.

⁷⁴ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.84, Paris to Rabat, Circulaire no.209, 3.11.1951.

would inspire disorders in Morocco to back up the Arab case.⁷⁵ However, Acheson insisted that the UN was competent to discuss this problem, although he admitted that it was not 'competent to deal with this question in the sense of passing any condemnatory resolution or setting up a commission of investigation etc.' Regarding Schuman's proposal of September 1951 for an exchange of notes, Acheson mentioned that the State Department had not reached a conclusion. The French reaffirmed on 12 October that their delegation must oppose the UN's competence, contrary to Acheson's argument.⁷⁶

On 9 October 1951, Francis Lacoste, the Alternate Permanent French Representative at the UN, informed Gladwyn Jebb, his British counterpart, that the French would contest the competence of the GA to discuss the Moroccan item, adding that 'he assumed that in so doing the French government would have the full support of His Majesty's government.' Jebb replied: 'such support would be forthcoming.'⁷⁷ Moreover, the British government immediately tried to convince the Americans to adopt the same attitude. Harvey asked Acheson, who was then in Paris, whether 'he could not support the French by voting against the Egyptian motion'. The latter responded that he had already made concessions to France by deciding to abstain on the vote for the placement. Harvey noted Acheson's position:

it was a basic principle with the US government not to oppose the discussion of matters of this sort by the UN. He had already agreed to violate American tradition to the extent of abstaining, and even this was laying him open to strong attack by 'the liberal wing of the US delegation', led by Mrs. Roosevelt. It would be impossible for him to vote against.⁷⁸

In fact, the US government had never voted against the inscription of a colonial matter on the GA agenda.⁷⁹ Acheson added, though, that he was 'prepared to advise other Governments, if they should consult him, to vote against admission of the item onto the agenda'.

On 8 and 9 November 1951, the GA General Committee considered the Egyptian demand to include the Moroccan problem on the agenda. On the first day, Maurice Schumann, the head of the French UN Delegation, objected to that demand, 'en déniant la compétence de l'Assemblée et en assurant que nous nous étions acquittés au Maroc de la mission confiée par le chapitre XI de la Charte aux membres des Nations Unis qui

⁷⁵ *FRUS*, 1951, V, pp.1389-1395, Memcon by Acheson, 9.10.1951.

⁷⁶ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.647, Paris to Washington, no.11922/26, 12.10.1951.

⁷⁷ PRO, FO371/90240, JF10113/10, Jebb to London, no.329, 9.10.1951.

⁷⁸ PRO, FO371/90241, JF10113/35, Harvey to FO, no.645, 6.11.1951.

⁷⁹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.647, Washington to Paris, No.7100/7119, 11.10.1951.

administrent des territoires non autonomes'.⁸⁰ On 9 November, the Committee adopted a Canadian motion recommending that the consideration of the question of placing the item on the GA agenda should be postponed.⁸¹ In fact, by the beginning of November 1951, the French had already agreed with the Anglo-Saxons that it would be best to work for an adjournment,⁸² an agreement on which the Canadian motion was based. This result also seemed to be due to lack of enthusiasm on the Egyptian part.⁸³ The GA plenary session started examining the Moroccan problem on 13 November 1951 and concurred with the General Committee's recommendation on 13 December 1951 by twenty-eight votes to twenty-three with seven abstentions.⁸⁴

This result made the French optimistic about American intentions, presumably because the US vote was regarded as an abstention on the inscription of a colonial matter. On 24 November, Schuman wrote to Guillaume:

[un] changement... est apparu notamment à l'occasion de l'Assemblée des Nations Unis et de la discussion sur la plainte égyptienne... [Cette évolution] représente de la part du Département d'État un effort de compréhension que nous ne devons pas sous-estimer.⁸⁵

This optimism could have allowed the French to take a very stern stand against the Tunisians, shown in their note of 15 December 1951.⁸⁶

However, this French speculation was only an illusion. A State Department paper dated 21 November 1951 once again argued that the US government should pursue a 'middle-of-the-road policy' towards Morocco. Moreover, American opinion was very critical of the US abstention.⁸⁷ In addition, the French had found the Sultan's attitude defiant during the UN session. On 18 November, Mohammed V had made a speech at the 24th anniversary of his accession to the throne, referring to the memoranda he had tabled to France in the autumn of 1950:

Les mémoires... traduisent notre désir de voir les relations franco-marocaines définies dans une convention garantissant au Maroc sa pleine souveraineté..., tout en sauvegardant les intérêts des divers éléments résidant dans notre empire. Nous ne

⁸⁰ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre, Schuman vol.97, Note, 9.11.1951.

⁸¹ Ibid., Note, no.110, 10.11.1951. The countries that supported this were Canada, Dominican Republic, the US, France, Norway, and the UK. Those who opposed were Iraq, Poland, the USSR, and Yugoslavia.

⁸² PRO, FO371/95737, UP2021/3, Record of a meeting of the UK Delegation to the UNGA, 7.11.1951.

⁸³ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/10-2551, Bruce to Washington, no.2440, 25.10.1951. According to Bruce, the Egyptians were offering instead moderation of their attitude on the Moroccan matter with the aim of receiving French support in the dispute with the British over the Suez Canal treaty of 1936. The Egyptian government was attempting to create a split between the two colonial powers.

⁸⁴ *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1951, pp.357-359. The US and the UK voted for this resolution.

⁸⁵ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.159, Rome to Rabat, no.1037/1039, 24.11.1951.

⁸⁶ Chapter 1, Section 3.

⁸⁷ Chapter 3, footnote 73.

cessions d'espérer depuis lors l'ouverture de négociation à ce sujet...⁸⁸

Thus the Sultan was planning to call for independence once again. However, as will be argued in Chapter 4, he was so cautious that his next step would only be taken in the spring of 1952.

⁸⁸ *L'Année Politique*, 1951, p.299.

Chapter 3: The UN debates and Franco-Tunisian negotiations; Tunisia, January 1952 to December 1952

3.1 Bourguiba's return to Tunisia

It was Bourguiba's return to Tunisia on 2 January 1952 that brought about a radical change to the evolution of Tunisian affairs. Since he left Tunisia just before the February 1951 agreements, he had been promoting the nationalist cause in a number of countries.¹ Immediately after his arrival, he led a strong campaign in favour of the recourse of the problem to the UN. In addition, the Bey was reportedly keen to seek popularity among the Tunisian people by means of 'sa collusion avec le Néo-Destour'.² Inside the Tunisian government, the moderates such as Prime Minister Chenik tried to prevent UN recourse, but Bourguiba's speech on 8 January in Monastir, the town of his birth on the mid-eastern coast, pressed the Tunisian Ministers into a decision by stating: 'le peuple tunisien était disposé à verser son sang et à se charger de saisir lui-même l'O.N.U.'.³ Although the Bey and Chenik were still hesitant, Bourguiba finally succeeded in persuading almost all the Ministers of the Tunisian government on 12 January.⁴ Bourguiba thus challenged overtly the very principle of French control of Tunisia.

The new Resident-General Jean de Hauteclocque arrived in Tunis on the following day. It was on 14 January 1952 that Salah Ben Youssef and Badra, Tunisian Ministers who had come to Paris the previous day, submitted a note to the UN Secretary-General, Trygve Lie, stating that Tunisia was convinced that the UNSC would be able to resolve the Franco-Tunisian dispute.⁵ This had all the Tunisian ministers' signatures but not the Bey's signature. The Tunisian request fundamentally changed the character of the problem, for this problem was highly likely to be brought to the UN in 1952 with the help of Arab countries. Furthermore, the US government was considered not unwilling to take up this problem because its failure to vote for the Moroccan problem's inscription of the previous year had been severely criticised by American opinion.⁶ France could not tolerate the Tunisian move, since this was a clear violation of the

¹ Prior to his departure for Tunis, Bourguiba was reported as stating: 'there is no precedent for a foreigner participating in the political institutions of a country in which he has not been integrated by accepting its nationality.' NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.72/1-252, no.3950, Bruce to Acheson, 2.1.1952.

² MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.358, Tunis to Paris, no.12/19, 5.1.1952.

³ *Ibid.*, Tunis to Paris, no.23/26, 8.1.1952.

⁴ *Ibid.*, Tunis to Paris, no.44/52, 11.1.1952; Tunis to Paris, no.53, 12.1.1952.

⁵ *L'Année Politique*, 1952, p.181.

⁶ Chapter 2, p.53.

protectorate treaty. The UN, they maintained, must not intervene in their domestic matters. Likewise, they feared that violent anti-French activities were likely to increase in order to attract international attention and that the Bey and the nationalists would be encouraged to resist the French plan, once the problem was debated on the international scene.⁷

It was already rumoured that the Tunisians desired recourse to the UN through the good offices of Sir Zafrullah Khan, the Pakistani Foreign Minister.⁸ The Arab League was reportedly exercising strong pressure on him to bring the matter to the SC.⁹ On 16 January, Maurice Schumann, the French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, asked Jebb to advise the Pakistani government not to cede to the pressure imposed by the Arabs. Jebb promised ‘d’entrer immédiatement en consultation avec sa délégation, et le cas échéant, avec Londres, en vue de ‘faire ce qu’il pourrait’ pour... aider [les Français].’¹⁰ In fact, on 17 January, the FO instructed Jebb to contact Zafrullah and persuaded him not to raise the Tunisian question.¹¹

The French countered the Tunisian move in a radical manner. The Quai d’Orsay instructed Hauteclercque on 18 January to arrest and expel Bourguiba and other Neo-Destour leaders from Tunis to provincial villages. This was done on the grounds that they had appealed to Tunisians to provoke trouble throughout Tunisia, such as the general strike on 17 January at Bizerta, a city on the northern coast, in order to attract international attention. In the absence of a regular French government, the decision on these instructions was taken by a Ministerial Committee that included René Pfeiffer, Robert Schuman, Georges Bidault, Edgar Faure and Maurice Schumann among others.¹²

The Arab countries, for their part, were seeking the involvement of the Anglo-Saxons, as they wished to avoid an outright confrontation with France. On 18 January 1952, Zafrullah Khan told the British and American UN delegations: ‘il serait prêt à s’abstenir de toute intervention s’il savait que les gouvernements britannique ou américain se proposaient d’agir comme médiateurs entre Français et Tunisiens.’ The UK delegation refrained from answering.¹³ On 21 January, Mohamed Fadhl al-Jamali, the Iraqi Foreign Minister, also asked both countries for arbitration, but the British response was

⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.361, Hoppenot to Paris, no.354/356, 28.3.1952.

⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.358, Karachi to Paris, no.35/37, 16.1.1952.

⁹ *Ibid.*, Paris to Karachi, no.30/32, 16.1.1952.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, Paris to Tunis, 16.1.1952. ‘Sa’ refers to ‘pakistanaise’.

¹¹ PRO, FO371/97090, J1041/16, FO minute, by Strang, 17.1.1952.

¹² *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, p.673, footnote 3; PRO, FO371/97090, JF1041/3, Tunis to FO, no.3, 18.1.1952. On that day, Faure was elected as Prime Minister.

¹³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.358, London to Paris, no.260/263, 19.1.1952.

negative.¹⁴ Anthony Eden, the British Foreign Minister, met Zafrullah two days later, but only urged caution on the Pakistani part.¹⁵

In fact, these British attitudes reflected advice from Sir Oliver Harvey, the British Ambassador in Paris. He had argued on 17 January, one day before Zafrullah's approach, that the British should never 'undertake to try to influence the French to pursue a more moderate course' for the following reason.

discussion in the UN might have embarrassing consequences, but the effect on Anglo-French relations of any attempt on our part to intervene in the conduct of their Tunisian affairs would be infinitely worse. They would be unlikely to listen to any advice we might give them and would only resent it.¹⁶

Thus he insisted that Britain, as a major ally of France, should not tender any advice to the French, even at the risk of the Arabs' bringing the matter before the UN.¹⁷ He reasoned that damage to Anglo-French relations would make the prospect of solutions remote. The British were afraid that their intervention would produce deep-seated French suspicions that the Anglo-Saxons secretly wanted France out of its overseas territories including North Africa.¹⁸

Roger Allen, the head of the FO African Department, minuted:

Although the French have behaved unwisely in many respects, we are bound on general grounds to support them. Moreover, on the particular case at issue HMG have themselves a substantial interest in preventing the discussion of the internal affairs of non-self-governing territories in the United Nations.¹⁹

Thus the FO believed that they, as a fellow colonial power, had to support the French position in North Africa, if not necessarily to individual French policies, by keeping the problem off the UN agenda. They believed so particularly because they felt there would be serious repercussions in Britain's own overseas territories if they allowed international intervention over this problem. The prevailing British view was that they should refuse any advice on a solution to the problem at the risk of the problem being taken up unless the French wanted it, and that only after Arab-Asian countries decided to put the matter on the UN agenda, should the British try to disrupt their move.

¹⁴ El Mechat, *Les Chemins*, pp.166-167. No documents containing the American reaction to this matter have been found.

¹⁵ PRO, FO371/97091, JF1041/24 FO, the African Department to Paris, 6.2.1952.

¹⁶ PRO, FO371/97090, JF1041/7, Harvey to FO, no.38, 19.1.1952.

¹⁷ The British had already adopted this position in March 1951. Chapter 2, pp.45-46.

¹⁸ In April 1951, Harvey had already pointed to this point. Chapter 2, footnote 43.

¹⁹ PRO, FO371/97091, JF1041/25, FO Minute, 23.1.1952.

On the other hand, the French were attempting to force the Tunisians to accept the French plan of December 1951. On 15 January 1952, Maurice Schumann instructed Hauteclercque to protest gravely to the Bey that the French government rejected the Tunisian UN referral and demanded that the Bey dismiss the Chenik government.²⁰ The following day, Hauteclercque requested Chenik's departure, arguing that it was no longer possible to resume negotiations unless the Tunisians withdrew their demands in the UN.²¹ On 24 January, Hauteclercque again had talks with the Bey and Chenik and demanded that the Bey make a public appeal for the restoration of peace and order. The latter declined to do so, although he authorised Hauteclercque to issue such an appeal in the Bey's name. The Bey, however, refused to recall the two Tunisian ministers and to withdraw the appeal to the UN.²² On 30 January, Hauteclercque tabled a note to the Bey, which repeated the demand of the December 1951 note for the establishment of mixed commissions, with the aim of examining the municipal and representative problems.²³

The cool British attitude made the Arabs realise that they could not count on Britain's arbitration and promoted their decision to turn publicly to the UN. On 30 January, fourteen Arab-Asian countries decided to address to the chairmen of both the UNSC and the UNGA with the purpose of drawing their attention to the grave Tunisian situation by referring to French actions which 'constituent une menace à la paix et à la sécurité internationale'.²⁴ On the same day, the French approached the GA chairman, insisting that the cause of the Tunisian crisis should be entirely attributed to the Bey and the Tunisian ministers.²⁵ Subsequently, Zafrullah Khan spoke to a French official about 'l'éventuelle nécessité d'une action positive aux Nations Unies dans le cas où les relations franco-tunisiennes ne se détendraient pas dans un avenir prochain'.²⁶ Finally, on 4 February 1952, a meeting of the Arab-Asian UN delegations concluded that they should seize this opportunity to bring the problem before the SC.²⁷

On 5 February, the Tunisians rejected the French note of 30 January. They replied that it was too vague on the issue of French nationals' participation in public institutions, and that the French would have to terminate marshal law, which violated the principle

²⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.358, Paris to Tunis, no.35/39, 15.1.1952.

²¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.384, Tunis to Paris, no.482, 5.3.1952.

²² FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.673-674, Bruce to the State Department, 25.1.1952.

²³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.384, l'Evolution politique de la Tunisie depuis Juin 1950 et la Crise de Janvier-Avril 1952, 4.1952; FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.674-675, Editorial Note.

²⁴ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.359, Note pour le Ministre, undated. The participants were Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Burma, Egypt, Ethiopia, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Liberia, Pakistan, Syria and Yemen.

²⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.358, Note, 30.1.1952.

²⁶ Ibid.

²⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.359, Note, 5.2.1952.

of Tunisian sovereignty.²⁸ The Tunisians had also approached the Americans. At the end of January 1952, one Tunisian Minister presented the nationalist case to Jernegan by stressing the moderate nature of Tunisian requests for greater autonomy and that the appeal to the UN was in the mildest possible form.²⁹

Another problem was raised concerning the issue of visas to Salah Ben Youssef and Badra, who were staying in Paris. On 6 February they requested visas from the US Embassy in Paris, to visit New York as the SC was to be transferred from Paris to New York on 15 February. The French believed that the two Tunisian ministers wished to present their nationalist case in the UN, so they warned the Americans of 'les graves inconvénients et la pénible impression' which the issuance of visas could produce. The Americans replied that they feared their refusal of visas could cause 'une publicité beaucoup plus dommageables que bienfaisants.'³⁰ Their apprehension came partly from the fact that the two Tunisian ministers had diplomatic passports issued by the French Resident-General in Tunisia, but it also came from the fact that their refusal would give a bad impression to the Arab-Asian countries. In view of American indecisiveness, the Quai d'Orsay decided on 14 February to terminate the two Tunisian ministers' diplomatic passports. This measure deprived the State Department of the grounds to issue visas and averted potential embarrassment. On the same day, the Americans notified Bonnet that this measure was welcomed in Washington.³¹

The Americans were increasingly concerned with the development of Tunisian affairs, all the more because of the UN debates on Morocco in the previous year. The introduction of the problem in the UN gave them a similar dilemma to the visa case. Having been informed that Paris was considering changes to the Tunisian government in order to achieve a breakthrough, Jernegan proposed on 14 February that the State Department warn the French that they were 'indulging in wishful thinking.' The main points of his proposal lay in persuading them to recognise that the Neo-Destour was a dominant fact of life, and that the appeal to the UN was a natural and logical reaction of dissatisfied nationalists.³²

The US Embassy in Paris agreed with Jernegan to approach the French. Therefore, eight days later, the State Department instructed the Embassy in Paris to present this proposal to them, arguing:

²⁸ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.674-675, Editorial Note.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, pp.672-673, Jernegan to the State Department, 21.1.1952.

³⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.359, Note, 9.2.1952.

³¹ *Ibid.*, Washington to Paris, no.1059/1061, 14.2.1952.

³² *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.676-678, Jernegan to the State Department, 14.2.1952.

[the] best hope [of] keeping [the] Tunisian case out of SC is by resumption [of] de facto negotiations between the French and Tunisians. If [the] issue is posed in SC, [the] US Delegation would be obliged to follow [its] traditional policy of not opposing discussions there.

Thus the State Department warned the French that they would have to accept discussions if the case was brought to the SC.³³ However, as will be argued below, the Americans had in fact not reached a decision as to their attitude when the problem was put to a vote for inscription on the SC agenda.

3.2 The UNSC debates

In late February 1952, Paris received the information from New York that on 20 February the Pakistani government had decided to bring the matter to the UN.³⁴ On 28 February, Ahmad Shah Bokhari, Pakistan's Permanent Representative at the UN, called on Ernest Gross, the Deputy US Representative at the UN, stating that the Asian-Arab group would bring the matter before the SC. Moreover, he requested that the US government take the lead in presenting the case, or at least cooperate with the Asian-Arab group. However, Gross only promised to confer with him as soon as he had further information from Washington.³⁵

On 1 March 1952, Jebb told the French that the Pakistani representative had informed him of its government's decision.³⁶ Two days later, the FO instructed the British UN delegation to give maximum support to the French in keeping Tunisia off the agenda, emphasising that French-Tunisian relations were essentially a matter of domestic jurisdiction and therefore that the matter was outside the SC's proper sphere. What was feared in London was that debates on the Tunisian problem would set a precedent, thereby allowing UN interference in Britain's overseas territories.³⁷

Seeing a clearer perspective of the problem being brought to the UN, on 5 March, the Quai d'Orsay sent the following instructions to Washington, New York, London and other capitals.

³³ *Ibid.*, p.679, The Chargé in France (Bonsal) to the State Department, 15.2.1952; *Ibid.*, pp.680-681, The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in France, 22.2.1952.

³⁴ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.359, Note, 20.2.1952.

³⁵ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.682-684, The US Representative at the UN (Austin) to the State Department, no.554, 28.2.1952.

³⁶ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.360, New York to Paris, no.59, 1.3.1952.

³⁷ PRO, FO371/97092, JF1041/47, FO to New York, no.78, 3.3.1952; JF1041/46, FO to New York, no.74, 1.3.1952.

Nous ne devons négliger aucun effort pour inciter la délégation pakistanaise, par l'entreprise de gouvernement ou de représentations amies, à renoncer à ce projet ou tout au moins à l'ajourner...

Vous pourrez à cette occasion faire valoir à vos interlocuteurs que toute initiative tendant à saisir les Nations Unies serait en l'occurrence sans objet puisque nous dénions la compétence de l'Organisation et nous nous opposerons formellement à l'inscription de la question à l'ordre du jour du Conseil.³⁸

This was the basic French position with regard to the UN. The French were adamant that they should prevent UN debate on the Tunisian problem, since it was regarded as being under France's jurisdiction. If this proved impossible, the French intended to postpone the debate for as long as possible. In either case, they considered support from Washington and London essential.

On 6 March, Jebb visited René Massigli, the French Ambassador in London, to enquire about French tactics in the case of a UN debate. Jebb explained two options. The first was to oppose the inscription of the problem on the agenda. To prevent that, he continued, at least five oppositions or five abstentions were required. The FO preferred this option while, in Jebb's opinion, the Americans would not oppose the inscription itself. The second was to accept the inscription and to contest the SC's competence to discuss this problem. He personally recommended the second option because this would be 'plus net et d'un effet politique plus certain',³⁹ taking into consideration the envisaged US position. Thus Jebb believed it desirable that the French should accept the inscription, on the assumption that at any rate France's veto could successfully block any anti-French resolutions.

In Paris, urgent efforts were being made to formulate a new reform plan in Tunisia in order to counter the Arabs' move in the UN. Along with the Americans, the French considered that the immediate resumption of Franco-Tunisian negotiations was the best way of avoiding a UN debate. François Mitterrand (UDSR), the Minister of State in charge of examining the Tunisian question, developed a liberal plan, inspired by the principle of dual-citizenship; that is, French settlers who had lived in Tunisia for five years would gain Tunisian citizenship and thereby participate in Tunisian political institutions. His plan consisted of, firstly, a government composed only of Tunisian ministers, secondly, a Tunisian representative assembly, thirdly, an economic and financial council with consultative power, and fourthly the Franco-Tunisian agreements

³⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.360, Paris to Washington, no.3753, 5.3.1952.

³⁹ Ibid., London to Paris, no.1088/1096, 6.3.1952.

which would guarantee French interests. This was welcomed by Tunisian nationalists but severely opposed by French settlers.⁴⁰

On the other hand, the Quai d'Orsay prepared a note in mid-February 1952 sketching out possible solutions of the three principal pending issues: a legislative national assembly, governmental reorganisation and the recruitment of public officials.⁴¹ As opposed to Mitterrand's plan, this note demonstrated the Quai's persistent determination to prevent the Tunisian people gaining any real power. Firstly, as for the envisaged legislative assembly, it argued that there were two possible solutions. The first was the establishment of a single assembly, but the Quai considered that the Tunisians would hardly accept the situation that 'dans la future Assemblée la moitié des sièges soit réservée aux Français au cette qualité.' Dual nationality was, therefore, proposed but this might enable the Tunisians to call for reciprocity, whereby they could enjoy double nationality in France. The second solution was the establishment of two assemblies. The first assembly would be composed of the Tunisians while in the second, an Economic Council, the French would play a key role. The latter's remit would cover budgetary and economic affairs.

Secondly, regarding the governmental reorganisation, this note pointed to the Tunisian wish for a government composed exclusively of Tunisian ministers, apart from Defence and Foreign Affairs, but the Quai rejected the formation of such a government as premature. This note also indicated that it was out of the question to allow the Tunisians the control of internal security, as otherwise French settlers' security could not be guaranteed. Lastly, regarding the recruitment of public officials, access would be open to more Tunisian people than the December 1951 plan. Contrary to these three questions, the Quai d'Orsay's attitude became less intransigent over the issue of the French Union; it was abandoning the idea of Tunisia's full participation in the future. Nevertheless, it noted: 'on peut concevoir un accord bi-latéral dont l'esprit ne serait pas très différent et qui pourrait même comporter une participation du gouvernement tunisien au Haut-Conseil de l'Union.'

Another Quai d'Orsay note of 28 February 1952 showed persisting but unfounded French optimism.

[les Ministres tunisiens] demandent que soit immédiatement définie l'autonomie interne que nous leurs avons promise et que soient précisés les moyens de parvenir

⁴⁰ *L'Année Politique*, 1952, p.193. This plan's outline was also found in *Le Monde* of 22 March 1952.

⁴¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.384, Note par la Direction d'Afrique Levant, 18.2.1952.

sans délai au but. Il est inévitable que le désaccord porte sur la durée des étapes. Toutefois une solution paraît possible sur ce point.⁴²

Thus the Quai failed to understand, or deliberately ignored, the structure of internal autonomy that the Tunisians called for, viewing that the difference of position was just about the duration of each step to ‘internal autonomy’. Perhaps this optimism was reflected in the firm French attitude towards the Chenik Government. Similarly, on 5 March, Hauteclocque noted that it was desirable to open negotiations with a new Tunisian government, because

[s]i... la politique de persuasion et de conciliation... devait échouer, il faudrait immanquablement recourir à une solution de contraint; beaucoup de Tunisiens... non seulement s'y attendent, mais encore le souhaitent... [La] démission [de Chenik] forcée ne paraîtra d'ailleurs pas une régression politique, si nous soumettons immédiatement notre projet de réformes au nouveau Gouvernement.⁴³

Hauteclocque assumed that the Tunisian people would welcome Chenik’s dismissal as long as it allowed the French plan to proceed. Creating the appearance of setting the French plan in motion was considered urgent in order to prevent the SC debates of the Tunisian problem. Thus this optimism was dominant amongst the French, and in any case the fall of the Faure government on 29 February 1952 meant the end of Mitterrand’s more liberal plan.⁴⁴

The French were continuing to make diplomatic efforts to thwart UN debates about Tunisia. Francis Lacoste, the Alternate Permanent French Representative at the UN, met Gross on 12 March 1952, asking him about the possible US attitude when this problem was taken up. The latter’s reply was quite evasive: he had informed Bokhari that the US would not actively oppose the inscription. Lacoste reported to Paris: ‘S'il refuse à Bokhari l'appui effectif que ce dernier sollicite, il n'en réserve pas moins à notre égard sa liberté d'action...’⁴⁵

⁴² Ibid., Note, 28.2.1952. This note also examined the way of guaranteeing the rights and interests of France and French settlers. Two ways were envisaged; one was ‘dispositions incluses dans la constitution tunisienne ou dans des textes organiques interne’, and the other was ‘garanties accordées par des conventions diplomatiques’. However, the disadvantages of both options were pointed out; ‘la première parce qu'elle remet aux mains des autorités publiques tunisiennes qui seront nécessairement entraînées à demander de plus en plus d'indépendance... la seconde parce que l'histoire récente montre que les Gouvernements arabes n'hésitent pas à dénoncer unilatéralement les Traités librement consentis.’ There was no decision taken at this stage, but, significantly, it was the second approach that the French government would take after the summer of 1954.

⁴³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.384, Tunis to Paris, no.482, 5.3.1952.

⁴⁴ Antoine Pinay was elected as French Prime Minister on 6 March 1952.

⁴⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.360, Hoppenot to Paris, no.131/144, 13.3.1952.

The French government felt the need to approach the State Department at a higher level. On 19 March, Franco-American talks were held in Washington in which Bonnet, Acheson, and other American officials participated.⁴⁶ They discussed two questions; the first was about the inscription of the item on the agenda, and the second was the SC's competence in the event of the item being inscribed. Bonnet discovered that the Americans did not share the French view on either question, however. Acheson mentioned that the Americans would not vote against inscribing the item and that the State Department in general viewed the SC as being competent to deal with the problem.⁴⁷ Bonnet objected that the item should not be placed on the SC agenda and that the French would vote against inscription. He explained that the current Tunisian question was an internal one that the UN had nothing to do with. Nevertheless, Acheson added: 'il espère vivement que la question sera reprise sans tarder [par le gouvernement français] et que des conversations franco-tunisiennes vont pouvoir s'engager. Si la nouvelle en était annoncée officiellement, l'appui... serait beaucoup plus efficace.' Bonnet, therefore, was able to report to Paris that the Americans did not want the problem to come to the SC, as this would by definition force the US to choose between France and Tunisia, and ultimately, France and the Arab world.

Acheson's remark prompted the French Council of Ministers to adopt on 21 March 1952 a plan based on the Quai's proposal.⁴⁸ Firstly, the French admitted that a 'homogenous' government was a future goal, but this was rather a sugar-coat word to induce the Tunisians into accepting the plan. The French also denied the Tunisian people any rights to foreign affairs and internal and external security. Secondly, the French did finally approve the creation of a Tunisian national assembly. However, they were committed to the idea of *co-souveraineté*, because they proposed to establish the economic council which was to represent French settlers' interests. The Tunisian assembly would remain unable to discuss important issues like budgets. Thirdly, the plan explicitly noted: 'Le Résident Général conserve l'ensemble des attributions qu'il détient actuellement en tant que dépositaire des pouvoirs de la République.' It was planned that the Resident-General would continue to endorse the Bey's decrees of a judicial and religious character, while this power over other ministers' decrees would be

⁴⁶ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.690-692, Memcon, Washington, 19.3.1952; MAE, Tunisie, 1944-1955, vol.361, Washington to Paris, no.1782/92, 19.3.1952.

⁴⁷ In these conversations, one American official even argued that the US delegation should vote in favour of the inscription. He continued that in view of the SC's peculiar voting procedures, where seven votes were required to inscribe an item on the agenda, an abstention was tantamount to a negative vote.

⁴⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.384, Paris to Tunis, 21.3.1952. Mitterrand also put forward his plan to leading political figures on 21 March. *L'Année Politique*, 1952, p.199.

removed soon after the establishment of the Administrative Tribunal, which was designed to judge the legality of ministers' decrees.⁴⁹ Fourthly, this plan assured French participation in municipal assemblies in major cities while the *Conseil des Caïdat* in other areas was to be reorganised so that it could exercise control over the budget.⁵⁰

On the morning of 25 March, Hauteclocque warned the Bey that he would not present the reform programme for discussion unless the present Cabinet was dismissed from office. The Bey replied that it was impossible, but Hauteclocque demanded the dismissal by three o'clock that day.⁵¹ The Bey and the Cabinet once again refused. As in January 1952, France's reaction was high-handed; the Resident-General arrested all the Tunisian Ministers except Salah Ben Youssef and Badra at midnight and ordered their temporary exile from Tunis to Kebili (in Southern Tunisia).⁵² In fact, Hauteclocque had, on this day, received instructions from Paris that gave him 'les mains libres' in order to resume dialogue. Two days later, much to the nationalists' surprise, the Bey accepted the French plan.⁵³

The US State Department was quite wary of these French moves. The Americans doubted whether the French plan would be acceptable to the Tunisians and expressed grave concern over the arrest of the Tunisian ministers, even though some State Department officials considered the French plan helpful in breaking the present impasse between both parties.⁵⁴ On 26 March, Bonnet wrote optimistically to Paris: 'Nous pouvons compter sur l'appui des autorités américaines pour essayer d'empêcher le dépôt de la plainte des Etats arabes et asiatiques.'⁵⁵ However, what the Americans intended was to warn the French once more of the possible consequence of their firm policy. Secretary Acheson instructed the Embassy in France on the following day to approach Foreign Minister Schuman.

[The] [n]ew situation created by arbitrary French actions in detaining Chenik and other Tunisian leaders has inflamed [the] situation to such [an] extent that only [the] most prompt French action to begin negotiations would warrant [the] US in

⁴⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.384, Paris to Tunis, 21.3.1952; vol.385, Déclaration du Gouvernement Français relative au Plan de Réformes en Tunisie, 19.6.1952. The Administrative Tribunal was officially proposed to the Tunisians in June 1952, but, as will be noted later, this did not mean the transfer of significant powers to the Tunisians.

⁵⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.384, Copie des Instructions envoyées to M. de Hauteclocque. 22.3.1952. For the *Conseil des Caïdat*, see Introduction, p.11.

⁵¹ FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.693-695, Jernegan to the State Department, no.124, 25.3.1952.

⁵² Ibid., pp.696-697, Jernegan to the State Department, no.127, 26.3.1952.

⁵³ *L'Année Politique*, 1952, p.200; It was reported to Washington that Hauteclocque threatened the Bey with deposition. FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, p.714, Jernegan to the State Department, 3.4.1952.

⁵⁴ For example, *Ibid.*, pp.695-696, Bonsal to the State Department, no.5851, 25.3.1952.

⁵⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.361, Bonnet to Paris, no.1964/1969, 27.3.1952.

attempting [to] forestall immediate inscription of [the] Tunisian matter on [the] S.C. agenda...⁵⁶

The appointment of Shaheddine Baccouche as the new Prime Minister was announced on 28 March, which provoked a nationalist demonstration in front of the Bey's palace.⁵⁷ It was also made public that a mixed commission would be convened on 24 April 1952 with the aim of examining the French plan.⁵⁸ This development was far from what the Americans had expected, but, nevertheless, affected their attitudes in the UN. Having obtained an excuse, they were eager to dissuade the Pakistanis from going to the UN. On that day, Acheson instructed Gross in New York to inform Pakistani Delegate Bokhari:

Now [it] appears French-Tunisian negotiations based on [the] French reform program will soon be underway. Since we believe French-Tunisian negotiations are [the] best means towards [the] solution [of the] problem, we consider SC consideration at this time undesirable.

Bonnet wrote to Paris that these instructions were entirely satisfactory to the French. He added that one American official had stated that the American delegation would be instructed to abstain in the case of a vote on the problem's inscription or, maybe, even to vote against.⁵⁹

However, the Pakistanis did not abandon the idea of taking up the Tunisian problem. On the contrary, Bokhari told Lacoste on 28 March: "il s'attendait "plus que jamais" à être appelé à d'amoindrir à ses yeux, et aux yeux de ses collègues asiatiques et africaines... le bien fondé d'un recours au Conseil".⁶⁰ Bokhari also approached one American UN delegate on the same day, describing the situation in the following way:

recent French arrests in Tunisia now raise a question as to whom [the] French will negotiate with and that it appears... that '[the] French will be sitting on both sides of table'.

He thus pointed out that the French interlocutors were not those who represented the Tunisian people. Rather than vote against the inclusion of the item on the SC agenda, Bokhari urged the US to abstain. The US official confined himself to replying that 'under present circumstances [the] US cannot support SC consideration.'⁶¹

⁵⁶ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.700-701, Acheson to the Embassy in France, no.5753, 27.3.1952.

⁵⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.384, Paris to Tunis, no.692, 29.3.1952; *L'Année Politique*, 1952, p.203.

⁵⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.384, Paris to Tunis, no.694, 29.3.1952.

⁵⁹ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.703-704, Acheson to the US Mission at the UN, no.362, 28.3.1952; MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.361, Bonnet to Paris, no.2027/2030, 28.3.1952.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, Hoppenot to Paris, no.376/378, 28.3.1952.

⁶¹ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.704-705, Austin to the State Department. no.656, 29.3.1952.

At this point the French noted the British government's retreat on its position; it was now more inclined to abstain if the inscription of the item was voted on. On 28 March, after receiving news of the appointment of a new Tunisian Prime Minister, the UK representative Jebb told French and US delegates that 'under his present instructions if four other members were against inclusion [the] UK would abstain or vote against. If there were not four others against, Jebb said he might have to vote for inclusion; he thought probably, however, he would be instructed to abstain.'⁶² In fact, the FO instructed Jebb on the same day that he should abstain if the US voted for the inclusion but France voted against.⁶³ This modification of the British position was probably due to Jebb's proposition on the previous day. He had argued:

If the French insist on contesting the adoption of the agenda even without American support, they are almost bound to lose... [W]e should vote with the Americans and not incur the odium of supporting the French in a lost cause... [I]t is difficult to maintain that the SC should not even consider a complaint of this sort and these difficulties... greatly increased after the drastic action the French have now taken in Tunisia. In view of the present position as regards Kashmir, this would surely also be an unfortunate moment for us to come out openly against the Pakistanis over Tunisia.⁶⁴

Presuming that the British vote, either for opposition or abstention, would not influence the result, Jebb suggested that the British follow the American lead in the UN.

On 29 March, Bokhari visited one US delegate at the UN and stated: 'l'acte de saisie pourrait intervenir... le 2 Avril, en vue d'une séance le 3 ou le 4 avril'.⁶⁵ In fact, on 2 April, thirteen Arab-Asian countries submitted a note to the SC chairman, asking him to convene the council immediately in order to examine Tunisian affairs.⁶⁶

Alarmed by these moves, the French increased their efforts to persuade the British not to abstain. On 31 March, Massigli met Sir William Strang, the UK Permanent Under-Secretary. The French ambassador argued that his government was urging Gross to be instructed to vote against, and that the FO should also instruct Jebb to vote against, but Strang replied: 'Jebb would probably abstain.' He added that whether Jebb abstained or not would make no difference since in either event there would not be enough votes to

⁶² *Ibid.*, pp.702-703, Austin to the State Department, no.652, 28.3.1952.

⁶³ PRO, FO371/97094, JF1041/67, FO to New York, no.139, 28.3.1952.

⁶⁴ PRO, FO371/97094, JF1041/67, Jebb to FO, no.147, 27.3.1952.

⁶⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.363, Hoppenot to Paris, no.384/385, 1.4.1952.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, New York to Paris, no.399, 1.4.1952; New York to Paris, no.448/453, 3.4.1952. The participants were, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Burma, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Pakistan, Philippine, Syria and Yemen.

place the item on the agenda.⁶⁷ Maurice Schumann spoke to William Hayter, the British Ambassador in Paris, on 1 April, suggesting that the British vote against. He continued that the French had maintained complete solidarity with the British when the Persian problem was under discussion at the SC.⁶⁸ Massigli approached Foreign Minister Eden two days later, urging him to modify the instructions to Jebb, emphasising that the British vote could affect other countries in the SC.⁶⁹ It was at this moment that, probably under Eden's initiative, the British government changed its position in favour of France. On 3 April, the FO instructed Jebb: 'In view of renewed French representation here, you should vote against inclusion of this item on the agenda, whatever the American line.'⁷⁰

Both the Arabs and the French assumed that many countries would follow the US vote concerning the issue of inscription.⁷¹ Being under strong pressure from both sides, the State Department had not yet decided on its stance. Its indecision also reflected a deep division of opinion inside the government. On 2 April 1952, its UN representative strongly recommended that 'we should vote for inscription' although he added that postponing the consideration of the Tunisian item would be preferable.⁷² Conversely, the Bureau of European Affairs of the State Department had recommended that the US vote against, or, if that position was deemed impossible, abstain. In addition, on 3 April, Eleanor Roosevelt, the Representative at the Seventh Regular Session of the UNGA, strongly pleaded with Acheson that the Americans should not keep the problem off the agenda.⁷³ On the same day, the Quai d'Orsay instructed its delegation in Washington to 'procéder à une dernière et pressante démarche auprès du Département Etat afin qu'il reconsidère son attitude et donne à la délégation américaine au Conseil de Sécurité instruction de voter contre l'inscription'.⁷⁴ Bonnet had talks with a State Department official, highlighting the following points. Firstly, the French reform plan had started to

⁶⁷ PRO, FO371/97094, JF1041/91, Conversation French Ambassador with Strang, 31.3.1952.

⁶⁸ PRO, FO371/97094, JF1041/84, Hayter to FO, no.200, 2.4.1952.

⁶⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.363, London to Paris, no.1566/1569, 3.4.1952.

⁷⁰ PRO, FO371/97094, JF1041/84, Hayter to FO, no.200, 2.4.1952. As for the reason for the change of attitude, Eden later declared in the House of Commons that international discussions could only lead to a deterioration of the Tunisian situation. MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.364, Massigli to Schuman, no.686AL, 24.4.1952. However, as will be noted below, the British motivation lay much more in the avoidance of a precedent in which the UN dealt with a problem of non-self-governing territories. PRO, FO371/97092, JF1041/46, FO to New York, no.74, 1.3.1952; JF1041/47, FO to New York, no.78, 3.3.1952.

⁷¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.360, New York to Paris, no.164, 14.3.1952.

⁷² FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.709-710, Austin to the State Department, no.663, 2.4.1952.

⁷³ She reminded him: 'our action in the GA on Morocco [in 1951] had done us a great deal of harm'. FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.717-718, Memorandum of Telephone Conversation by Evans, Office of the Secretary of State, Washington, 3.4.1952.

⁷⁴ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.363, Paris to Washington, no.5653/5655, 3.4.1952.

make progress, but if it lacked support from outside, the prospect of success would be damaged by ‘les agitateurs locaux’. Secondly, the activities of anti-colonialist countries served the Soviet Union’s interest, by creating a crack within the Atlantic pact.⁷⁵ It was on the night of 3 April, one day before the US delegation at the UN would speak at the SC session, that Acheson decided to abstain on the inscription.⁷⁶ He instructed the delegation on 4 April to make a speech that it would abstain for the reason that ‘at this moment it is more useful to concentrate on the problem of facilitating negotiations between the French and the Tunisians than to engage in debate at this table.’⁷⁷

After all this, the SC rejected the inscription of the Tunisian item on the agenda on 14 April. The delegations from Pakistan, the USSR, Brazil and Chile voted for the inscription, while those of France and the UK voted against. The US, Greece, the Netherlands and Turkey abstained.⁷⁸

Thus the French successfully prevented the Tunisian problem from being discussed in the UNSC. They were satisfied with this outcome, but Hoppenot commented on how precarious the success was.

Le sentiment latent qui persiste dans tous les milieux du Conseil et des Nations Unies... depuis le mois de décembre dernier, va de la désapprobation ouverte à la critique modérée et compréhensive de nos difficultés... [L]e fait que ni nos alliés ni nos amis ne trouvent dans leur appréciation de notre politique tunisienne des éléments suffisants pour s’en dégager, mérite de retenir toute notre attention.⁷⁹

In fact, following the Moroccan debates in the UNGA in the previous year, American public opinion was extremely critical of the US abstention. On 18 April Bonnet noted that ‘[o]n paraît être frappé au Département d’Etat par l’ampleur et l’unanimité de la réaction de la presse’,⁸⁰ stressing that it was not until some progress in Tunisia had been made that US opinion would cease to criticise France.⁸¹

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, Bonnet to Paris, no.2148/2158, 3.4.1952.

⁷⁶ On the morning of 4 April, one British official conveyed the FO’s view to the Americans that their representatives should be instructed to follow the British in voting against. She justified a negative vote on the ground that the inscription would prejudice the real objective of a solution through negotiations. However, the Americans replied that they had already decided to abstain. NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.72/4-452, Memcon, 4.4.1952.

⁷⁷ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.720-721, Acheson to the US Mission at the UN, no.371, 4.4.1952. Acheson was reported to have said at the end of the meeting for the final decision that it was one of the most difficult decisions he had ever had to make. PRO, FO371/97095, JF1041/105, Washington to FO, no.10268/62/52, 4.4.1952.

⁷⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.364, New York to Paris, no.611/612, 14.4.1952.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, New York to Paris, no.647/654, 17.4.1952.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, Bonnet to Paris, no.2521/2523, 18.4.1952.

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, Bonnet to Schuman, no.1922, 18.4.1952.

3.3 Towards a UNGA Special Session

Despite the failure at the SC, the Asia-African countries continued their efforts to put the problem to the UN. As early as 22 April, the thirteen Arab-Asian countries decided to approach other governments with the aim of proposing a GA special session. Under the GA regulation, they were required to collect a majority of member states (at least thirty-one votes) for that purpose, so the Arab-Asians started to canvass the views of Latin American countries' delegations regarding this matter.⁸² On 1 May 1952, the former group held a meeting with the latter, and Hoppenot reported that it was certain that their initiative would receive a favourable reaction from the Latin American [hereafter LA] countries.⁸³

The Arab-Asian countries' new initiative made the State Department consider once again alerting Paris. The Americans feared that, as was the case in the SC, they would be confronted with a choice between France and the Arab world if there were no progress in Franco-Tunisian negotiations. Acheson instructed James Dunn, the newly-appointed US Ambassador in Paris, to convey to the Quai d'Orsay the following message:

- (1) Our decision to abstain... [was] only to give France time to move ahead.
- (2) France should have [the] opportunity [to] negotiate a long-term Tunisian settlement... with substantive content for bringing Tunisia along [the] road to internal autonomy.
- (3) If no immediate progress [is] made on [the] program with substantive content in negotiations with representatives of Tunisian groups... [w]e would... be obliged to reconsider our position.

The message noted that the mixed commission, which had been expected to meet on 24 April, had not yet been established but had been postponed until early May 1952. Coupled with overwhelmingly unfavourable public opinion on the abstention at the SC, the State Department judged it paramount to prompt the French to move ahead.⁸⁴ This message was conveyed to Maurice Schumann on 2 May, only to provoke his surprise. He mentioned: '[the] US position of non-abstaining, if known, would cause dangerous reaction... on French public opinion and more particularly on rep[resentatives] in [the]

⁸² Ibid., New York to Paris, no.678/680, 23.4.1952; Paris to Latin American countries, Circulaire no.59, 25.4.1952.

⁸³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.365, New York to Paris, no.839, 2.5.1952; Secrétariat des Conférences, Note, undated.

⁸⁴ FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.735-737, Acheson to the Embassy in France, no.6353, 29.4.1952.

Parliament. It would raise latter's minds how far [the] solidarity of Atlantic nations could be maintained in solving particular problems'.⁸⁵

On 13 May, the Arab-Asian countries reconfirmed their resolution to take up the matter at a GA special session. They were reported as believing that it might be difficult to collect more than twenty-four or twenty-five votes to support a special session, but that 'si la situation continuait à se détériorer en Tunisie, les hésitants du groupe Latino-Américain cessaient d'hésiter'.⁸⁶ Six days later, they invited several countries' representatives to their meeting, although the French observed that it did not give any encouragement to the Arab-Asians.⁸⁷

Encouraged by the Arab-Asian countries' move, the Tunisian nationalists did not stop their resistance to the French plan. Indeed, as late as mid-May 1952, the mixed commission had not been established because there were no Tunisians disposed to participate.⁸⁸ This being the case, on 13 May, Resident-General Hauteclercque suggested that the French government abandon the mixed commission and instead 'procède à l'octroi unilatéral des réformes' and pointed out that the Americans wished that the French projects should be realised quickly enough to reassure US opinion.⁸⁹ Moreover, on 22 May, the Bey gave Hauteclercque approval to abandon the mixed commission. Following his acceptance of the Chenik Government's dismissal, he was trying to dissociate himself from the nationalist cause. As one French official put it to the Americans, the Bey was now opposed to the idea of a constitutional monarch.⁹⁰ Hauteclercque reported:

[Le Bey], sous la pression du Néo-Destour avait paru s'orienter dans le sens d'une souveraineté constitutionnelle ainsi qu'en témoignait son discours au Trône du 15 mai 1951 tandis que maintenant, sous l'influence de M Baccouche, vraisemblablement, il en revient à la notion traditionnelle de la souveraineté absolue.⁹¹

The French, having been alerted by the State Department, decided to have high-level talks with the Americans. They were desperate to avoid the situation in which the Americans would back the Arab-Asian countries for a GA special session. On 15 May,

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, pp.742-743, Dunn to the State Department, no.6739, 2.5.1952.

⁸⁶ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.365, Hoppenot to Paris, no.1009/1013, 15.5.1952.

⁸⁷ The invitees were the representatives of Norway, Sweden, Denmark, Iceland, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Yugoslavia, Thailand, Ethiopia and Liberia. *Ibid.*, Circulaire no.68, 5.15.1952; Hoppenot to Paris, no.1033/1035, 19.5.1952.

⁸⁸ *L'Année Politique*, 1952, p.212.

⁸⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.385, Hauteclercque to Paris, no.901/906, 11.5.1952.

⁹⁰ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.746-747, Memcon, by McBride, 5.5.1952.

⁹¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.385, Hauteclercque to Paris, no.998/1004, 22.5.1952.

Ambassador Bonnet called on Acheson to prepare for a Schuman-Acheson meeting.⁹² Bonnet emphasised how bad the effects of Franco-American disagreements would be in the UN, only to find Acheson's position unchanged. Acheson replied that before deciding on support, the Americans would need details of the French programmes. Likewise, the Tunisians had also approached the State Department to forestall the French move. On 13 May, Bahi Ladgham, a Neo-Destour leader in charge of international affairs, had mentioned to US officials: 'in envisaging French participation in and control over [the] executive and legislative branches of [the] Tunisian government, they violate [the] French promise of last year to grant internal autonomy.'⁹³

On 28 May 1952, Schuman-Acheson talks on North African affairs took place in Paris. The former emphasised the importance of US support, arguing that the Tunisian nationalists believed the US government would vote for inscription in the UN, and therefore that some agreement should be found between the two countries so that the 'extremists' would not exploit the US position. Acheson, however, did not agree. After explaining the American way of thinking, which was based on traditional sympathy for oppressed people, he stressed that only by publicising French plans could the US government canalise these habits of thought satisfactorily. Nevertheless, when Schuman asked whether his counterpart would make a public statement regarding the necessity of the French presence in North Africa if the French government published the plan, the reply was that 'this was not impossible'.⁹⁴ This agreement was of much significance to the French, as for the first time the US promised support in the case of the French publication of their reform plan.

The conversations prompted the French to resume negotiations. Agreeing to Hauteclocque's proposal of 13 May, Schuman sent instructions to him at the end of May: 'Abandon [la] Commission Mixte'.⁹⁵ On 5 June 1952, Hauteclocque made public the French plan's outline,⁹⁶ and then Schuman announced its details at the French National Assembly on 19 June.⁹⁷ The method of negotiating apart, this plan was in

⁹² *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.751-754, Memcon, by the Acting Deputy of Director, 15.5.1952.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, pp.750-751, The US Representative at the UN to the State Department, no.810, 13.5.1952.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.766-771, US Delegation Minutes of a Meeting, 3.6.1952.

⁹⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.385, Réunion chez M Robert Schuman, 31.5.1952.

⁹⁶ *L'Année Politique*, 1952, p.225. One week after, Acheson declared at the Committee of Foreign Relations of the Senate that he would recognise 'les droits acquis' of France in North Africa, but this was far from what the French had expected as US support at the meeting of 28 May 1952. *Le Monde*, 13.6.1952.

⁹⁷ Before his declaration, the Americans had asked the French to show them the latter's project, so that they could make some suggestions, but had been rejected. *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.772-773, Acheson to the embassy in France, no.7283, 10.6.1952.

essence the same as that of March 1952, but with two minor changes. Firstly, it proposed the establishment of the Administrative Tribunal. To this tribunal, the Resident-General was to have the right to submit all the decrees that he considered illegal. The Administrative Tribunal was not to have the power to examine the Bey's judicial and religious decrees. However, this tribunal would be presided over by a French person chosen by the members of the *Conseil d'Etat* and would be composed of four French members and four Tunisian members, allowing the French to retain a majority. Secondly, this French plan proposed detailed provisions for the two national assemblies. In the legislative council, which would be composed only of Tunisians, the members were to be initially appointed by the Bey's decree, as the Bey would exclusively conserve the legislative power for the time being. They would be progressively substituted by members elected at a local level. This plan explicitly noted that the Financial Council, which would deal with financial and budgetary affairs, would have an equal number of Tunisian and French members.⁹⁸

This plan, however, did not get the approval of the National Assembly. The right wing attacked the government and even demanded Schuman's resignation. One parliamentarian succinctly expressed his anxiety: 'que ferez-vous si l'Assemblée législative homogène que vous envisagez proclame l'indépendance de la Tunisie?' Conversely, left wing politicians like Mitterrand criticised the plan as derisory. Being immensely divided, the National Assembly did not agree to the plan. Neither did this plan receive approval from French settlers nor Tunisian nationalists.⁹⁹

The French declaration on their plan did not successfully hinder the Arab-Asian countries' move. They had decided on 13 June to formally request Trygve Lie to consult sixty member states about a special GA session and one week later, they asked him to convene a special GA session.¹⁰⁰ Under UN regulations, it was by 20 July 1952 that those countries would have to collect thirty-one favourable votes.

To French satisfaction, the British position remained unchanged from that in the SC. On 24 June, Hoppenot reported that the British UN delegation had received instructions to support French efforts to persuade member states' representatives to respond

⁹⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.385, Déclaration du Gouvernement Français relative au Plan de Réformes en Tunisie, Paris, 19.6.1952. Needless to say, despite the expressions used in the French note, the Bey's legislative power was only nominal since it was subject to French control.

⁹⁹ *L'Année Politique*, 1952, pp.225-230.

¹⁰⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.366, Hoppenot to Paris, no.1283/1285, 13.6.1952; Hoppenot to Paris, no.1372/1375, 18.6.1952; Hoppenot to Paris, no.1442/1449, 20.6.1952. The participants were, Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Burma, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Pakistan, the Philippines, Syria, and Yemen.

negatively to the UN Secretary-General's question about a special session.¹⁰¹ Regarding the reason for the British position, Eden noted convincingly:

The interests which we have at stake are so great - no less than the political stability of the Colonial Empire - that I consider it to be essential that we should support the French to the fullest possible extent in keeping Tunisia off any UN agenda... We can hold the position in the Security Council and probably also in the Assembly, whatever the Americans do.¹⁰²

On 25 June, Massigli met Strang, who confirmed that he had already instructed the British Embassy in Washington to persuade the State Department to take a firm position against the envisaged special session. Massigli asked Strang 'd'entreprendre directement auprès des gouvernements sur lesquels Londres a de l'influence, les démarches opportunes.'¹⁰³

It turned out that the Americans did not pose a difficult problem to the French either, although this never meant that they were satisfied with the French programme. Aware of nationalist dissension, State Department officials advised Acheson to refrain from any public declaration of support, contrary to the French hopes that their plan would receive it in accordance with the 28 May agreement.¹⁰⁴ Still, the State Department was opposed to a special session, as the US had every desire to avoid a choice between France and the Arabs, unless it proved impossible. On 24 June, one State Department official spoke on television, stating that the US government was hostile to the convocation of a special session.¹⁰⁵ It was for this reason that, the following day, the Quai d'Orsay was able to note: 'les 31 voix requises pour une telle réunion ne seront pas recueillies'.¹⁰⁶ Three days later, the US delegation replied to Trygve Lie that its government did not concur with the Arab-Asian request.¹⁰⁷

On 2 July 1952, Hauteclerc reported to Paris that the Tunisian Prime Minister Baccouche had handed to the Bey the reform projects of the previous month.¹⁰⁸ Then the Tunisian Council of Ministers started examining them and, late in July proposed a number of minor modifications. The French Resident-General reported that there was close collaboration between the French ministers and Tunisian ministers inside the

¹⁰¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.366, Hoppenot to Paris, no.1474, 24.6.1952.

¹⁰² PRO, FO371/97099, JF1041/176, Eden minute, 28.6.1952.

¹⁰³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.366, no.2904/2908, 25.6.1952.

¹⁰⁴ FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.778-779, Memorandum by Popper to Hickerson, 20.6.1952.

¹⁰⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.366, Washington to Paris, no.4498/4502, 25.6.1952.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., Secrétariat des Conférences, Note pour la Direction d'Afrique-Levant, no.824SC, 25.6.1952.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., New York to Paris, no.1513/1514, 27.6.1952.

¹⁰⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.386, Hauteclerc to Paris, no.1197/1198, 2.7.1952.

government, so the Quai noted: ‘Beaucoup de ces propositions sont d’importances secondaire et ne soulèvent pas de difficultés.’¹⁰⁹

In the UN, seeing Franco-Tunisian negotiations in progress, the prospect of convening a special GA session was disappearing. On 21 July, it was reported from New York to Paris that only ten countries had responded favourably to the thirteen Arab-Asian countries’ request.¹¹⁰ As a result, two days later, the UN Secretary-General informed the member states that he would not call a special session.¹¹¹

3.4 The UNGA and British intervention

On 30 July 1952, the thirteen countries¹¹² handed in a letter to the UN Secretary-General requesting the inscription of the Tunisian problem on the GA agenda. Unlike the SC or a GA special session, it was supposed, the Tunisian item would be inevitably taken up in the GA, given the number of Arab-Asian member states. This was going to provoke different reactions from the Western powers. Neither Paris, London nor Washington could immediately decide on its attitude, each exploring the other two governments’ views. The British wished to avoid influencing the French standpoint, even though the British did not welcome French acceptance of UN debates since it could have repercussions in their overseas territories.¹¹³ In fact, as will be argued later, the basic British position was to let France keep the initiative in Tunisian and Moroccan affairs, while hoping to guide French policy in the direction they considered desirable. In contrast, reflecting the severe criticism of their abstention in the SC vote in April,¹¹⁴ the Americans strongly believed that it was very difficult for them to oppose the inscription. Rather, they wanted the French to accept the inscription but, nonetheless, did not want anti-French resolutions passed in the GA.

Several Quai d’Orsay officials had already started to have doubts about the French tactics of keeping the Tunisian problem off the UN agenda. On 25 July, Lacoste sent a telegram to Paris:

¹⁰⁹ *Ibid.*, Hauteclercque to Paris, no.1232/1233, 19.7.1952; Note pour le Ministre, 22.7.1952.

¹¹⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.367, Lacoste to Paris, no.1693/1694, 21.7.1952.

¹¹¹ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.784-785, Editorial Note.

¹¹² The same countries as those who had requested a special GA session.

¹¹³ The FO noted: ‘we are not seeking to influence [France] in any way as to the attitude she should adopt in the forthcoming Assembly.’ PRO, FO371/97102, JF1041/241, Draft brief for the Secretary of State for the visit of Mr. Pearson. 9.9.1952. The French were aware of the British position. The French Embassy in London noted that the British were not willing to define their policy before knowing the French position in the UN. MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.368, London to Paris, no.3608, 14.8.1952.

¹¹⁴ As the GA session came closer, public and press criticism in this regard was quite often referred to inside the State Department. For instance, *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.786-788, Acheson to the Embassy in France, no.548, 30.7.1952.

De nombreux Etats... considèrent que, dans le cas où les négociations franco-tunisiennes actuellement en cours n'auraient pas abouti, au moment de l'ouverture de la prochaine session ordinaire de l'Assemblée, c'est-à-dire à la mi-octobre, à un accord dont le gouvernement tunisien se déclare satisfait, l'Assemblée devra se saisir de la question tunisienne...

Le seul fait de notre part d'accepter... l'inscription à l'ordre du jour, provoquerait sur l'Assemblée... une impression profonde, et très favorable.¹¹⁵

Simply put, he insisted that as the problem would be certainly debated in the GA, the French acceptance of such debates was desirable because it would soften the Arab-Asian countries' attitudes.

In Tunisia, despite French expectations in early July, there had been no progress in Franco-Tunisian dialogues. On 22 July, the Bey sent a message to Auriol, which surprised the French. He stated that, contrary to press suggestions that he had implicitly accepted the French plan put forward at the beginning of July, he had not even received the draft from Baccouche.¹¹⁶ Irrespective of whether he had really received it or not, the Bey was seemingly engaged in dilatory tactics, aware of the prospect of the Tunisian problem being discussed in the next GA session. Undoubtedly, his change of attitude reflected his fear that he might be overthrown if he was divided from the nationalists, as was the case with King Farouk of Egypt.¹¹⁷ On 1 August 1952, he summoned the *Conseil des Quarante*, a meeting which forty people attended including Tahar Ben Ammar and members of the Neo-Destour, the Vieux-Destour and the UGTT, to discuss the June 1952 French programme. Hauteclocque commented: 'cette réunion convoquée par le Bey à l'insu de son Gouvernement et du Résident-Général représente un acte caractérisé d'indépendance'.¹¹⁸

On 6 August, a State Department official talked with Bonnet about US attitudes in the UN and suggested that the French government accept the inscription of the Tunisian problem because otherwise France's moral position would be worse. Although the State Department had not reached a conclusion in favour of the inscription, he added that the British UN Delegation held the same view as the US.¹¹⁹ Realising that the Americans would probably vote for the inscription, Bonnet wrote to Paris on the following day: 'dans l'hypothèse où nous estimerions possible et opportun de nous rallier à ses vues, le

¹¹⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.367, New York to Paris, no.1752, 25.7.1952.

¹¹⁶ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.386, Message du Bey de Tunis au Président de la République, 22.7.1952.

¹¹⁷ PRO, FO371/97102, JF1041/238, Rumbold to Allen, 10112/255/52, 6.9.1952. King Farouk was overthrown by the Free Officers in a coup d'état on 23 July 1952.

¹¹⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.386, Tunis to Paris, no.1390/1395, 1.8.1952.

¹¹⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.368, Washington to Paris, no.5583/5592, 6.8.1952.

Département d'Etat nous accorderait... une aide soutenue sur le plan diplomatique et se montrerait aussi probablement disposé à entreprendre un réel effort sur son opinion publique afin de l'orienter dans un sens favorable à notre cause.¹²⁰

On 6 August, the State Department sounded out the British view with regard to their position in the UN. The Americans wanted to know whether they would cooperate in persuading the French.¹²¹ However, the British reply was rather negative:

1. If [the] only question were that of UN tactics, [the] Foreign Office agrees that probably France should not object to [the] inscription of [this] item on the agenda...
2. On principle, however, [the] UK believes [the] issue raised is one of deepest concern both to France and to [the] UK... [The] importance of this question of principle has been agreed by Eden and [the] Secretary of State for Colonies.
4. [The] Foreign Office thinks it would be unfortunate if [the] US and UK should appear to be putting pressure on France.¹²²

Eden later told Massigli: 'I still took the view that the main debate ought not to take place until after the [US] presidential election. It seemed completely crazy to have international discussions of this kind in the last fortnight of the campaign.'¹²³ Thus, the British desired to keep the problem off the agenda at least until the beginning of November 1952. Nevertheless, London would not reach a decision on this matter until the French attitude was made clear.

From the French viewpoint, the ideal course of action was the Tunisian acceptance of their plan, as had hitherto been the case. Its probability would increase, they speculated, if it became clear that the Americans supported that plan. Therefore, the Quai d'Orsay instructed the embassy in Washington to approach the State Department, with the purpose of obtaining approval from Acheson to issue a declaration to support the French position in North Africa, which the French considered had been envisaged at the time of Schuman-Acheson talks on 28 May. Likewise, the Embassy in Washington was instructed to ask the State Department to approach Tunisian Prime Minister Baccouche.¹²⁴ The Americans, the French expected, would convince the Tunisians of their view that the settlement of Franco-Tunisian disputes could only be achieved

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, Washington to Paris, no.5638/5645, 7.8.1952.

¹²¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.368, Massigli to Paris, no.3427/3428, 6.8.1952; London to Paris, no.3523/3524, 9.8.1952.

¹²² *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.793-794, The Chargé in the United Kingdom (Holmes) to the State Department, no.668, 6.8.1952.

¹²³ PRO, FO371/97102, JF1041/233, Eden to Harvey, no.876, 2.9.1952.

¹²⁴ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.368, Paris to Tunis, no.1972/1975, 9.8.1952. Interestingly, it was Eden who firstly proposed to Massigli the idea of letting the Americans talk to the Tunisians. *Ibid.*, Massigli to Paris, no.3427/3428, 6.8.1952.

through bilateral negotiations.¹²⁵ Hauteclocque initially disliked the idea of a US approach to the Tunisians, because ‘nous devons éviter de créer nous-mêmes le précédent dangereux que constituerait une prise de contact directe du Consul Général des Etats-Unis avec les milieux nationalistes’, but he finally agreed with the Quai that Acheson’s declaration of support would outweigh any disadvantages.¹²⁶

On 12 August, Jean Daridan, an official at the French Embassy in Washington, met David Bruce, the US Acting Secretary of State, to ask for a declaration to support France. However, the latter refused, mentioning that a decision was impossible as Acheson was on leave.¹²⁷ On the same day, a French official in London told Sir James Bowker, the Director of the FO African Department, that British assistance would encourage Acheson to decide in favour of such a declaration.¹²⁸ Then Maurice Schumann again instructed Daridan to approach the State Department and asked him to emphasise: ‘Notre plan de réformes n’a de chance d’être accepté par le Bey et ses Conseillers que si ceux-ci sont convaincus de la vanité de leurs efforts pour intéresser à leur cause les Etats-Unis.’¹²⁹ On 20 August, Daridan met Bruce again and highlighted the importance of Acheson’s declaration, especially because the Bey’s reply to the French plan was supposedly imminent, only to find Bruce’s position unchanged.¹³⁰ At this time, desperate to obtain US support, Schuman was becoming favourably disposed towards the inscription of the Tunisian problem; on 20 August, he declared in the Foreign Affairs commission of the National Assembly: ‘la France pourrait peut-être accepter l’inscription... mais qu’en aucun cas, il ne faudrait accepter un débat... avec ses corollaires (conclusions, Commission d’Enquête).’¹³¹

On the following day, Jefferson Jones, the US Consul General in Tunis, had talks with Baccouche. The former stated: ‘la Charte des Nations Unies veut que les parties en cause recherchent une solution par voie de négociation... Un débat à l’Assemblée Générale et même... une résolution... pourraient même retarder la possibilité de réaliser

¹²⁵ In fact, the State Department had conveyed this view to a Neo-Destour member on 6 August. *Ibid.*, Washington to Paris, no.5602/5607, 7.8.1952.

¹²⁶ *Ibid.*, Hauteclocque to Paris, no.1444/1447, 11.8.1952.

¹²⁷ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.795-796, The Acting Secretary of State to the Consulate General at Tunis, 13.8.1952.

¹²⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.368, London to Paris, no.3555/3556, 12.8.1952. On 20 August, the British Embassy in Washington approached the State Department to urge support for France in Acheson’s declaration. *Ibid.*, Washington to Paris, no.5858, 20.8.1952.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, Schumann to Washington, no.13194/13196, 14.8.1952.

¹³⁰ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.798-799, The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in France, no.1041, 22.8.1952.

¹³¹ *L’Année Politique*, 1952, p.247.

des réformes désirables.¹³² This was what the French expected the State Department to tell the Tunisians. However, the Americans wished to maintain a balance between France and Tunisia. On 1 September 1952, to French embarrassment, Ernest Gross announced in a radio interview that, firstly, the Tunisian problem would be taken up in the GA unless the Franco-Tunisian negotiations reached a conclusion, and secondly, that there would be no constructive solution without agreement by 'real representatives' of the Tunisian people.¹³³ Obviously, he was referring to the Neo-Destour when he stated 'real representatives'.

On 5 September 1952, Franco-American discussions were held at a higher level than previously. Bonnet highlighted the significance of Acheson's proposed declaration, but Acheson again refused, and instead remarked: 'the opportunity might be given if France made known that it would not oppose the question of inscription'. Bonnet replied: 'this would be entering a vicious circle for the French government could not think of deciding its position before having obtained a formal promise of support from the United States'.¹³⁴ Aware of American intentions, Bonnet wrote to Paris on 11 September, once again proposing that the French government announce its intention not to oppose the inscription.¹³⁵ Meanwhile, on 9 September, the State Department discussed with a French diplomat a deal, in which the Americans would issue a statement to confirm their support for the French position in North Africa in return for French acquiescence regarding inscription. A State Department memorandum dated 16 September outlined the envisaged statement, in which the US would declare that it considered the GA should have as its goal the resumption of Franco-Tunisian negotiations but that the US vote for inscription was not a vote of censure of French policy in Tunisia.¹³⁶ This would have been similar to the sort of statement that the French had longed for from the US.

On the other hand, the British government was determined to follow the course that the French would adopt. After noting the Canadian approval of the inscription, the FO argued:

¹³² MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.368, Tunis to Paris, no.493/495, 21.8.1952.

¹³³ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.801-803, Memcon, by Acheson, 5.9.1952, footnote 1; MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.368, New York to Paris, no.2016/2020, 4.9.1952.

¹³⁴ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.801-803, Memcon, by Acheson, 5.9.1952.

¹³⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.368, Washington to Paris, no.6322/6334, 11.9.1952.

¹³⁶ Both sides insisted that the other should first make an announcement to that effect, though, in order to dispel public suspicions of the other country's intentions. NARA, RG59, Lot58, D48, Entry 1293, Box 5 [40.1 UN Tunisia 1952-1953], Memcon, 10.9.1952; Secret Security Information, 16.9.1952.

If a precedent is set in the case of Tunis[ia] for the discussion by the UN of such affairs, Cyprus and other British territories may well come next. The strategic consequences... would be most grave. Nevertheless we recognise the importance of the Tunisian question for France and we are not seeking to influence her in any way...¹³⁷

The British were fully aware of the danger resulting from the inscription of the Tunisian question but felt it was essential to support France to the detriment of damages to their own overseas territories.

It was on 9 September that the Bey put forward a reply to the French plan. This was a severe blow to French hopes. He wrote:

[les Réformes] ne répondent... pas aux objectifs minimaux que Nous avons Nous-même définis notamment le 15 mai 1951 et le 31 octobre de la même année. Au surplus, elles ne constituent nullement un acheminement vers l'autonomie interne solennellement promise par le Gouvernement Français.¹³⁸

As the Quai d'Orsay noted, obviously the Bey was largely influenced by the *Conseil des Quarante*.¹³⁹ Auriol sent back a message to the Bey six days later, warning 'qu'il n'a pas dépendu de la France de poursuivre avec le Bey de Tunis des conversations sur la base d'un plan de réformes, dont M Acheson a reconnu le caractère raisonnable.'¹⁴⁰ Thus, the French attempted to ascribe the deadlock in negotiations to the Tunisians.

The French government had not yet decided on its attitude in the event that the problem's inscription on the GA agenda was put to a vote.¹⁴¹ The Bey's rejection of the French plan only added difficulties to the French position. According to Dunn, in mid-September, Robert Schuman was intent on avoiding actively opposing the inscription.¹⁴² Moreover, some diplomats of France's allies, such as Lester Pearson of Canada and Gladwyn Jebb, were trying to convince the French of the desirability of not opposing the inscription.¹⁴³ It was in these circumstances that Schuman made a statement at the Anglo-American Press Club on 24 September: 'in coming to a decision the French government would have to weigh very carefully the views of the other governments, in

¹³⁷ PRO, FO371/97102, JF1041/241, Draft brief for the Secretary of State for the visit of Mr. Pearson. 9.9.1952.

¹³⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.386, Le Bey to Auriol, 9.9.1952.

¹³⁹ Ibid., Paris to Tunis, Circulaire no.119, 14.9.1952.

¹⁴⁰ Ibid., Note, 15.9.1952.

¹⁴¹ In early August 1952, a French official had explained to the British the division of opinion inside the government. According to him, Pierre Pflimlin, the Minister of Overseas France, opposed debates on this problem, while Schuman was more subtle. Prime Minister Pinay was closer to Pflimlin. PRO, FO371/97101, JF1041/224, Hope Minute, 8.8.1952.

¹⁴² FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.811-812, Dunn to the State Department, no.1711, 18.9.1952.

¹⁴³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.368, Réunion du 18 Septembre 1952; Washington to Paris, no.6597/6606, 26.9.1952.

particular the UK, the US and the governments of South America.¹⁴⁴ It should be noted that this was a rare case in which the French government expressed its intention to consult other governments in deciding its colonial policy.

Schuman's announcement made the State Department formally decide to vote for the inscription. Under Acheson's instructions of 26 September, Dunn informed Schuman of this decision at the end of September. The reasons were, firstly, that the Tunisian situation was at a standstill, unlike the situation in the spring of 1952 when the French were about to present their plan. Secondly, as the problem would certainly be inscribed no matter what position either France or the US took, they could be more influential in the actual consideration of the problem.¹⁴⁵ Besides, it is important to emphasise that State Department officials favoured the idea of granting a hearing to representatives of the Bey and the Sultan, as the Arab-Asians desired. This was what the French had to prevent at all costs, since, from their viewpoint, France had exclusive jurisdiction over Tunisia. Hoppenot and Bonnet told the Americans on 30 September that Paris was unlikely to consent to this idea, but that the government might accept the idea only if it realised that the alternative would be the GA's invitation of Salah Ben Youssef.¹⁴⁶ The State Department simultaneously started promoting mediation between the French and the Arab-Asians; American officials suggested João Carlos Muniz, the Brazilian UN representative and also the chairman of the GA First Committee, as a person who should assume leadership in persuading the GA to adopt a moderate resolution.¹⁴⁷ The Americans were pursuing a 'middle-of-the-road policy'¹⁴⁸ and therefore did not wish to see the GA close with the Arab-Asians' total victory or their complete defeat.

However, the British decision was quite opposite to that of the US. Realising French intentions to listen to other governments, the British government finally determined its own attitude, expecting that it would influence the French. On 2 October 1952, Massigli sent a telegram to Paris about the British decision.

Sir Oliver Harvey reçoit pour instruction de faire savoir à Votre Excellence que le Gouvernement Britannique souhaiterait que nous nous opposions à l'inscription...

[L]e Gouvernement Britannique estime... qu'il importe... d'éviter de créer un précédent qui ne manquera pas d'être invoqué plus tard pour tenter de porter devant les Nations Unies d'autres questions concernant des territoires dépendants... On semble déterminé ici à se prononcer contre l'inscription, même au cas ou [sic]

¹⁴⁴ PRO, FO371/97102, JF1041/246, Paris to London, no.397, 25.9.1952.

¹⁴⁵ FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.813-814, Acheson to the Embassy in Paris, no.1780, 26.9.1952; pp.814-815, Editorial Note.

¹⁴⁶ NARA, RG59, CDF, 320.00/9-3052, US-French Talks on the UN, 30.9.1952.

¹⁴⁷ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/9-2952, Memcon, 29.9.1952.

¹⁴⁸ Chapter 2, pp.49-50.

nous déciderions d'accepter l'inscription, quitte à contester ensuite la compétence des Nations Unies.¹⁴⁹

The following day, Paris received an aide-mémoire from the British to the same effect.¹⁵⁰ Thus the British explicitly challenged the US position of accepting the inscription.

This British decision introduced a fundamentally new element. Actually, it was due to this British intervention that the French ultimately changed their course, which had been more or less inclined to the acceptance of the inscription. It was argued:

Il est bien évident... que ni le Parlement, ni le pays ne comprendraient que la délégation française acceptât l'inscription de la question tunisienne à l'ordre du jour de l'Assemblée, alors que la délégation britannique s'y opposerait...

[La démarche anglaise] nous promet un appui plus énergique... de la délégation britannique au sein du Comité et devant l'Assemblée. Elle nous fournirait en même temps, pour expliquer aux Américains ce refus.

Sur le terrain de principes, la position anglaise est certainement très forte: accepter l'inscription... affaiblit sans aucun doute notre position morale et juridique et risque de créer... un fâcheux précédent.¹⁵¹

The Quai d'Orsay sought reconfirmation of the British intentions. On 7 October, Massigli asked Eden 'si... [les] Britanniques et Français se trouvaient d'adopter la même attitude, il devrait... en résulter dans la suite des débats une solidarité complète des deux délégations et la volonté de concerter étroitement leur action.' The latter replied firmly, 'c'était bien ainsi qu'on l'entendait ici.'¹⁵²

Consequently, the French Council of Ministers decided to oppose the inscription of the problem on 7 October. With reference to Acheson's instructions of 26 September, a Quai d'Orsay official informed the Americans of this decision on the same day, reasoning: 'US [was] not openly and actively supporting France on [the] competence question but that support was of more indefinite nature which could not be guaranteed to assure favorable outcome [of] these issues before [the] UN.'¹⁵³ Namely, the French chose the UK rather than the US as a partner with whom to handle the North African problems in the UN. This was a critical moment when the French decided to defend its colonial policy as a whole at the expense of possible short-term benefits in North Africa

¹⁴⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.369, Massigli to Washington, no.4173, 2.10.1952.

¹⁵⁰ Ibid., aide-mémoire, 3.10.1952. This aide-mémoire recalled the Lyttleton-Pflimlin colonial talks held on 31 March 1952, where 'both governments would strenuously resist any further attempts by the UN to intervene in the political affairs of non-self-governing territories.' See also John Kent, *The Internationalization of Colonialism*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), p.295.

¹⁵¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.369, Hoppenot to Paris, no.2245/2250, 4.10.1952.

¹⁵² Ibid., Massigli to Paris, no.4231/4232, 7.10.1952.

¹⁵³ NARA, RG59, CDF, 320/10-752, Paris to Acheson, no.2130, 7.10.1952.

brought about by US support. This sudden French decision seriously perplexed the Americans. Acheson instructed the Embassies in Paris and in London on 10 October to explore detailed French tactics and the nature of the British support.¹⁵⁴

On the following day, Maurice Schumann instructed the UN delegation to vote against the inscription both in the GA First Committee and its plenary session. The delegation was also instructed to make every effort to get the examination of the North African items placed low down the agenda, once the inscription was decided on.¹⁵⁵ This meant that the French delegation would have to stay at the GA session during debates on North Africa. However, the Quai modified its position on 14 October, instructing the delegation to abstain from both the First Committee and the plenary session, if the inscription was decided on.¹⁵⁶ It was pointed out that these new tactics would deprive the French delegation of a chance whereby it could try to prevent the GA from passing a resolution hostile to France. Nevertheless, it was perhaps judged that the new tactics were more consistent with the principle that the UN was not competent to deal with internal affairs, the principle to which the French government attached much importance, and that the advantage derived from this consistency would outweigh the disadvantage deriving from non-attendance.¹⁵⁷

On 22 October, the GA First Committee discussed the Arab-Asian motion which proposed placing the Tunisian and Moroccan questions second and third on the GA agenda respectively, following the Korean War question. The Committee voted for this motion, with fifty-one votes in favour, five against, and four abstentions. To French and British surprise, Gross voted for this motion. His vote astonished Hoppenot, who had observed that '[Gross] nous prêterait tout son appui pour maintenir ces deux questions en fin de liste.'¹⁵⁸ From Tunis, Resident-General Hauteclocque reported: 'l'inscription de la question tunisienne... a été saluée ici, dans les milieux nationalistes, comme une défaite de la France.' In fact, the number of violent activities of Tunisian nationalists had increased particularly a few days before the opening of the GA session.¹⁵⁹ The French press harshly attacked the US vote.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁴ NARA, RG59, CDF, 320/10-1052, Acheson to Paris, no.2082, 10.10.1952.

¹⁵⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.369, Paris to New York, no.6853/6861, 8.10.1952. The Iraqi government demanded the Moroccan problem's inscription on the GA agenda on 7 August 1952. Chapter 4, p.91.

¹⁵⁶ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.369, Paris to New York, no.2876/2880, 14.10.1952.

¹⁵⁷ The French informed the Anglo-Saxons of their change of tactics on 15 October. NARA, RG59, CDF, 320/10-1552, New York to Acheson, DELGA no.4, 15.10.1952.

¹⁵⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.369, New York to Paris, no.2483/2486, 22.10.1952.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., Tunis to Paris, no.1777, 22.10.1952; vol.372, Note, 12.5.1953.

¹⁶⁰ FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.824-826, Memorandum by Knight to Perkins, 23.10.1952. The British were also critical of this vote. PRO, FO371/97105, JF1041/288, FO Minute by Mason, 24.10.1952.

Hoppenot protested against the US vote when he met Secretary Acheson immediately after the First Committee session. Acheson insisted that the US negative vote would not have brought any change to the result and that Gross voted on his own judgement, but added that his vote must not be interpreted as a sign of the attenuation of US determination to assist the French to the fullest extent.¹⁶¹ Nevertheless, Gross actually decided to do so, because 'developing Asia-African sentiment for early consideration of Tunisia' after the GA session's opening had put the US delegation in a position to choose Korea or Tunisia as the first item to be discussed.¹⁶² The rise of this sentiment was unquestionably caused by the Sultan's revelation of Franco-Moroccan dialogues on 8 October 1952.¹⁶³

The French reactions were alarming to the Americans. The State Department started examining a letter from Acheson to Schuman in order to allay French worries, although it had rejected the idea of making a public statement in support of France. On 27 October, Dunn was instructed to emphasise orally that 'no other countries could give effective assistance to the French if they did not make a strong presentation at the United Nations regarding their achievements and programs for North Africa.'¹⁶⁴ Then the Americans revived an idea of a Brazilian draft resolution when Jessup met Hoppenot on the following day. Jessup warned the latter that the Arabs could win a majority for an anti-French proposal 'if we sat back and did nothing' and mentioned that there was a good probability of obtaining sufficient support from the LA delegations to get a moderate resolution passed 'if the French could decide on an affirmative and constructive position now'. However, regarding the issue of inviting representatives of the Bey, Jessup was not opposed to this and even expected 'the likelihood of a French defeat'. Hoppenot took note of the first point, but underlined that the French could under no circumstances acknowledge that France was responsible to the UN in this matter.¹⁶⁵

The Bey's declaration of his support of UN recourse on 28 October¹⁶⁶ pressed the French government into accepting Schuman's attendance, however. Now that it was clear the Bey's representative would present a strongly nationalist case if invited to the

¹⁶¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.369, New York to Paris, no.2508/2512, 23.10.1952.

¹⁶² NARA, RG59, CDF, New York to Acheson, DELGA no.4, 320/10-2452, 24.10.1952.

¹⁶³ Chapter 4, p.92.

¹⁶⁴ FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.835-836, Dunn to the State Department, no.2604, 28.10.1952, footnote 2.

¹⁶⁵ NARA, RG59, Lot53 D65, Entry 1496, Box 4, [Tunisia - Memos of Conversation], Memcon, 28.10.1952.

¹⁶⁶ *L'Année Politique*, 1952, p.266.

GA, US support was considered essential.¹⁶⁷ As soon as Schuman received a letter from Acheson on 31 October suggesting his own presentation at the GA, he drafted a letter dated the same day.¹⁶⁸ His letter, transmitted to Washington on 3 November 1952, stated that he was arriving in New York on 7 November in order to make a speech in the GA three days later.¹⁶⁹

Schuman's acceptance contributed to moderating American attitudes concerning the invitation of North African representatives. When Massigli had met Bruce in Washington on 31 October, the latter was willing to support granting an oral hearing to North African representatives. Alarmed by this remark, Massigli, under the Quai d'Orsay's instructions, asked Eden on 4 November 1952 to persuade the State Department to oppose this oral hearing.¹⁷⁰ However, when Oliver Franks, the British Ambassador in Washington, met Acheson on 6 November, it turned out that the latter intended to vote against on the issue of North African representatives if it was put to a vote.¹⁷¹ The FO noted that this was an improvement on the original US position.¹⁷² Schuman's acceptance of GA attendance alone did not, nonetheless, explain all the reasons for the US concessions, since the Americans had favoured an oral hearing even when France was inclined to accept UN debate. Presumably, in view of strong French reactions after Gross's vote on 22 October and, more generally, the Anglo-Franco common front, Acheson had already decided to withdraw the US insistence over this issue on condition Schuman attended.

In addition to an oral hearing, the Americans had already started trying to dissuade the Arab-Asian countries from passing an anti-French resolution. When Acheson had talks with Schuman, who had just arrived in New York on 7 November 1952, he revealed that he had already contacted Zafrullah Khan, the Pakistani UN representative, who Acheson said expressed 'his desire to be helpful' to the Americans. Schuman replied that there could be no resolution 'officially' acceptable to France, but promised that the French delegation would provide maximum assistance to the US delegation in

¹⁶⁷ See this Chapter, p.81.

¹⁶⁸ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, Acheson to the French Foreign Minister, pp.837-839, 31.10.1952; *MAE*, *Tunisie 1944-1955*, vol.369, Schuman to Acheson, 31.10.1952.

¹⁶⁹ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.837-839, footnote 1.

¹⁷⁰ *PRO*, FO371/97105, JF1041/295, Eden to Harvey, Conversations between Acheson and the French Ambassador, no.887, 5.11.1952. This document did not mention the date of the Massigli-Bruce talks but *Le Monde* reported that this talk had taken place on 31 October. *Le Monde*, 2/3.11.1952.

¹⁷¹ *PRO*, FO371/97105, JF1041/297, Franks to FO, no.2069, 6.11.1952. Meanwhile, the US presidential election was held on 5 November. Dwight D. Eisenhower was elected as the new president.

¹⁷² *PRO*, FO371/97105, JF1041/299, Brief for Secretary of State, 7.11.1952. However, the FO was dissatisfied that 'the Americans are unshaken in their belief that the Assembly should discuss the Tunis[ian] item.'

order to get a moderate resolution passed.¹⁷³ Then Schuman made a speech in the UN in which he redefined French policy towards the North African protectorates but mentioned that the French delegation would not attend the GA First Committee. This triggered difficulties with the Brazilians, who did not wish to present their resolution unless the French attended the First Committee, as Muniz complained to Schuman on 15 November.¹⁷⁴ The French delegation would refuse to participate as it was thought that a Brazilian resolution possibly implied GA competence, explained Schuman.¹⁷⁵ The Americans were adamant. On 21 November, Jessup met Muniz and strongly suggested that he introduce a moderate resolution.¹⁷⁶

Debates on the Tunisian problem were opened in the First Committee on 4 December 1952. Two days before, the thirteen Arab-Asian countries had introduced their draft resolution which recommended, firstly, that negotiations be resumed between the French government and the Tunisian people's true representatives for the purpose of implementing the right of self-determination, and secondly, that a commission of good offices be formed to arrange and assist in the proposed negotiations. Subsequently, on 8 December, the LA countries presented their draft resolution, which expressed the hope that the parties would continue negotiations with a view to bringing about self-government for Tunisians while safeguarding the legitimate interests of the French.¹⁷⁷ Two days later, the Arab-Asians proposed inviting the Bey's and the Sultan's representatives, but this proposition was turned down. Undoubtedly, this result reflected the US change of stance. Finally, on 12 December, the First Committee rejected the Arab-Asian draft resolution by twenty-seven votes to twenty-four with seven abstentions, and instead approved the Latin American draft resolution by forty-five votes to three with ten abstentions.¹⁷⁸ The GA plenary session, held on 17 December, decided to follow the First Committee's recommendation and passed the LA draft resolution by forty-four votes to three with eight abstentions.¹⁷⁹ In fact, one day before the vote in the First Committee, Jamali of Iraq had suggested to Muniz that the Arabs

¹⁷³ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.839-845, Draft Memcon, by Acheson, New York, 8.11.1952.

¹⁷⁴ NARA, RG59, Lot53 D65, Entry 1496 Box 4, US Delegation to the Seventh Session of the GA, [Tunisia - Memos of Conversation], Memcon between Muniz and Jessup, 18.11.1952.

¹⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, Memcon between Hoppenot and Jessup, 18.11.1952.

¹⁷⁶ NARA, RG59, Lot53 D65, Entry 1496 Box 4, US Delegation to the Seventh Session of the GA, [Tunisia - Memos of Conversation], Memcon between Muniz and Jessup, 21.11.1952.

¹⁷⁷ *UNGA Official Records*, vol.7 1952-53, First Committee, p.193, p.206, p.231. The LA countries that presented the resolution include Brazil, Costa Rica, Cuba, Ecuador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay and Venezuela.

¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.270-271. Britain voted against the Arab-Asian draft resolution and abstained on the LA resolutions.

¹⁷⁹ *UNGA Official Records*, vol.7 1952-53, Plenary Meetings, p.382.

would vote for the LA resolution if theirs was defeated, because ‘no resolution would be by far the worst solution.’¹⁸⁰ The GA debates closed with the passage of the moderate resolution with an overwhelming majority.

From the French viewpoint, this was not a disastrous result but, nevertheless, a sinister precedent whereby the UN took up a colonial matter. More important was the fact that the US voted for the GA resolution, since this was a great encouragement to the North African nationalists. In fact, on 23 December, Bourguiba noted: ‘l’Amérique a fait un petit pas de plus... [E]lle a voté... la compétence de l’O.N.U.’ He correctly regarded the American vote as ‘un sursis’.¹⁸¹ However, on the other hand, the French decision in October 1952 had indicated their determination to fight against any UN intervention with Britain’s collaboration, and anyway they ignored the GA resolution. Besides, most Tunisian nationalists had already been expelled in January and March 1952. With this background, the French were to renew attempts to force the Bey and the nationalists to surrender, for the Bey’s acceptance of their plan was considered as a prerequisite for obtaining US support promised at the Schuman-Acheson talks in May 1952.

The Resident-General met the Bey on 15 December, three days after the GA First Committee’s rejection of the Arab-Asian draft resolution. Hauteclocque insisted on ‘la nécessité qu’il y avait de rompre avec les atermoiements qui, depuis mon arrivée en Tunisie, paralysaient les affaires publiques au détriment des bonnes relations du Souverain avec la France et pour le plus grand dommage du Pays.’ In reply, the Bey undertook to seal ‘ce soir même’ the two decrees on the municipal reform and the *Conseil des Caïdat*.¹⁸² These two decrees constituted the third element which the French had intended to introduce to Tunisian political institutions since the summer of 1950. However, in spite of his promise, the Bey was not yet ready to commit himself to signing the decrees and, once Hauteclocque had left the Palace, he suddenly stated that he refused to sign. The Resident-General commented: ‘le souverain est retombé sous l’influence de ses deux fils, Chedly et Mohamed et de son gendre’.¹⁸³

The French were determined to force him to withdraw his refusal. Robert de Boisseson, an official at the Residency in Tunis, had talks with the Bey on 20 December 1952, and delivered Foreign Minister Schuman’s letter which emphasised that his

¹⁸⁰ NARA, RG59, CDF, 320.11/12-1152, Memcon, 11.12.1952.

¹⁸¹ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, pp.176-178. He concluded this note by optimism: ‘La victoire du bon sens et la justice sera peut-être longue à venir, mais elle viendra... et nous l’aurons méritée!'

¹⁸² MAE Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.387, Hauteclocque to Paris, no.2118/2122, 15.12.1952.

¹⁸³ Ibid., Hauteclocque to Paris, no.2142/2126, 15.12.1952.

refusal was damaging the function of governmental institutions. The Bey once again changed his mind. Boissozon reported to Paris that the Bey assured him that he would ‘très volontiers’ seal the decrees.¹⁸⁴ Thus, the French finally succeeded in forcing the Bey to accept the reform plan. At the end of 1952, it appeared to the French that a better prospect of realising their purpose was opened: the introduction of a political regime based on the *principe de co-souveraineté* and, ultimately, Tunisia’s adherence to the French Union.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid., Tunis to Paris, no.2155/2158, 20.12.1952.

Chapter 4: The Deposition of the Sultan; Morocco, January 1952 to August

1953

4.1 UN Debates in 1952 and the Casablanca Massacre

Despite the Tunisian recourse to the UN, Moroccan political leaders did not react in any significant way at the beginning of 1952. As the French observed, the Sultan was watching the Tunisian situation closely to ascertain whether the French would decide to revise Tunisia's protectorate status. It was on 2 February 1952 that Prince Moulay Hassan stated in an interview to the press that the Sultan's idea was based on the following points:

- 1) Le Maroc accèdera fatalement à la pleine souveraineté et à l'indépendance.
- 2) L'indépendance acquise, les Français pourraient être traités... comme des privilégiés.
- 3) En aucun cas, le Sultan actuel... ne consentirait à l'entrée du Maroc dans l'Union française.
- 4) Les accords passés par la France avec les Etats-Unis d'Amérique au sujet des bases aériennes établies au Maroc... sont contraires au Traité de Fès.¹

The Quai d'Orsay commented that the sovereign was under strong pressure from the Istiqlal: 'Le Sultan... s'efforce... de louoyer entre le Protectorat qui garantit son règne et les nationalistes'. This view more or less reflected the French over-confidence that his domestic position still relied on France's recognition of him as a sovereign, but the French were perhaps aware that he had to maintain a careful balance between the nationalists and the traditionalists. It was noted: 'le Sultan n'est pas assez sûr de la cohésion de l'Empire chérifien, ni des capacités de ses futurs ministres, pour vouloir se priver d'emblée du soutien militaire et de l'aide technique d'une puissance étrangère moderne, c'est-à-dire de la France', suggesting that the French had to prove to him that the French presence in Morocco was indispensable.

Finally, Mohammed V made up his mind about publicising his requests to France, as a result of the Pakistani submission of the Tunisian problem to the UN on 12 March 1952. He addressed to the French government a memorandum composed of three demands on 14 March: (1) the removal of martial law and the right to form trade unions, (2) the constitution by the Sultan of a government, and (3) negotiations on the revision

¹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.84, Note, Direction Générale des affaires politiques, 9.2.1952.

of Franco-Moroccan relations.² The Sultan then sent his entourage to the Americans on 27 March in order to explain his intentions. An American official in Tangier was notified that, firstly, the Sultan did not want to introduce a change in the form of Sharifian government but wanted to modify the composition of the present Sharifian government and make it capable of negotiating with France. Secondly, the Sultan adamantly refused to join the French Union, which would make direct access to the UN impossible to Morocco, but would accept Morocco's becoming part of a French Commonwealth in the same manner that India and Australia were part of the British Commonwealth.³ On 30 March, he circulated in Rabat by car to show his stance to the Moroccan people and to demonstrate his nationalist attitude. Thus, by the end of May 1952, '[l]e Sultan a largement regagné le terrain qu'il avait perdu en février 1951.'⁴

Paris was unwilling to respond to the Sultan's memorandum at this stage, presumably because it was so preoccupied with the Tunisian question in the UN.⁵ In April and May 1952, the French were keen to secure American support in view of their abstention on the inclusion of the Tunisian item on the SC agenda and the Arab countries attempting to hold a special GA session.⁶ Bonnet suggested to Paris that the government approach the Americans and emphasise the importance of their role in affecting other governments' voting in the UN.⁷ On 13 May 1952, Bonnet underlined to McBride that 'to give the Moroccans the impression that [the Americans] felt the Treaty of Fez was a threat to the public order of Morocco would be... an incitement to disturbances', and added that Schuman wished to discuss the entire North African situation with Acheson.⁸ Two days later, Bonnet passed on to Acheson Schuman's suggestion that the Americans 'could decide on [the] nature and scope of discussions establishing common policy... for North Africa... in UN'.⁹ Acheson replied, however, that the next Franco-American

² Julien, *L'Afrique du Nord*, p.334. *Le Monde* also reported this but its details were not published. *Le Monde*, 22.3.1952.

³ NARA, RG59, CDF 651.71/3-2752, The Diplomatic Agent at Tangier (Vincent) to the State Department, Despatch no.512, 27.3.1952. 'The present Sharifian government' meant the Maghzen. See Introduction, footnote 44.

⁴ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.85, de Blession to Schuman, no.1115, 29.5.1952. Jacques de Blession was assigned to the Residency in Morocco.

⁵ As for a reason for this delay, Harvey later noted that Schuman was notorious for his distaste for tackling the Moroccan problem during his long term of office. PRO, FO371/102976, JM1015/73, Harvey to FO, no.289, 21.8.1953.

⁶ Chapter 3, Section 3.

⁷ MAE, AM 1952-1963, Etats-Unis, vol.359, Bonnet to Schuman, no.2031, 25.4.1952.

⁸ FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.600-602, Memcon by McBride, 13.5.1952. McBride was then an official in the Office of Western European Affairs, Bureau of European Affairs, the State Department. Bonnet insisted that any kind of disagreement with the Americans would be made use of by Moroccan nationalists, mentioning that the nationalists were already considering that the US presentation at the International Court of Justice proved their basic sympathy with the Moroccan cause.

⁹ NARA, RG59, CDF, 751S.022/5-1752, Acheson to Paris, no.6820, 17.5.1952.

conversations ‘ne pourraient être pleinement efficaces que si nous [les Français] étions en mesure d’exposer... l’ensemble de notre [les Français] politique africaine’.¹⁰ The Schuman-Acheson conversations took place on 28 May 1952, when the latter promised that the US would support the French presence if France announced its reform plans in the North African protectorates.¹¹

On 7 August 1952, the Iraqi government requested UN Secretary-General to include the Moroccan problem on the GA agenda.¹² The Iraqi demand forced the Quai d’Orsay to discuss how to respond to the 14 March 1952 memorandum of the Sultan, who, according to Guillaume, ‘n’envisage pas d’autre... que l’ouverture de négociations devant aboutir à très brève échéance à l’abrogation du traité de Fez et à l’institution d’un nouveau régime analogue à celui d’avant 1912’.¹³ A Quai d’Orsay note dated 21 August explained the principal points of the French plan, but it repeated the thesis that France and French settlers had contributed to the pacification and modernisation of Morocco. As with the Tunisian case, the French were determined not to alter their position: the establishment of municipal assemblies through the *principe de co-souveraineté*, and no transfer of significant political powers to indigenous people. As for concrete methods of implementing the plan, the Quai authorised the Resident-General to discuss them with the Sultan.¹⁴

Guillaume handed the French reply to Mohammed V on 17 September 1952,¹⁵ but at this stage its content was not made public.¹⁶ Immediately after, the latter summoned a meeting composed of leading Moroccan figures of various shades of opinion in order to examine the French note. On 3 October 1952, as Guillaume himself had already anticipated,¹⁷ the Sultan rejected it on the ground that the French government had only indicated its determination to maintain the protectorate treaty without paying attention to his demands of 14 March 1952.¹⁸ He did not publicise the French reply at this time,

¹⁰ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.85, Washington to Paris, no.3214/3229, 15.5.1952. In this talk, Bonnet referred to France’s difficulties by using a somewhat exaggerated expression: ‘les mouvements extrémistes panislamiques’ who dreamed of a ‘troisième force arabe’.

¹¹ Chapter 3, p.72. Before the talks, French officials had even suggested that Schuman warn Acheson: ‘il dépend largement des États-Unis que la France n’ait pas à choisir entre son attachement à l’O.N.U. et ses intérêts vitaux en Afrique du Nord’. MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.160, Aide-mémoire pour le Ministre, 21.5.1952.

¹² MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.85, Note pour la Direction d’Afrique Levant, no.1003/SC, 18.8.1952. Although this was of grave concern for the Americans, they did not ask the French about this matter. Most likely they were much more occupied with the Tunisian case. See Chapter 3, Section 4.

¹³ Ibid., Rabat to Paris, no.564/565, 1.8.1952.

¹⁴ Ibid., Projet de Réponse au Mémorandum du Sultan du Maroc, 21.8.1952.

¹⁵ Ibid., Rabat to Paris, no.666/669, 17.9.1952.

¹⁶ *L’Année Politique*, 1952, p.254.

¹⁷ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/9-1052, Dorman to Acheson, no.22, 10.9.1952.

¹⁸ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.85, Sidi Mohammed Ben Youssef to Guillaume, 3.10.1952.

but submitted it to the press on 8 October 1952. The French observed that his aim of publication lay in impressing world opinion that it was only the UN that could work out an acceptable solution to the Franco-Moroccan dispute. The Sultan also intended to appease the nationalists' discontent and to support the Arab-Asia countries' initiative in the GA.¹⁹ In reality, at the end of September 1952, Mohammed V had been rather reluctant to publicise the original French plan because it would surely have antagonised the French.²⁰ In view of the French decision on 7 October 1952 to oppose the inclusion of the North African items on the UNGA agenda, however, he decided to proceed with the revelation. As argued in Chapter 3, the Sultan's revelation would stiffen the US attitude in the UN, although it did not immediately cause political instability in Morocco.²¹

However, soon after the opening of the UN debates on Tunisia, a riot led by the Istiqlal broke out in Casablanca on 7 and 8 December 1952, protesting against the assassination of Ferhat Ached²² in Tunisia on 5 December, and this incident was seriously to increase tension inside Morocco. At least eight Frenchmen were murdered and an unknown number of Moroccan rioters shot by police and troops.²³ Moreover, on 8 December the UGSCM (l'Union général des syndicats confédérés du Maroc), the only Moroccan labour union, called for a 24-hour strike, to which the Residency responded by arresting 400 members of the Istiqlal, the UGSCM and the Communist Party, and outlawed those groups. French records contend that 'the Casablanca Massacre' outraged French opinion,²⁴ but the British noted that the members of the French left, such as François Mauriac, condemned the excesses committed by the French police.²⁵

These violent events in turn strained Franco-American relations. Naturally, American public opinion regarded the French response to the riot as typical oppressive French policy. On 12 December, the American Consulate at Rabat was instructed to tell Guillaume: 'further violence no matter what origin will alienate US public opinion'.²⁶ The following day Guillaume explained to the Americans the background and causes of the recent events: 'French attempt to change a backward country of [the] Middle Ages

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, Guillaume to Schuman, no.2283AL, 25.10.1952.

²⁰ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/9-2552, Dorman to Acheson, no.29, 25.9.1952.

²¹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.85, Guillaume to Schuman, no.2283AL, 25.10.1952.

²² He was the leader of the UGTT.

²³ Considering the timing, the riot and strike could have also been aimed at attracting international attention. *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.142-144, Memorandum by Bonbright and Jernegan, 17.12.1952. The British Consul in Casablanca reported: 'the true total of Arabs killed was over 1500.' PRO, FO371/102974, JM1015/4, Casablanca to Allen, 39P/52, 18.12.1952.

²⁴ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.85, Rabat to Paris, no.988/993, 23.12.1952.

²⁵ PRO, FO371/102976, JM1015/73, Harvey to FO, no.289, 21.8.1953.

²⁶ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, p.604, The Acting Secretary of State to Rabat, no.52, 12.12.1952.

into a Twentieth Century nation in [a] matter [of] forty years was responsible for their present difficulties'. Then he insisted, to no avail, that he had absolute proof of connections between the Istiqlal and the Communist Party and that the mass of Moroccans was not in sympathy with the Istiqlal.²⁷

On the other hand, debates on Moroccan affairs started in the GA First Committee.²⁸ On 13 December 1952, the day after its adoption of the Latin American draft resolution on Tunisia, the Arab-Asian countries submitted a draft resolution requesting the government of France and the Sultan of Morocco to enter into negotiations to reach an early peaceful settlement in accord with the sovereignty of Morocco. Eleven Latin American countries sponsored a moderate draft resolution on 16 December, expressing the hope that France and Morocco would continue to work towards the development of free political institutions.²⁹ The following day, the Committee rejected the Arab-Asian resolution but adopted the LA resolution with a Pakistani amendment, which required 'les parties poursuivront sans retard leurs négociations, en vue de permettre aux Marocains de se gouverner eux-mêmes'. The GA plenary session, on 19 December, approved the LA resolution by a vote of forty-five to three with eleven abstentions but rejected the Pakistani amendment, which, according to the US delegation, 'fausse l'esprit de la proposition latino-américaine'.³⁰ As with the Tunisian case, the French did not favour this result, since 'la résolution votée consacre explicitement, par une majorité massive, la compétence des Nations Unies'.³¹

Yet the result was not considered a total defeat for the French, because their plan advocating French participation in Moroccan political institutions was not overtly rejected by the UN as a basis for further bilateral negotiations. So the French started to pressurise the Sultan to accept it. Guillaume, who met the Sultan on 22 December, noted: 'j'ai invité le souverain à reprendre avec nous une collaboration dénuée des arrières pensées auxquelles avait pu donner naissance le vain espoir d'une intervention des Nations Unis, de la Ligue Arabe ou d'une autre puissance étrangère'.³² However, Guillaume's persuasion did not work with the Sultan, contrary to the case of the Bey of Tunisia, who had accepted a similar French plan. The Moroccan sovereign was

²⁷ *Ibid.*, pp.604-606, Vincent to the State Department, 14.12.1952.

²⁸ UNGA debates on Morocco developed in a similar way to those on Tunisia. For the details of the three Western countries' attitudes, see Chapter 3, Section 4.

²⁹ *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1952, p.284.

³⁰ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.606-608, Editorial Note; *L'Année Politique*, 1952, pp.288-289. Perhaps the Americans reasoned that the term 'se gouverner', which clearly referred to 'self-government' as opposed to 'internal autonomy', would antagonise the French.

³¹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.649, Note pour le Ministre, no.275SC, undated.

³² MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.85, Rabat to Paris, no.988/993, 23.12.1952.

convinced that the nationalists' setback was only temporary and that they would soon restore their former prestige.³³ As will be discussed, the differences of both sovereigns' attitudes would be much clearer in March 1954.³⁴

Nevertheless, the French succeeded in banning the Istiqlal and ousting the nationalist leaders, availing themselves of the Casablanca Massacre. The removal of the nationalist leaders in the North African protectorates and the Bey's approval, as it appeared to the French, gave them a green light to proceed to the realisation of their goal: the introduction of political regimes based on the *principe de co-souveraineté* and, ultimately, the incorporation of both Protectorates into the French Union. The Sultan's refusal to sign posed a principal obstacle to this goal, but the French were perhaps confident that they could easily press him to accept the plan about French settlers' votes.

4.2 The deposition of the Sultan³⁵

At the beginning of 1953, the French publicised their intentions regarding Tunisia and Morocco. In his declaration before becoming prime minister, René Mayer stated on 6 January 1953 that France's mission was 'de guider les populations de Tunisie et du Maroc vers l'administration de leurs propres affaires'.³⁶ He was nominated as prime minister by 389 votes to 205 and, two days later, formed a government including Georges Bidault as the new Foreign Minister. Thus the French announced that they were intent on giving the right to 'l'administration de leurs propres affaires' to local people in Tunisia and Morocco. This was not, however, a promise of granting internal autonomy to both countries. In fact, Guy Mollet, the leader of the SFIO, criticised Mayer by stating that the French had to 'fixer la date de la suppression du protectorat et les étapes successives du passage de la Tunisie au stade d'un État souverain et indépendant'. Likewise, Mitterrand advocated achieving internal autonomy in North Africa immediately.³⁷ In any case, 'there would be no change of French policy in either territory and the French meant to go on with the reforms as heretofore', as Maurice Schumann put it to the British.³⁸ By failing to refer to internal autonomy, the French were not able to secure US support for the French presence in North Africa, as had been

³³ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/12-2452, Dorman to Acheson, no.73, 24.12.1952.

³⁴ Chapter 5, Section 2.

³⁵ Unfortunately, few governmental sources have been declassified concerning the deposition of Mohammed V in August 1953.

³⁶ *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.187.

³⁷ *Ibid.*

³⁸ PRO, FO371/102937, JF1015/4, Mayall to Allen, no.10115/10/53, 19.1.1953.

envisioned by the Schuman-Acheson talks in May 1952. Washington made no reaction to Mayer's declaration, although this would, to some extent, contribute to making American attitudes sympathetic to the French, as will be argued below.

On the other hand, in Morocco, conflict between the Sultan and the traditionalists had been intensifying since the Casablanca Massacre of December 1952. As Muslim leaders, the latter were furious with the Istiqlal's violent methods and hated Mohammed V whose sympathetic attitude, they considered, encouraged the Istiqlal thereby undermining traditional Muslim society and the French position. This was a very serious situation, because el-Glaoui preserved a semi-independent status in Southern Morocco. In fact, it was the French authorities that restored him as the Pasha of Marrakech in 1912 and armed him with modern weapons since then.³⁹ Since the French were reluctant to destroy the feudal hierarchy beneath him, they did not oppose his movement. On the other hand, since France had an obligation to defend the Sultan under the Treaty of Fez, the French failure to protect the Sultan was potentially a grave act which was condemned by international opinion, as will be discussed below. On 2 January 1953, in an interview with a Madrid newspaper, el-Glaoui had violently accused Mohammed V of encouraging a seditious movement. Even though Mohammed V probably knew that the French remained committed to the *principe de co-souveraineté*, he responded to Mayer's declaration,⁴⁰ perhaps largely because of the necessity of countering el-Glaoui's pressure. On 12 January, he sent a message to Auriol, which, referring to Mayer's declaration, confirmed his intention to negotiate 'une solution tendant notamment à l'établissement d'une coopération'.⁴¹ The Sultan's note omitted reference to his earlier expressed position that the goal of negotiations should be the revision of the protectorate treaty but the Quai d'Orsay had no reason to believe this position had changed.⁴²

Mayer's declaration and his taking office made the Americans willing to cooperate with the French. Bidault discussed the North African problems with John Foster Dulles, the new US Secretary of State, in Paris on 2 February 1953. He considered Dulles's attitude more encouraging than his predecessor when the latter told him that 'l'Administration républicaine n'avait pas l'intention de remettre en cause les principes

³⁹ Maxwell, *Lords*, p.133, p.155. El-Glaoui had been dismissed from the Pasha of Marrakech by the Sultan Moulay Hafid in 1911. See also Introduction, p.12.

⁴⁰ *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.197.

⁴¹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.86, Paris to Rabat, no.15AL, 14.2.1953.

⁴² NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/2-453, Dunn to Dulles, no.4352, 4.2.1953.

fondamentaux de la politique américaine qui était fondée sur le Pacte Atlantique' and that 'les États-Unis ne sauraient souhaiter la 'désintégration' de l'Union Française'.⁴³

Bidault's reply of 7 February 1953 to Mohammed V's message stated that it was by direct conversations between the Sultan and French representatives, i.e. the French Resident-General, that the problems had to be examined. For the French, it was imperative to make the Sultan realise 'la nécessité de régler les problèmes concernant les rapports franco-marocains en dehors de toute intervention extérieure' or without the 'agitation' of the Communists and of the Istiqlal.⁴⁴ On 18 February, Bidault instructed Guillaume to emphasise to the sovereign: 'la démocratisation que nous sommes résolus à entreprendre doit être faite sans porter atteinte aux prérogatives du Sultan, dont nous sommes garants'.⁴⁵ This hypocritical argument did not convince the Sultan to agree to the French plan, however.

Unlike 1952, the US government was not willing to see the North African problems discussed in the UN's 1953 session. On 19 February 1953, the Arab-Asian countries in the UNGA met to examine the desirability of these items being taken up in the GA. On the very next day, an American weekly magazine, which supposedly had close relations with the government, announced that Dulles would assure the French that the US government would exert its influence in order not to create trouble for France.⁴⁶ The State Department considered it too early for the French to show to the world positive results in the negotiations with the North Africans and, therefore, concluded that UN debates would be inappropriate. In fact, on 10 March 1953, the State Department instructed its UN delegation to the GA to oppose consideration of the North African problems in the autumn of 1953, 'on grounds that far too little time has elapsed since [the] adoption of GA resolutions to expect conclusive results in negotiations'.⁴⁷ Besides, the US policy may have been motivated by not pressurising the French excessively in order to obtain their adherence to the EDC.⁴⁸

⁴³ MAE, Secrétariat Général 1945-1966, vol.29, Paris to Rabat, Circulaire no.20, 3.2.1953. Taking advantage of the conversations with Dulles, the French told the Sultan: 'the United States would give France carte-blanche in North Africa.' NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/2-1853, Dorman to Washington, no.289, 18.2.1953.

⁴⁴ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.86, Paris to Rabat, no.15AL, 14.2.1953. This French response was publicised on 13 February 1953.

⁴⁵ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.2, Bidault to Guillaume, no.303AL, 18.2.1953.

⁴⁶ *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.203.

⁴⁷ FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.609- 610, The Acting Secretary of State to the US Mission at the UN, Gadel A-1, 10.3.1953.

⁴⁸ In September 1955, one American official noted: 'in the past the U.S. approach to NA problems has been conditioned mainly by French considerations involving our desire not to disturb any given French parliamentary equilibrium in order to avoid endangering the attainment of important U.S. objectives, such as gaining French adherence to EDC.' NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.00/9-2955, Holmes to Dulles, 29.9.1955.

In Morocco, not only el-Glaoui but also several French Residency officials had started anti-Sultan campaigns. One French official published an article in *Paris-Match* on 7 February 1953, headed 'Le Sultan doit changer ou il faut changer le Sultan.'⁴⁹ In mid-February 1953, Mohammed V reportedly complained to his entourage: 'A bitter propaganda [campaign] is being waged against the Sultan by the French officials... with the Glaoui serving as the willing leader.'⁵⁰ Some Residency officials were in fact deeply involved in this anti-Sultan movement, considering that Mohammed V was the gravest obstacle to the French plans. Residency officials' activities were made without explicit instructions from Paris, but as will be made clear below, the French government, Foreign Minister Bidault in particular, was soon to take advantage of pressure on the Sultan by forcing him to agree to their programme, even though Bidault himself instructed Guillaume not to exert such pressure on Mohammed V, and the French government opposed the idea of his deposition. This tactic was in fact similar to what the French had adopted from December 1950 to February 1951, when they were demanding that the Sultan condemn the Istiqlal.⁵¹ However, there was one difference; after experiencing the 1952 UN debates, the French Resident-General ceased to threaten the Sultan with deposition, fearing criticism of international opinion.

The project of a *dahir* concerning the municipal institutions was once again tabled to Mohammed V on 2 March 1953, although it seemed that no press reported this event. The *dahir* aimed at creating seven municipal assemblies composed of French and Moroccan members, each having an equal number of seats, but this project was never acceptable to the nationalists, even though most Istiqlal leaders had already been exiled. Three days later, Allal el-Fassi in Cairo and other nationalist leaders sent a memorandum to Auriol in the name of the Moroccan National Front, criticising the municipal project for being 'incompatible avec la souveraineté marocaine'. On 16 March, the Arab-Asian countries' delegations wrote to the UN Secretary-General denouncing 'la politique de "violence et d'oppression" de la France au Maroc'.⁵² Nevertheless, unlike July 1951, the sovereign's position concerning this issue looked ambivalent, so Guillaume reported to Paris: 'Soumis à des influences diverses et

⁴⁹ Centre d'Accueil et de Recherche des Archives Nationales [hereafter CARAN], Archives Georges Bidault, 457AP, vol.117, [Maroc, la crise d'août 1953], Note, 22.8.1953.

⁵⁰ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/2-1853, Dorman to Washington, no.289, 18.2.1953.

⁵¹ Chapter 2, Section 1.

⁵² MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.86, Situation Politique au Maroc (mars 1953).

souvent contradictoires, soucieux de ne rompre les ponts ni avec la France ni avec l'Istiqlal, Sidi Mohammed hésite'.⁵³

On the other hand, el-Glaoui made a decisive step towards the Sultan's deposition. On 20 March 1953, a petition was signed demanding his removal, following a meeting of some twenty *caids* with el-Glaoui in Marrakech. This movement had originally been started in Fez by Sharif Abedelhaï el-Kittani, Grand Master of *Kittanies*, a pro-French Moslem brotherhood,⁵⁴ and 'espoused by [the] Pasha of Marrakech as a useful instrument against the Sultan'.⁵⁵ The petition stated:

- 1) That the Sultan Sidi Mohammed ben Youssef had broken the commitments and covenants by which he was bound in regard to the Muslim religion and under which he bore obligations to the Moroccan people;
- 2) That by attaching himself to illegal extremist parties and applying their principles in Morocco, he was leading the country to its doom;
- 3) That in so doing, he had placed himself in opposition to all men of goodwill in the country and had embarked on a path contrary to the tenets of religion.

Therefore the signatories asked the Resident-General and the French government to remove the Sultan and this petition at once began to circulate among the Moroccan chiefs.⁵⁶

Soon after this, at the end of March 1953, Mohammed V was showing a flexible attitude over the issue of municipal assemblies, presumably because he wanted Paris's intervention more than ever in order to counter el-Glaoui's offensive. Emphasising that this problem was related to Moroccan sovereignty, he informed the Residency of the conditions upon which he would sign the *dahir* and accept French settlers' participation in those assemblies. Those conditions were: firstly, the right of French settlers to vote should be limited to the area of the municipalities, which would enable the Palace to regard that right as merely a technical means of recruiting committees and as having no political character and, secondly, the administrative supervision of the municipalities should be restored by the Residency to the Grand Vizier. Bidault noted with satisfaction that the Sultan did not object to the democratic nature of the reform.⁵⁷ Pressured by el-

⁵³ Ibid., Guillaume to Bidault, 16.3.1953. Guillaume also noted that the Moroccan nationalists were encouraged by the recent works of Charles-André Julien, a professor of the University of Sorbonne.

⁵⁴ There were seven religious brotherhoods or *zaouia* in Morocco, who diverged from the orthodox path of pure Islam, and had always been distrusted by the Sultans as undermining the central spiritual authority of the throne. Maxwell, *Lords*, p.218.

⁵⁵ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/7-2253, American consulate, Bordeaux to the State Department, Dispatch no.10, 22.7.1953. This information was brought by Saadek el-Glaoui, one of the sons of the Pasha of Marrakech, who was, however, critical of his father's attitude against the Sultan.

⁵⁶ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp.147-148.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p.140.

Glaoui and French Residency officials, Mohammed V began considering accepting the French settlers' participation, although he still had reservations. For that reason, Mohammed V's attitude was far from being satisfactory to Paris.

Some French officials in Morocco contributed significantly to the enlargement of el-Glaoui's movement. It was only on 31 March that Jacques de Blesson, *Délégué à la Résidence Générale*, notified Paris of the petition without, however, transmitting its text. According to him, this was merely 'un des signes par lesquels se manifeste de temps à autre l'opposition conservatrice'.⁵⁸ On 1 April 1953, Bidault cabled Guillaume instructing: 'certain persons... are advocating recourse to such extreme measures as the deposition of the Sultan... It must be made quite clear... that the French government would not condone recourse to such a policy.'⁵⁹ Needless to say, France had an obligation under the Treaty of Fez to defend the Sultan.

Mohammed V's conciliatory attitude seriously concerned the traditionalist dignitaries, because now it was clear that the French government did not accept his deposition if he accepted the municipal project. From the dignitaries' viewpoint, he had to be dethroned unless he condemned the Istiqlal. From 4 to 6 April 1953, a congress of the North African Religious Brotherhood was held at Fez, presided over by el-Kittani, in the presence of el-Glaoui and some twenty *caids* and a thousand Moroccan delegates representing religious brotherhoods. After speeches hostile to the Sultan, this assembly adopted resolutions in favour of expanding the movement of the brotherhoods.⁶⁰ Naturally, this assembly provoked sharp reactions from the Palace and other religious leaders. The Sultan told Guillaume that it would be impossible to make progress on the Franco-Moroccan dialogue until the atmosphere had improved, indicating that the rapidly-developing revolt of the *caids* would have been impossible without the Residency officials' support.⁶¹ In other words, at this point Mohammed V requested that the ongoing Franco-Moroccan dialogues be suspended as long as the Residency officials supported el-Glaoui's movement. He also sent a message to the French government on 14 April, proposing that Franco-Moroccan conversations on the municipal reform be continued in Paris, not in Rabat, because of the local troubles. This was in fact the first time that Paris had been told of the Sultan's complaint about el-Glaoui's campaigns, because French officials had failed to report it to Paris.⁶² However,

⁵⁸ CARAN, Archives Georges Bidault, 457AP, vol.117, [Maroc, la crise d'août 1953], Note, 22.8.1953.

⁵⁹ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp.139-140.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p.148.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, p.142.

⁶² CARAN, Archives Georges Bidault, 457AP, vol.117, [Maroc, la crise d'août 1953], Note, 22.8.1953.

the French government refused the Sultan's request on 23 April 1953, presumably because it wished to maintain pressure on him. At the same time, pro-Sultan groups were also voicing their opposition to el-Glaoui. The *Ulama* of Fez submitted a letter to the Sultan in which they supported him and protested about el-Glaoui's activities.⁶³ This was a significant counter-attack on el-Glaoui, since no Sultan could rightfully be either deposed or elected without the *Ulama*'s consent.⁶⁴

Meanwhile, outraged by the anti-Sultan movement, the Arab-Asian countries were preparing to bring the Moroccan problem to the UNSC in 1953. On 8 April 1953, Henry Cabot Lodge Jr., the US representative at the UN, reported to Washington that the Arab-Asian countries had decided to bring the Tunisian and Moroccan cases before the SC, hoping that the US would vote for inscription.⁶⁵ However, on 9 April, Dulles instructed Lodge to tell the Arab-Asian group the US view: 'we do not feel that sufficient time has elapsed since [the] adoption of GA resolutions [in 1952]'.⁶⁶ That day, the Quai d'Orsay instructed the French UN delegation to oppose the inscription of the two items on the SC agenda.⁶⁷ In May 1953, despite Dulles's position, the Arab-Asians still believed that the US would vote for the inscription in the UNSC's 1953 session,⁶⁸ but it was fortunate from the French viewpoint that the Anglo-Saxons agreed that they should vote against it.⁶⁹ In fact, the three countries' delegations in New York shared the view that '[the] best course is to keep Arab-Asians in dark re[garding] our position thus prolonging their state [of] uncertainty and indecision re[garding] [the] submission of item',⁷⁰ so that those countries would finally withdraw their request in view of the ambivalent US attitude.

While the petition against the Sultan was circulating throughout the country, de Blesson failed to inform Paris of the gravity of the situation. It was not until 15 May 1953 that he reported that 'cette initiative semble avoir été beaucoup plus largement suivie qu'il n'était d'abord à prévoir.' Bidault, on the following day, rejoined the Residency to remind local French officials that their attitude towards such movements

⁶³ *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.224.

⁶⁴ Maxwell, *Lords*, p.219. Note that the *Ulama* in Fez were prestigious because Fez was a religious city.

⁶⁵ NARA, RG59, Lot58 D742 and 59 D237, Tunisia General Correspondence 1953 (Mangano File), Memorandum, Hickerson to the Secretary, 9.4.1953.

⁶⁶ NARA, RG59, CDF, 330/4-953, Dulles to New York no.383, 9.4.1953.

⁶⁷ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.651, Note pour le Secrétariat des Conférences, 9.4.1953.

⁶⁸ PRO, FO371/102941, JF1041/29, New York to FO, no.388, 19.5.1953.

⁶⁹ PRO, FO371/102942, JF1041/29, FO to New York, no.471, 26.5.1953; MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, Washington to Paris, no.2730/2735, 14.4.1953.

⁷⁰ NARA, RG59, CDF, 330/6-1053, Dulles to New York, no.482, 10.6.1953.

should conform to France's obligation under the protectorate treaty.⁷¹ Guillaume officially presented the petition to the Quai d'Orsay on 27 May, when the French government had already been suffering a ministerial crisis since the fall of the Mayer Government on 21 May 1953.⁷² On 30 May, the Quai issued a communiqué that it would not be replying to the petition but that '[c]ette démarche ne peut que renforcer la volonté du gouvernement de donner une expression démocratique aux tendances qui se font jour dans l'opinion marocaine'.⁷³ This meant that the French did not intend to prevent el-Glaoui's movement from gaining strength but that they did not want positively to assist it. Mohammed V told Guillaume on 31 May that 'the petition... could only be considered as treason' and asked him to remove the *caids* who had signed it. However, the Resident-General merely pointed out that 'had [the Sultan] agreed to sign the *dahir* implementing the municipal reforms, the petition would never have been circulated', to which the sovereign was reported as replying that he would never sign the municipal reform.⁷⁴ In fact, it was widely rumoured among Moroccan people that France might depose the Sultan and that the Arab-Asian bloc would immediately rally to his support. Knowing that Guillaume was reluctant to take action to stop el-Glaoui's movement, Mohammed V chose to appeal to Paris publicly on 1 June 1953, mentioning that the French government 'saura mettre sans tarder un terme à cette dissidence organisée'.⁷⁵

Guillaume did not halt el-Glaoui's movement, with the hope of forcing the sovereign to accept the French plans by making use of the troubles. On 3 June, he wrote to Paris: 'il était de son devoir de laisser l'opinion publique s'exprimer librement contre le Sultan'.⁷⁶ The division of Moroccan opinion was becoming even more conspicuous. On the same day, the pashas of Fez, Sefrou, Meknès, and Salé made declarations of loyalty to Mohammed V.⁷⁷ Similarly, about 300 messages protesting against the anti-Sultanate movement of pashas and *caids* were sent to Auriol. On 8 June, el-Glaoui, who was then in London, announced his plan clearly:

⁷¹ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp.169-170.

⁷² CARAN, Archives Georges Bidault, 457AP, vol.117, [Maroc, la crise d'août 1953], Note, 22.8.1953.

⁷³ *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.234.

⁷⁴ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/6-553, Dorman to the State Department, no.430, 5.6.1953. The pashas and *caids* were officials nominated by the Sultan who chose them from a list of three candidates proposed by the Resident-General. *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.234.

⁷⁵ *L'Année Politique*, 1953, pp.545-546.

⁷⁶ CARAN, Archives Georges Bidault, 457AP, vol.117, [Maroc, la crise d'août 1953], Note, 22.8.1953.

⁷⁷ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.86, Situation politique au Maroc, 6.1953.

Le Sultan est déchu et n'est plus l'Emir des croyants. Pour qu'il soit détrôné, il ne manque plus que le consentement de la France... Le nouveau Sultan sera choisi parmi les membres de la famille Alaouite par les Caïds...⁷⁸

Thus both the Sultan and el-Glaoui openly pressed Paris to give support.

In June 1953, the State Department changed its tactics towards the Arab-Asians in the UNSC. Presumably, the Americans judged it best to prevent the Arab-Asian move to bring the Moroccan problem to the UNSC, seeing them more eager to do so because of Guillaume's failure to halt el-Glaoui's movement. The State Department concluded on 10 June that if asked, the US should inform the Arab-Asians that the US would vote against the inscription of the North African problems for the purpose of drawing Arab-Asian leaders' attention to Dulles's address on 1 June 1953, whereby he had declared: 'the western Powers can gain rather than lose from an orderly development of self-government' of colonial territories.⁷⁹ The FO agreed on the change of US tactics while the UN delegations of Britain and France remained opposed to revealing their intention because the two delegations estimated that the Arab-Asians were not likely to bring the problem to the UN.⁸⁰ On 15 June, one official at the Pakistani Embassy in Washington had conversations with the Americans over the issue of inscription. The Americans pointed out that US support for the GA consideration of the North African questions in the autumn of 1952 did not imply US acceptance of the idea that these questions constituted threats to international peace and security. Then the Americans concluded: 'the US would not wish to see [the proposed resolutions] introduced'.⁸¹ Thus, despite the troubles that el-Glaoui was creating, the US was adamant in opposing SC consideration of the Moroccan problem.

On 29 June 1953, the Sultan handed a letter dated 23 June 1953 to Guillaume. This letter was addressed to President Auriol, requesting the French government to intervene in order to restore order in accordance with the Treaty of Fez, and it also made clear the Sultan's intention to negotiate after the restoration of order. The sovereign insisted: "les agissements du Pacha de Marrakech", la "rébellion ouverte des fonctionnaires d'autorité contre le Pouvoir central" et l'action d'"un chef... d'une confrérie religieuse", constituent des "menées subversives entreprises en violation du Traité du 1912 et en

⁷⁸ Ibid., Situation politique au Maroc, 6.1953.

⁷⁹ NARA, RG59, CDF, 330/6-1053, Dulles to New York, no.482, 10.6.1953; *The Times*, 3.6.1953. He had just returned from his trip to twelve Near Eastern and South Asian countries.

⁸⁰ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.651, Hoppenot to Paris, no.1245/1246, 12.6.1953; PRO, FO371/102942, JF1041/36, Jebb to FO, no.443, 15.6.1953; FO to Washington, no.2046, 15.6.1953.

⁸¹ FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.611-613, Memcon, by Metcalf, 15.6.1953.

particulier de son article troisième”⁸² The internal division was such that the Sultan had no other alternative but to indicate his willingness to negotiate on the French plan in order to secure French intervention to restore order. Soon after this, however, during el-Glaoui’s absence from Morocco, his sons started circulating a new petition demanding that the Sultan specifically condemn the Istiqlal. Fearing that Mohammed V’s willingness to negotiate with the French would allow Paris to accept his staying on the throne, the dignitaries were trying to remind Paris that their main concern was his siding with the Istiqlal. As in February 1951, the sovereign once again refused to condemn the nationalist party, declaring: ‘je ne puis prononcer une condamnation quelconque contre des musulmans’.⁸³ However, Guillaume’s announcement on 22 July 1953 merely supported the anti-Sultanate *caïds*’ attempts to force him to condemn it: ‘Ces méthodes [de l’Istiqlal] ont provoqué de la part des caïds un « mouvement d’autodéfense » qui « a abouti à la pétition ».⁸⁴

In the meantime, Paris was given little information about developments in Morocco. In fact, as some Quai d’Orsay officials put it to the Americans later, certain Residency officials did not keep the government fully informed because they knew that Paris was opposed to the Sultan’s deposition. As a result, el-Glaoui’s movement made such headway that it was from a practical point of view too late for Paris to take the necessary action to stop the movement. Those Residency officials believed that they were acting in the best interests of France and Morocco.⁸⁵ Bidault was shocked by the news of el-Glaoui’s tour throughout Morocco from 4 to 7 August 1953, whose purpose was ‘pour y entretenir le zèle de ses partisans’.⁸⁶ On 4 August, he instructed Rabat to report the movement’s goal and intentions, emphasising: ‘il importe d’éviter que des éléments irresponsables aient l’impression qu’ils pourraient... créer des faits accomplis que nous ne pourrions reconnaître’.⁸⁷ The following day, de Blesson optimistically

⁸² MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.86, Situation politique au Maroc (juin 1953); Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.144. This letter was transmitted to Paris on 4 July 1953.

⁸³ *L’Année Politique*, 1953, p.260. This was published on 21 July 1953. El-Glaoui was in London and then in Paris.

⁸⁴ *Le Monde*, 23.7.1953.

⁸⁵ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.622-624, Dillon to the State Department, no.695, 21.8.1953; pp.614-615, Dillon to the State Department, no.541, 12.8.1953. ‘Certain Residency officials’ include Philippe Boniface, Director of Interior and Contrôller Civil of Casablanca.

⁸⁶ CARAN, Archives Georges Bidault, 457AP, vol.117, [Maroc, la crise d’août 1953], Note, 22.8.1953.

⁸⁷ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre Pinay, no.28, Paris to Rabat, no.716/717, 4.8.1953. Bidault’s message was addressed to de Blesson because Guillaume was on vacation in France.

reported to Paris: 'Rien... ne nous permet de croire qu'il envisage de passer à l'action directe et de nous mettre devant le fait accompli.'⁸⁸

However, this was not the case. De Blession's telegram on 8 August indicated that he himself had dismissed the gravity of the situation. Actually, greatly encouraged by the dignitaries' reactions, el-Glaoui had told him the day before that there had never been such favourable conditions to achieve deposition. Under Bidault's instructions, de Blession tried to dissuade el-Glaoui by stating:

les responsabilités assumées par la France... depuis 1912 ne permettaient pas au Gouvernement de la République de se désintéresser à ce point de la politique intérieure marocaine... [N]ous ne pouvions pas pour autant faire abstraction de nos devoirs concernant le maintien d'ordre. Enfin... [s]eul le Gouvernement français était en mesure de juger les conséquences extérieures qu'entraînerait tel ou tel geste accompli sur le territoire marocain.

El-Glaoui did not agree with de Blession, but promised that he would not take any decisive action until around 12-13 August 1953.⁸⁹ Despite this undertaking, however, el-Glaoui and el-Kittani overtly pressed Paris to remove the Sultan. *Le Petit Matin* of 8-9 August 1953 reported that the former, when asked if Mohammed V was to be allowed to stay on the throne, responded '[c]ela dépend de la France, et d'elle uniquement !' and that the latter declared '[n]ous voulons que l'on nous laisse libres de choisir un autre sultan'.⁹⁰ They were immensely irritated by the French government's attitude of disapproving of the deposition. Furthermore, de Blession reported to Paris over the telephone on 8 August that 'el-Glaoui... was no longer in control of his forces',⁹¹ although the French government did not abandon hopes that the Sultan's acceptance of the French demands would lead el-Glaoui to stop his forces. Conversely, the Sultan wrote to Auriol on 11 August, stressing that it was impossible to demonstrate such opposition openly without the French authorities' consent since Morocco was still under martial law and that the movements were trying to lead the French government 'à violer les engagements internationaux... en particulier le traité de 1912', i.e. the protection of the Sultan's status.⁹²

⁸⁸ CARAN, Archives Georges Bidault, 457AP, vol.117, [Maroc, la crise d'août 1953], Rabat to Paris, no.632/639, 5.8.1953.

⁸⁹ Ibid., [Maroc, la crise d'août 1953], Rabat to Paris, no.653, 8.8.1953.

⁹⁰ *Le Monde*, 12.8.1953.

⁹¹ CARAN, Archives Georges Bidault, 457AP, vol.117, [Maroc, la crise d'août 1953], Rabat to Paris, no.653, 8.8.1953.

⁹² *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.264, p.547.

On 12 August, the French Council of Ministers sent ‘strong instructions’ to de Blesson in Rabat to try to prevent el-Glaoui proclaiming a new Sultan.⁹³ Likewise, on the same day Dulles instructed Douglas Dillon, the US Ambassador in France, to tell the French that ‘[the] US Government shares French concern over grave repercussions which would result in Morocco, Arab-Asian World and United Nations’ if el-Glaoui was permitted to proclaim a new Sultan.⁹⁴ Dulles was so alarmed that he sent another telegram to Paris on the same day: ‘you should make it unmistakably clear to Bidault that we cannot help being gravely concerned over probable consequences of what seems... to be exceedingly ill-advised and ill-timed line of action.’ The Americans were acutely anxious that Bidault seemed to think ‘all depends on [the] Sultan’, namely, the former was pressurising the latter into accepting the French municipal project by making use of el-Glaoui’s movement.⁹⁵

It appeared that the French brinkmanship ultimately bore fruit. Bidault instructed Guillaume, who had just returned to Paris from sick leave, on 13 August 1953: ‘Il faut que... vous puissiez dès matin faire accepter au Sultan le programme’. If so, the French promised to stop el-Glaoui’s activities and protect the Sultan. Guillaume was also instructed to table a new compromise plan to the Sultan.⁹⁶ French sources did not disclose the content of this plan, but it was obvious that the French were demanding that he condemn the Istiqlal in tune with el-Glaoui. Guillaume went back to Rabat and met Mohammed V. By 6.30 pm on that day, the latter conceded. He agreed to all the points of the municipal reform plan, the devolution of the legislative power to the Grand Vizier and the rejection of all UN intervention.⁹⁷ Faced with the fact that only the French could protect his position from el-Glaoui, Mohammed V accepted the French demands instead of running the risk of leaving the country seriously divided, although his acceptance of French settlers’ participation in the municipal assemblies was certainly a betrayal of the nationalist cause. As de Margerie later told a British official, the French hoped: ‘having got the Sultan to sign the decrees, the French authorities would be able to calm the Glaoui and his followers’.⁹⁸ Thus Mohammed V’s concessions were significant, but, importantly, he refused to condemn the Istiqlal to the end, although in its place he

⁹³ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.614-615, Dillon to the State Department, no.541, 12.8.1953.

⁹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.615-616, Dulles to the Embassy in France, no.471, 12.8.1953.

⁹⁵ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/8-1253, Dulles to Paris, no.508, 12.8.1953.

⁹⁶ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.86, Bidault to Guillaume, no.738/743, 13.8.1953.

⁹⁷ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.156; *L’Année Politique*, 1953, p.265.

⁹⁸ PRO, FO371/102975, JM1015/64, Harvey to FO, no.291, 18.8.1953. Roland Jacquin de Margerie was Deputy Director General for Political and Economic Affairs, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

accepted the rejection of UN intervention. Even so, Bidault noted on 14 August that he was satisfied with this result.⁹⁹

However, el-Glaoui did not stop. On 13 August 1953, el-Glaoui and el-Kittani gathered 9 pashas out of 23 and 309 *caids* out of 325, in order to issue a proclamation naming a new Sultan. Desperate to avoid the naming of a new Sultan, Guillaume had talks with el-Glaoui on 15 August and succeeded in persuading the latter not to do so. The pashas and *caids*, therefore, dissolved the gathering and affirmed 'leur confiance dans la France pour résoudre le problème de trône.' However, on 15 August, el-Glaoui and el-Kittani elected as an Imam Sidi Moulay Mohammed Ben Arafa, an uncle of Mohammed V.¹⁰⁰ Having failed to obtain French approval, they confined themselves to nominating an Imam, but this was meant to pressure Paris to accept Arafa as a new Sultan. El-Glaoui explained that 'un Imam, chef suprême religieux marocain... détiendra l'autorité spirituelle jusque-là exercée par le Sultan en même temps que l'autorité temporelle' but the existence of an Imam was not compatible with that of a Sultan, since the latter was both a sovereign and religious chief. The Sultan announced his refusal to accept a new Imam on 16 August and once again requested French intervention to restore order. This extraordinary situation led to a bloody incident in Oujda, a city in the North-Western region, on that day, in which twenty-three people were killed.¹⁰¹

On 17 August, John Dorman, the US consul at Rabat, urged the State Department to intervene, firstly because US Air Force and Naval bases could be targets of terrorism in the case of passive US acceptance of the coup and secondly because '[a]s long as US is [the] only country maintaining special treaty rights [in] Morocco we are expected... [to] concern ourselves plight [of] their country'.¹⁰² Furthermore, another official at Tangier argued:

United States was also symbol that some hope lay in eventual recognition of legitimate aspirations [through] cooperation with anti-Commie [sic] West. There is reason [to] fear now that nationalists may be finally driven to arms of Commies.¹⁰³

⁹⁹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.86, Guillaume to Bidault, no.753/755, 14.8.1953.

¹⁰⁰ CARAN, Archives Georges Bidault, 457AP, vol.117, [Maroc, la crise d'août 1953], Rabat to Paris, no.720/729, 16.8.1953.

¹⁰¹ *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.266. The Sultan's message of 16 August 1953 stated that he was 'le seul souverain du Maroc et son seul chef spirituel'.

¹⁰² *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.616-618, Dorman to the State Department, no.32, 17.8.1953.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, pp.618-619, The Diplomatic Agent at Tangier (Satterthwaite) to the State Department, no.72, 17.8.1953. Byroade was Assistant Secretary of State for Near East, South Asian, and African Affairs.

On the next day, John Jernegan, now the Deputy of Henry Byroade, warned a French official that Moroccan affairs were so serious that ‘l'on estime ici particulièrement inquiétants dans la mesure où ils peuvent affecter les relations de l'Occident avec le monde arabe’.¹⁰⁴ Similarly, on the same day Harvey conveyed to de Margerie British concern about the deposition that could certainly cause Arab resentment.¹⁰⁵ However, the Anglo-Saxons did not publicly prompt the French to avoid the deposition.

El-Glaoui's naming of the Imam seriously alarmed Paris, since the French assumption that Mohammed V's acceptance of the French plan would calm el-Glaoui had turned out to be wrong. At this stage, it can be assumed, the French had three options: firstly, the prevention of el-Glaoui's attack against the Sultan probably by using French military force; secondly, the Sultan's deposition by el-Glaoui; thirdly, the deposition by France. A Quai d'Orsay note of 17 August pointed out that France had two obligations resulting from the Treaty of Fez: firstly, to guarantee the Sultan's status, and secondly, to take all police action in order to maintain order.¹⁰⁶ The first point denoted a double responsibility, i.e. the guarantee of the sovereign and that of the dynasty. The second point dictated that the French government should not leave the situation as it was, since the conflict between the Sultan and el-Glaoui would be highly likely to lead to a civil war or a replacement of the Sultan by el-Glaoui. Then this note merely argued for the third option, mentioning that deposition was justified but only if the sovereign was endangering the dynasty itself. Why was the third option considered the best? The Quai had already ruled out the first option, presumably because it was thought this would trigger a large-scale armed conflict with Berber forces led by el-Glaoui. The French also feared the possibility of Berber revolt, as most of the French Union forces in Morocco were recruited from Berber people. The second option was out of the question, because this would be a fatal blow to the French authority in Morocco, considering the second point of this note. Thus the Quai was inclined to the Sultan's deposition by France as the least evil of the three options. However, the Quai was aware that whatever course the government took, it would have very grave consequences for Franco-Moroccan relations.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.86, Washington to Paris, no.6318/6326, 18.8.1953. Note that this was the only deviation from the British line that they, the British, should not advise the French.

¹⁰⁵ PRO, FO371/102975, JM1015/64, Paris to FO, no.291, 18.8.1953.

¹⁰⁶ CARAN, Archives Georges Bidault, 457AP, vol.117, [Maroc, la crise d'août 1953], Note pour le M. Président Bidault, 17.8.1953.

¹⁰⁷ This view was conveyed to the Americans. *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.619-620, Dillon to the State Department, no.624, 18.8.1953

The situation was reaching a critical point, especially because a religious festival called *Aïd el-Kébir*, to be held on 21 August, was thought to represent the deadline for the French decision because the Sultan had to attend this festival as a religious leader. On 17 August 1953, el-Glaoui finally began to mobilise Berber troops in Marrakech. Throughout all the Arab world there were demonstrations against France and demands for UN intervention.¹⁰⁸ Then, el-Glaoui's ultimatum of 18 August to the French and the Sultan was to determine the French course of action regarding the Sultan most decisively. He announced that the Moroccan people were awaiting the French decision whether to remove Mohammed V or not and that unless the government acted immediately and firmly there would no longer be any place for France in Morocco.¹⁰⁹ In fact, el-Glaoui could no longer stop the movements of his fellow pashas and *caïds* and their tribesmen.¹¹⁰ If el-Glaoui had stopped, he would have lost face in the eyes of Berber tribesmen. The Sultan's acceptance of the French plan turned out to be insufficient to halt el-Glaoui's movement and therefore the Berber troops' attack against the Sultan was imminent.

The French Council of Ministers on 19 August 1953 failed to reach a decision whether to support the Sultan because of his acceptance of the French demands or to satisfy el-Glaoui by deposing the Sultan. In the early morning of 20 August, Guillaume asked el-Glaoui to withdraw his troops on condition that the Sultan denounced the Istiqlal, but el-Glaoui refused, because his troops were already moving towards Rabat and he knew that such a denunciation was not likely. Finally, the French cabinet reached a decision, later the same day, that France could not meet forces backing el-Glaoui with French troops, who were recruited from the Berber people, and that the only course open was to obtain Mohammed V's abdication or depose him. Immediately after on that day, Guillaume asked the Sultan to abdicate but, when the latter refused, Guillaume removed him and his two sons by plane to Corsica.¹¹¹ On 20 August, Ben Arafa was named the new Sultan by the Maghzen. The French government thus chose the deposition because it represented the least evil, even though it had obtained Mohammed V's acceptance of the municipal project. The French managed to avoid a civil war while

¹⁰⁸ Maxwell, *Lords*, p.225.

¹⁰⁹ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.167.

¹¹⁰ Note that de Blesson had already informed Paris of this point on 8 August 1953.

¹¹¹ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.621-622, Dillon to the State Department, no.672, 20.8.1953. The following day Dillon reported the French decision: 'We do not believe that French government itself was guilty of any duplicity in this matter... Except for L'Aurore, non-Communist press had generally been critical... [S]everal Ministers, notably Faure and Mitterrand were strongly opposed to taking action [to] depose Sultan but... in final analysis all were unwilling to take decision [to] use force to impose a solution'. *Ibid.*, pp.622-624, Dillon to the State Department, no.695, 21.8.1953.

maintaining their own initiative in coping with the situation, but they knew that not only the Arab-Asians but also international opinion were bound to judge them harshly.

Undoubtedly, the deposition was what Paris had wanted to avoid at all costs. French Residency officials were largely to blame for the denouement in the immediate term in the sense that they contributed to el-Glaoui's movement gaining strength in defiance of governmental instructions, so much that Paris could not halt it without using military force. However, the French government itself had to take some responsibility for the deposition because it was also certain that the government pressurised Mohammed V to agree to its plan, by making use of the anti-Sultan movement. Paris had no intention to side with Mohammed V unless he dissociated himself with the Istiqlal. Moreover, as the Anglo-Americans correctly pointed out, this was a consequence of the long-term culmination of French support for el-Glaoui and the Berbers as against the Sultan,¹¹² although it was highly doubtful that el-Glaoui's movement had unanimous support from the Berber people.¹¹³ In fact, French rule in Morocco had been based on a precarious balance between the Arabs represented by the Sultan and the Berbers represented by el-Glaoui since 1912. In this sense, August 1953 witnessed the collapse of a traditional principle of French colonial rule: 'divide and rule'. In fact, French control in Morocco had been based on a precarious balance between Mohammed V and el-Glaoui.¹¹⁴

Despite its opposition to the deposition, the State Department made no public statement concerning the French action. This was because '[the] Department feels any statement which would not offend French would be too weak to accomplish useful purpose with Arabs'.¹¹⁵ Nevertheless, Dulles gave a clear warning to the French. On 24 August 1953, he told the US Embassy in Paris:

to impress upon Laniel our gravest concern that time is running out and that if France does not institute quickly a Reform program with real substance with view to granting internal autonomy not only to Moroccans but to Tunisians and show real determination to move along this path notwithstanding the obstruction of local French officials [and] colons alike, we do not see how we can long pursue our present course.¹¹⁶

¹¹² PRO, FO371/102976, JM1015/73, Harvey to FO, no.289, 21.8.1953.

¹¹³ One ex-caid, who had resigned in February 1953, informed the Americans in September 1953: 'the Berbers were wholeheartedly in favor of the former Sultan.' NARA, RG59, Lot72 D232, Entry 5169, Box 1, [UN General Assembly (sept-dec. 1953) Morocco and Tunisia], Memorandum from Satterthwaite to Lodge, undated.

¹¹⁴ Introduction, p.12.

¹¹⁵ FRUS 1952-1954, XI, pp.629-630, Dulles to the US Mission at the UN, no.80, 25.8.1953.

¹¹⁶ NARA, RG59, Lot58 D48, Box 5, Entry 1293, Memorandum to Byroade, 26.8.1954.

On the same day, Dulles instructed Lodge to vote against the inscription of the Moroccan case on the SC agenda.¹¹⁷ Thus, the Americans gave a reprieve to the French. Failing to obtain two-thirds of the member states (seven votes), the SC rejected the inscription on 3 September 1953 by a vote of five to five, with one abstention.¹¹⁸ Dillon in Paris reported to Washington on 16 September that the US opposition had made a good impression on French opinion.¹¹⁹ In spite of the UNGA resolution of December 1952, the Americans were patient enough to wait for the French government to move towards Morocco's internal autonomy.

Since the establishment of the Istiqlal, the French goal had been to sever its links with Mohammed V. The French had failed to do so when he rejected the December 1952 plan, but nonetheless succeeded in weakening the party's strength by making use of the Casablanca riot. After this incident, the French still wanted the Sultan to dissociate himself from the party, but knowing that it was no longer possible to threaten him with deposition, given the UN resolution of December 1952, they expected el-Glaoui's movement to pressurise him to accept the municipal plan, or ideally, to denounce the Istiqlal. If only the Sultan accepted the plan, the French hoped, not only would it be a significant step towards Morocco's adherence to the French Union, but also the gap between the party and him would be widened. However, el-Glaoui's failure to stop the move against Mohammed V obliged the French to depose him without having severed links between him and the Istiqlal. Inevitably, this was to enhance his prestige as a political martyr and strengthen the Istiqlal immensely, as the French were well aware. The deposition made the French realise the strength of nationalism, but even so, they tried to ignore it. They optimistically considered that under Arafa's reign, their plans would be able to receive acquiescence if not support from the people.

¹¹⁷ *FRUS 1952-1954, XI*, pp.627-628, Dulles to the Embassy in France, no.627, 24.8.1953.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, pp.629-630, Dulles to the US Mission at the UN, no.80, 25.8.1953.

¹¹⁹ NARA, RG59, CDF, 320/9-1653, Dillon to Dulles, no.1094, 16.9.1953. Dillon continued that the Americans should 'keep the closest possible liaison with the French delegation' at the UNGA session, as he considered the US vote 'a basis [sic] and very important factor in Bidault's decision to push the EDC actively'.

Chapter 5: Tunisia's internal autonomy; Tunisia, January 1953 to June 1955

5.1 Towards the French plan of March 1954

The Bey's acceptance of French settlers' participation in the municipal assemblies in December 1952¹ provoked various reactions in Tunisia. Leaders of French settlers like Colonna, welcomed it. In contrast, radical opinion among indigenous people protested against his betrayal and felt disappointed with the Neo-Destour, who 'n'a pu réaliser aucun de ses buts' despite their efforts in internationalising the problem in the UN. The Neo-Destour and the communists published communiqués protesting against the 'coup de force' by the French authorities, but some Neo-Destour members argued that a truce was needed in order to let the French abandon their firm attitude.² Furthermore, violent activities protesting against the French plan started. An armed organisation called the Fellaghas was created in Southern Tunisia soon after Hauteclercque's imposition of the plan on the Bey.³

It is worth noting the Bey's motivation behind his approval of the French plan, which the ancient Tunisian Prime Minister Chenik explained to a French official in February 1953:

le Bey n'avait absolument aucun désir de se dépouiller de ses priviléges. Sidi Lamine... n'avait participé en rien à la rédaction du discours du trône du 15 mai 1951, œuvre de Ben Youssef et de Badra. La formule d'une monarchie constitutionnelle du type anglais était aussi éloignée que possible...⁴

As for the reason why the Bey had come near the Neo-Destour especially in May 1951, Chenik maintained it was because he had not had any other way to win popularity despite his fear of the nationalist party. It can be assumed, therefore, that the Bey was more opportunistic than nationalist-oriented: what motivated him to accept the French plan in December 1952 was his desire to preserve his privileges as a sovereign and he was not unwilling to side with France once he understood that the nationalist cause did not win international support. In fact, the nationalists' demand for the establishment of a

¹ Chapter 3, pp.87-88.

² MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.388, Hauteclercque to Schuman, no.2033, 24.12.1952; Hauteclercque to Paris, no.2193/2199, 27.12.1952; Letter to Bidault, 5.2.1953; *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.195.

³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Paris to Tunis, Evolution de la Situation en Tunisie depuis l'Assemblée Générale des Nations Unies de 1953, 24.9.1954.

⁴ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.388, Hauteclercque to Paris, no.175, 11.2.1953. Hauteclercque later noted: 'le Bey, dans le fond de son cœur, ne souhaite aucunement le développement d'institutions démocratiques en Tunisie'. vol.388, Hauteclercque to Paris, no.462/464, 16.4.1953.

legislative Tunisian national assembly theoretically meant the loss of the Bey's legislative power, even if it was nominal.

The Bey's acceptance allowed the French to proceed to the next step. Mayer's declaration on 6 January 1953 reflected their determination to accomplish the June 1952 plan.⁵ The Quai d'Orsay argued later in January 1953 that France should, firstly, prepare for the *Caïdat* and municipal elections envisaged in the *dahir* of December 1952 and secondly, follow up the plan.⁶

The local elections were held in the spring of 1953. In the *Caïdat* elections from 13 to 23 April 1953, the French were content that 59% of registered voters participated in them, despite the boycott from the Neo-Destour and the Tunisian socialist party. However, the assassination of Taïeb Gachem, the father of the Tunisian Minister of Public Health, on 22 April gave impetus to a series of violent activities against pro-French Tunisians. Dr Ben Raïs, the Minister of Commerce, narrowly escaped assassination on 1 May 1953. The municipal elections were held on 3 and 10 May. Just before them, on the night of 2 May, fearful of nationalist disruptive activities, the French authorities had arrested a number of trade union leaders, Neo-Destour members and communists.⁷ However, the results of these elections were much less satisfactory than those of the *Caïdat* elections, as only 51% of Tunisian voters took part and in Tunis in particular, the percentage was only 8.83%.⁸ According to Mayer's report in front of the National Assembly on 12 May, of the sixty-nine municipalities as a whole, forty elected all their council members, but two municipalities did not have complete Tunisian membership, three municipalities had only French members, and ten purely Tunisian municipalities did not elect any members. Some Tunisian council members were reportedly elected against their will. Furthermore, the *caïds*, who were the presidents of the municipal councils, delayed delegating their powers to elected vice-presidents, who had to fulfil the role of mayors. In total, 'les élections municipales n'ont nullement détendu l'atmosphère dans la Régence. Au contraire, elles ont été l'occasion d'une reprise du terrorisme.'⁹

However, some leading French figures were aware of the need for a 'soft policy' in Tunisia. In May 1953, President Auriol stated at the French Council of Ministers: 'Il faut, si l'on veut ramener ce pays à nous, faire des réformes sociales profondes, il faut

⁵ Chapter 3, pp.72-73.

⁶ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre Pinay, no.29, Note, 27.1.1953.

⁷ *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.232.

⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.388, MAE to Messieurs les chefs des postes diplomatiques, no.480AL, 15.5.1953; *FRUS* 1952-195, XI, Dillon to the State Department, no.5783, 4.5.1953.

⁹ *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.233. The Mayer government fell on 21 May 1953.

avoir le peuple avec nous, il faut enfin changer de méthodes'.¹⁰ In early July 1953, a committee studying the overseas problems, presided over by General Georges Catroux,¹¹ made recommendations to the government: 'la Tunisie verrait affirmer solennellement par la France le principe de sa souveraineté. Elle prendrait graduellement la gestion de ses affaires intérieures sous la direction d'un gouvernement tunisien homogène, assisté d'un organisme législatif élu, les Français étant représentés dans un Conseil créé auprès du Résident général'.¹²

Meanwhile, the Tunisian situation remained unsettled, partly because of the Moroccan situation. An armed incident occurred on 14 August 1953 between the police and the Fellaghas, killing eight people.¹³ On the same day, an American official in Tunis noted that there was no sign that a financial council, which was expected to review the budget in place of the defunct Grand Council, would be established despite the approaching 30 September deadline, when the second half of the 1953-54 budget had to be promulgated. One week later, the same American official pointed to 'the continued deterioration in the security situation in Tunisia during the past week', referring to the fact that French Residency officials were taking the situation more seriously than before.¹⁴

However, the French were slow to move, presumably because they were preoccupied with Moroccan affairs, where opposition to the Sultan had increasingly mounted since the beginning of 1953. It was only after Moroccan affairs had settled down as a result of the Sultan's deposition¹⁵ that the French government took its next major step in Tunisia. On 2 September 1953, Pierre Voizard was appointed as the new Resident-General, a decision that seemed to reflect Auriol's statement to the Council of Ministers in May 1953.¹⁶ This was welcomed by the Tunisian nationalists to some extent. Hedi Nouira, the then Neo-Destour's Secretary-General, declared that he was prepared to help

¹⁰ Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.176-177.

¹¹ He was an ex-Governor-General of Algeria and was recognised as a liberal leader on colonial issues.

¹² Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.178. Périllier himself participated in this committee. Catroux was to publish the so-called 'Catroux Plan' on 4 October 1953. This constituted two steps: (1) France's reaffirmation of the principle of Tunisian sovereignty, (2) the prompt establishment of a regime of internal autonomy which would gradually be placed under the direction of an all-native Tunisian Government. This plan was welcomed by the Tunisian nationalists including the Neo-Destour, but was not adopted by the French government. NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/10-953, Hughes to the State Department, Despatch no.53, 9.10.1953.

¹³ *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.271.

¹⁴ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/8-1453, LeBreton to the State Department, Despatch no.26, 14.8.1953; 772.00/8-2153, LeBreton to the State Department, Despatch no.28, 21.8.1953. A financial council had been envisaged in the June 1952 plan and, in the spring of 1953 there had been a prospect of the Bey's accepting this council.

¹⁵ Chapter 4, Section 2.

¹⁶ Auriol explains this remark in his memoirs: 'des changements de méthodes qui implique un changement de personne.' Vincent Auriol, *Journal du Septennat 1947-1954*, Tome VII, p.152.

Voizard 'à créer une détente.'¹⁷ On 21 September, the Bey made an appeal to the Tunisian people, expressing the desire for a calmer political atmosphere to facilitate the solution of problems, an appeal which, according to French sources, had been made voluntarily for the first time. The French hoped that this appeal would reduce terrorist activities, considering the prestige that the Bey enjoyed among the Tunisians.¹⁸

On 26 September 1953, Voizard arrived in Tunis, with the French government's instructions to begin reducing tension without, however, touching on substantive points of internal autonomy. Actually, the amelioration of this tense atmosphere was the key theme that Paris and the Bey had in mind. Voizard announced, (1) the abolition of press censorship, (2) the transfer of police powers, which had been in French hands since the introduction of martial law, to civil authorities, and (3) the amnesty of all political leaders who had been arrested in January 1952.¹⁹ Paris had also instructed him to complete the June 1952 plan and that in the process of implementing the reform, he would have to negotiate with the Bey about future agreements between the two countries, which the French government judged necessary to guarantee permanent Franco-Tunisian links thereby securing the interests of France and French settlers.²⁰ To put into effect the above policies, Voizard was given extensive freedom of action so that he could explore the conditions under which Franco-Tunisian dialogues would be resumed.²¹

On 17 August 1953, the Arab-Asian countries had requested the UN Secretary-General to take up the North African problem.²² The GA decided to inscribe these problems on the agenda on 17 September 1953.²³ The French and British governments' positions remained opposed to inscription, as the former confirmed: 'on the Moroccan and Tunisian items the French delegation will adopt exactly the same tactics as last year.'²⁴ However, on account of the events in Morocco in the summer of 1953, the Moroccan issue dominated the UNGA debates on North African affairs.²⁵ On 26

¹⁷ *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.285.

¹⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.388, Note 'situation en Tunisie', undated.

¹⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Bidault to the Bey, 10.5.1954.

²⁰ The French government deemed these conventions necessary because it feared that the Tunisian assembly designed in the June 1952 reforms might abrogate the protectorate treaty. However, no documents are available to show that Voizard had talks with the Tunisians on this subject. MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.388, Compte-rendu de la réunion tenue chez le Secrétaire d'Etat, 14.9.1953.

²¹ The French Council of Ministers had made this decision on 24 September 1953. *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.286.

²² MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.373, MAE to the Resident-General, no.1203/AL, 2.9.1953. Those which submitted this memorandum were Afghanistan, Saudi Arabia, Burma, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Lebanon, Liberia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Syria, Thailand and Yemen.

²³ *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.287.

²⁴ PRO, FO371/102942, JF1041/48, FO to New York, no.842, 19.9.1953.

²⁵ Chapter 6, p.142.

October 1953, the GA First Committee passed the Arab-Asian draft resolution recommending: ‘toutes les mesures nécessaires soient prises pour que le peuple tunisien jouisse de son droit à l’indépendance complète’.²⁶ However, having considered the unsatisfactory result of the Moroccan debates in the GA plenary session, the Arab-Asian countries accepted the amendments introduced by the Icelandic delegation, which confined itself to recommending that both parties pursue negotiations ‘en vue de l’accession des Tunisiens à la capacité de s’administrer eux-mêmes’.²⁷ On 3 November 1953, however, the GA plenary session rejected this motion just after its rejection of a Moroccan draft resolution and instead approved the Iraqi motion which proposed postponing debate on the Tunisian problem. The French noted that the Arab-Asian countries did not want to suffer another defeat following the Moroccan case,²⁸ because, to those countries, Morocco offered a more promising prospect than Tunisia.

Even after the UN debates, Voizard was quite cautious: before taking the next step, he started to sound out the Tunisian nationalists and, in particular, the Bey about the possible programme. The French had already abandoned the June 1952 plan as unrealistic, given French settlers’ opposition. In October 1953, he reportedly continued to widen contacts with the Tunisians.²⁹ Regarding his tactics, Quai d’Orsay officials explained to the Americans in December 1953:

[By] these consultations and his conversations with the Bey... he expects to be able to arrive at his own conclusions of the nature of reform which might be feasible. The Bey has indicated to the Resident-General that he favors such an approach... [In contrast] M. Périllier’s approach... was too spectacular and encouraged ever-increasing demands on the part of Neo-Destour.³⁰

The French were trying to convince the Americans that Périllier’s policy had failed because he did not spend enough time on persuading the Tunisians, but not because the French aim was unacceptable to them. On 1 January 1954, the Resident-General announced that the French authorities would release forty-one Neo-Destour leaders, including Mongi Slim, the director of the Neo-Destour Political Bureau.³¹ In parallel

²⁶ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.373, Hoppenot to Paris, no.2791/2797, 21.10.1953; vol.373, Hoppenot to Paris, no.2898, 26.10.1953. This draft resolution also recommended that martial law in Tunisia be ended and that political prisoners be released. UNGA Official Records, vol.8, 1953, First Committee, p.102. The US delegation voted against this.

²⁷ *L’Année Politique*, 1953, p.300.

²⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.373, Hoppenot to Paris, no.3100/3101, 4.11.1953.

²⁹ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/10-1453, American Consulate General (Morris Hughes) to the State Department, Despatch no.57, 14.10.1953.

³⁰ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/12-253, Paris to the State Department, Despatch no.1467, 2.12.1953.

³¹ Habib Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, p.136. The release was what had been demanded by René Coty, who became the new President of the French Republic on 16 January 1954. Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.187.

with this caution on the part of the French, the party took ‘une position d’attente et d’expectative’.³²

However, one major exception to amnesty was left: Habib Bourguiba, who was on the Galite Island, about twenty miles off Tunisia’s Mediterranean coast, and who consequently was unable to contact the Tunisian nationalists or receive proper medical care despite his ill health. Therefore, the Tunisian nationalists campaigned strongly for his release. On 18 January 1954, Mohammed Masmoudi, the Neo-Destour’s representative in France, publicised a communiqué deplored the fact that Bourguiba had not yet been liberated.³³ In response, the French Residency issued a communiqué: ‘aucune mesure en faveur de Habib Bourguiba n’interviendrait sous la menace’.³⁴ This was because, explained French officials to the Americans, his transfer to France or Tunisia could allow him to begin an anti-reform campaign thereby disturbing the current atmosphere favourable for the resumption of Franco-Tunisian negotiations. They continued that the Bey agreed with the French, and added: ‘he would prefer not to have Bourguiba, whom he referred to as an “exalte” (hot-headed person), on the scene at this particular time.’³⁵ Namely, the Bey had already decided to break with the nationalists. This tough French attitude was opposed, however, by Alain Savary of the SFIO, who declared on 28 January: ‘il n’y aura pas de solution contre ou sans Bourguiba’.³⁶

5.2 The French plan of March 1954

On 27 February 1954, the French restricted cabinet meeting unanimously approved the plan that Voizard had presented.³⁷ This was the so-called Voizard plan. A Quai d’Orsay note of that day argued that this plan contained four principal points: institutional reforms, the formation of a new Tunisian government, Bourguiba’s transfer and a customs and cereal market union between France and Tunisia.³⁸

Regarding the reforms, it argued as follows.

³² Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, p.204.

³³ Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.187.

³⁴ *Ibid.*, p.188.

³⁵ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/1-1254, Paris to the State Department, 12.1.1953.

³⁶ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, p.196.

³⁷ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/3-154, Paris to Dulles, no.3132, 1.3.1954.

³⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Note pour le Président par la Direction d’Afrique-Levant, 27.2.1954.

1. L'Exécutif
 - a) Le Conseil des Ministres comprend dorénavant 8 ministres tunisiens... et 4 membres français...³⁹
 - b) Le rôle de Secrétaire Général... [s]ous son nouveau titre de 'Secrétaire général à la Présidence du Conseil'... cesse d'être chef d'administration et sa subordination est nettement affirmée à l'égard du Président du Conseil... S'il continue à centraliser les arrêtés réglementaire... ceux-ci doivent être désormais soumis à la signature du Président du Conseil...
 - c) Suppression de l'assentiment résidentiel aux arrêts ministériels.
2. Assemblées représentatives

L'Assemblée tunisienne comprend 45 membres tunisiens élus au suffrage universel à deux degrés... Elle est obligatoirement consultée préalablement à l'adoption par le Gouvernement de tout décret législatif... La Délégation des Français de Tunisie comprend 23 délégués et 19 délégués adjoints, élus... au suffrage universel direct... Pour l'exercice de ses attributions financières..., l'Assemblée tunisienne siège en session spéciale budgétaire par l'adjonction à ses membres de deux délégations, l'une de 19 membres désignés par les Chambres économiques françaises et tunisiennes, l'autre des 42 membres de la Délégation des Français de Tunisie.

3. Les collectivités locales

- a) Municipalités – Alors que les Présidents de municipalités étaient, jusqu'à présent, nommés par le Bey parmi des membres du corps caïdal, les conseils municipaux élisent désormais leur Président parmi leurs membres...
- b) Conseils de caïdat – [L]es membres de l'Assemblée tunisienne, de la Délégation des Français de Tunisie et des Chambres économiques sont appelé à siéger... aux délibérations des conseils de caïdat...

Certainly the French made concessions on the following points: firstly, the numerical predominance of Tunisian ministers over French ministers in the cabinet, secondly, the suppression of the French Secretary-General's endorsement, and thirdly, the introduction of some democratic elements at local levels. However, the devolution of powers from the French to the Tunisians remained superficial, since the Resident-General was to retain the power of veto, as will be shown below. Furthermore, the national Tunisian assembly was to be only consultative in character, unlike a legislative assembly envisaged in the June 1952 plan. Above all, by allowing French settlers to discuss budgetary and financial matters, the French denied the Tunisians a right to self-determination, as opposed to Bourguiba's argument.⁴⁰ Namely, France was still committed to the *principe de co-souveraineté*.

³⁹ It was planned that the prime minister and the ministries of *Institutions musulmanes*, *Justice*, *Santé Publique*, *Commerce et artisanat*, *Agriculture*, *Travail*, and *Urbanisme et habitat* would be occupied by the Tunisians and *Secrétaire général à la Présidence du Conseil*, *Directeur des Finances*, *Directeur de l'Institution Publique* and *Directeur des Travaux Publics* by the French.

⁴⁰ Nineteen members appointed by les *chambres économiques* were composed of eleven French and eight Tunisians. As a result, an equal number of French and Tunisian members were planned to participate in financial and budgetary discussions. *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.194. For Bourguiba's argument, see Chapter 1, pp.22-23.

The second point of the Voizard plan concerned a new Tunisian government, with which the French government was to negotiate about the implementation of the plan. Voizard's choice of prime minister was Mohammed Salah Mzali, a former minister of the Chenik Government. He had already obtained the Bey's approval on this matter on 5 February 1954.⁴¹ Thirdly, the Quai's note of 27 February suggested Bourguiba's transfer from the Galite Island to another place where he could enjoy better facilities. Therefore, his transfer aimed to ease Tunisian discontent, thereby facilitating the new Tunisian government's task.⁴² Finally, this note argued that France and Tunisia should form the customs and cereal market union.

In addition to the four principal points, this note advised that Voizard should start negotiations with the Bey about new Franco-Tunisian agreements with a view to guaranteeing the interests of France and French settlers. It was argued:

ces réformes continuent à procéder de la méthode du “don gratuit” sans aucune contre partie... [N]ous en arrivons au point où un nouvel amenuisement des prérogatives de la France en Tunisie ne permettrait plus d'assumer convenablement la protection des intérêts français par la voie des garanties institutionnelles...

Referring to the fact that in September 1953, Paris had instructed Voizard to examine agreements, this note continued: ‘De telles conventions seront de plus en plus difficile à négocier au fur et à mesure que les pouvoirs de l’Assemblée tunisienne s’affirmeront.’ Although Voizard personally considered that his power of veto would be sufficient to block possible anti-French deliberations by the Tunisian Assembly, the Quai d’Orsay insisted that Foreign Minister Bidault would have to emphasise to him the importance of such agreements. Fearing that even nominal concessions listed in their plan could be harmful to the interests of France and French settlers, the French considered that their protection must be reinforced by means of new agreements, and not only through the existing agreements with the Bey, i.e. the Treaty of Bardo.

On 4 March 1954, the Bey sealed the reform projects and the formation of the Mzali Government was announced.⁴³ From the French viewpoint, this was a remarkable victory in the sense that, for the first time, the Bey's acceptance paved the way for French settlers' participation in a Tunisian national assembly. In fact, as the Americans had correctly pointed out in February 1954, the French were, despite Neo-Destour's

⁴¹ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, p.197.

⁴² This note agreed with Voizard, who proposed that Bourguiba be transferred to Corsica.

⁴³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Tunis to Paris, no.172/176, 4.3.1954.

evident opposition, ‘counting on the Bey’s support and personal prestige to counteract this opposition and to win popular acceptance... of the reform program.’⁴⁴

However, the Voizard plan turned out to be very unpopular, and protestations followed from both the Tunisian and French settlers’ side. According to a report sent to Washington, ‘the recent governmental reforms... have succeeded in pleasing no one.’ The Neo-Destour and various nationalists bitterly denounced the ‘pseudo-reforms’ that would ‘lead to a type of co-sovereignty rather than Tunisian sovereignty.’⁴⁵ In fact, the party had not yet taken its final position at the end of March, as it did not exclude ‘une attitude “d’opposition constructive” à l’intérieur des nouvelles institutions’. Some Neo-Destour leaders were inclined to accept the French plan, because they did not want to break their relationship with the Bey.⁴⁶ The French speculated that Bourguiba’s position concerning the plan would crucially affect the party’s orientation.⁴⁷ On the part of French settlers, the *Rassemblement français* issued a motion on 10 March, deplored the fact that they were presented with a fait accompli ‘d’une organisation d’État conçue dans le sens du renversement du protectorat’.⁴⁸ Five days later, Tunisian students of the *Grande Mosquée* launched a demonstration under the Vieux-Destour’s influence.⁴⁹ What is more, anti-French armed activities rapidly grew in number. The Fellaghas, whom the French considered were receiving support from extremist elements from Egypt and Libya, attacked a rail car in Southern Tunisia on 22 March.⁵⁰ Having started in December 1952, the Fellagha movement was increasingly to gain force from March 1954 onwards.

While accepting the Voizard plan, the Bey was desperate to regain popularity among the Tunisian people, particularly because some nationalists insisted that ‘le Bey avait trahi la cause du nationalisme’. He had proposed Bourguiba’s transfer to Metropolitan France and, on 30 March 1954, he sent a letter to that effect to René Coty, the President of the French Republic. Knowing the Bey’s intentions, the Quai d’Orsay advised: ‘le Souverain pourra-t-il prouver que son appel a été entendu et en retirer un bénéfice moral que nous n’avons pas à lui marchander si nous voulons pouvoir compter sur sa

⁴⁴ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/2-1954, Paris to the State Department, no.2150, 19.2.1954.

⁴⁵ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/3-1754, Hughes to the State Department, Despatch no.182, 17.3.1954.

⁴⁶ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, p.209.

⁴⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.375, Note, *La Situation en Tunisie*, 23.3.1954.

⁴⁸ *L’Année Politique*, 1954, pp.195-196.

⁴⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.375, Note, *La Situation en Tunisie*, 23.3.1954.

⁵⁰ Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.200; MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Note, *Evolution de la Situation en Tunisie depuis l’Assemblée Générale des Nations Unies*, 24.9.1954.

collaboration.⁵¹ Thus, the strengthening of the Bey's position was considered fundamental in order to achieve the French plan.

Despite opposition to the Voizard plan, the Neo-Destour did not exclude its participation in the envisaged elections, due to be held in June 1954. On 2 April 1954, its National Council adopted two motions. The first motion stated that 'les réformes du 4 mars 1954... portent atteinte à... la souveraineté tunisienne, une et indivisible..., et consacrent la participation des Français de Tunisie aux institutions' but the second one declared that the party 'ne peut envisage de participer aux prochaines élections qu'autant qu'auront été assurées les conditions d'un scrutin sincère et libre' and that Bourguiba's release was necessary in order to realise those conditions.⁵²

Later in April 1954, opposition to the Voizard plan was also expressed by Tahar Ben Ammar,⁵³ a former president of the Tunisian section of the Grand Council. On 21 April, he put forward a motion to the French. In fact, as a result of a series of meetings with other nationalists in April 1954, he had already the support of fifteen signatories, nine of whom had participated in the *Conseil des Quarante* summoned by the Bey on 1 August 1952.⁵⁴ Criticising its undemocratic character, Ben Ammar concluded that the Voizard plan, which retained the *principes de co-souveraineté*, did not meet Tunisian aspirations.⁵⁵ The Quai d'Orsay noted that he was beginning to align himself with the Neo-Destour although he had long been considered a moderate nationalist.⁵⁶

5.3 The Carthage Declaration

In May 1954 Tunisia experienced further troubles. As an American diplomat reported to Washington, 'the fellagahs [sic] are undermining French authority in Central and South Tunisia, intimidating the local population, and endeavouring to convince the villagers that the French are powerless to protect them.'⁵⁷ Later in the month, the Quai d'Orsay noted that the Fellaghas' activities were expanding into Northern Tunisia, commenting that the deterioration of the general situation 'n'est pas plus l'effet de la chute de Dien Bien Phu que l'espoir calculé par le Néo-Destour d'un changement de

⁵¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Voizard to Paris, no.383/390, 31.3.1954. Voizard commented about the Bey's motive: 'il ne faut voir dans cette lettre qu'un témoignage du besoin qu'épreuve le Souverain de revigorer sa popularité.'

⁵² *Le Monde*, 4-5.4.1954.

⁵³ He had stood for the *caïdat* elections in the spring of 1953, but had suddenly resigned his candidacy. MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Note, 9.5.1954.

⁵⁴ Chapter 3, p.76.

⁵⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Etude Critique des Décrets du 4 Mars 1954.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, Note, 9.5.1954.

⁵⁷ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/5-1254, Hughes to the State Department, Despatch no.29, 12.5.1954.

gouvernement et d'un retour éventuel sur les réformes du 4 mars.⁵⁸ Their activities were, continued the Quai, so fierce that police operations alone were limited in their ability to halt the attacks. However, the Fellagha was not only challenging French rule. It is important to emphasise that it was also undermining the Bey's authority, since he was a sovereign, however nominal, in the Tunisian people's mind.

It was in these circumstances that Paris decided on Bourguiba's transfer to Groix Island, near the Brittany Peninsula, hoping that this measure would contribute to a climate favourable to the elections.⁵⁹ This was because, firstly, the French were less optimistic about holding elections. It was noted: 'La participation du Néo-Destour aux élections... apparaît de moins en moins sûre et reste subordonnée au règlement du cas Bourguiba.'⁶⁰ The French in fact wondered if the Neo-Destour had not given its members instructions to oppose the envisaged elections.⁶¹ Secondly, they were anxious to restore the Bey's popularity, which they believed would bring about stability. On 21 May 1954, Voizard announced Bourguiba's transfer to Groix Island, where he was permitted to receive visits and to make public his views on the evolution of the Tunisian problem.⁶² However, the situation was to evolve in quite the opposite way to what the French had hoped.

Immediately after his transfer, Bourguiba wasted no time in phoning one of his entourage and ordered that his instructions of March 1954 be published without delay. In fact, on 10 March 1954, he had given a letter about the Voizard plan to his son, who had exceptionally been allowed to visit his father by the Resident-General. Expressing his disagreement with the plan, he had ordered the party leaders to take action 'pour faire comprendre au peuple sa décision de rompre définitivement avec le Bey.' For him, 'la légitimité n'est pas l'apanage du Bey, mais plutôt du peuple « source de tout pouvoir ».'⁶³ This was clearly the first outright challenge to the Bey's legitimacy. His conclusion was remarkable, considering other Neo-Destour members' conciliatory attitudes, exemplified by the 2 April 1954 declaration.⁶⁴ However, the Neo-Destour did not follow its president's instructions. The party's communiqué published on 22 May 1954 opposed the Voizard plan in spite of the improvement in Bourguiba's living

⁵⁸ The fall of the Dien-Bien-Phu was on 7 May 1954. The Neo-Destour had announced their indecision on the participation in elections in April 1954. Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, p.204.

⁵⁹ MAF, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Note, 10.5.1954.

⁶⁰ *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.217. A similar expression is found in *Le Monde*, 5.5.1954.

⁶¹ MAF, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.375, Note pour le Président, no.97, 20.5.1954.

⁶² Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.203.

⁶³ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, pp.226-227.

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, pp.226-236. Neo-Destour leaders had been informed of Bourguiba's ideas, but did not pursue them. *Ibid.*, p.228.

conditions – although this certainly attacked French policy – but was not aimed at encouraging the people to challenge the Bey's authority.⁶⁵

Bourguiba's instructions were published in the Arabic newspaper *Al-Sabah* on 27 May 1954. This had, to use his own expression, 'l'effet d'une bombe'. A significant fact was that this was a direct appeal to the Tunisian people, unlike the Neo-Destour's communiqué of 22 May 1954, which was merely directed at the French authorities. The press reported a further increase in violent activity, conducted not only by the Fellaghas but also by the French settlers. On 29 May, Voizard, who had just returned from Paris, was confronted by 200 hostile settlers demanding measures to protect their rights. Two days later the Bey condemned the violent activities before French and Tunisian representatives, breaking with the custom of not giving any audiences during Ramadan.⁶⁶ Here the French faced a dilemma: Bourguiba's contact with the nationalists was exacerbating the situation but prohibiting such contact would increase his prestige as a martyr, thereby further undermining the French plan's prospects. Therefore, the Quai d'Orsay did not decide on the prohibition, even though the Bey now demanded that Bourguiba's broadcasting activities be restricted again because the latter's remarks were seriously damaging his prestige.⁶⁷

Thus the Fellagha insurgency and Bourguiba's activities went hand in hand. However, this did not mean that Bourguiba was encouraging the Fellaghas' activities. Interviewed by *Paris-Match* on 28 May 1954, he stated: '« des hommes politiques sérieux » ne peuvent pas pousser leurs compatriotes à des actes de violence... c'est le désespoir qui a armé les mains des terroristes, et les vrais responsables du terrorisme ne sont pas les Tunisiens'.⁶⁸ Nonetheless, in any event both Bourguiba and the Fellagha undermined the Bey's authority and French rule immensely.

On 9 June 1954, Voizard noted: 'Le moral de l'équipe Mzali est mauvais... [L]es Ministres ont reçu des lettres de menace.'⁶⁹ In the light of the pro-French Tunisian government being jeopardised, a marked change appeared in the Quai d'Orsay's mindset. Maurice Schumann argued two days later: 'il y aurait intérêt, dans les circonstances actuelles, si l'on veut éviter l'isolement du Ministère Mzali et ne pas être amené à une impasse dans la mise en œuvre des réformes, à reprendre des contacts avec

⁶⁵ *Le Monde*, 23-24.5.1954.

⁶⁶ *Le Monde*, 29.5.1954-2.6.1954; *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.219. Bourguiba's analysis of the Voizard plan was published in *l'Express* on 29 May 1954. Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, pp.235-236, pp.348-354.

⁶⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Note pour le Secrétaire d'Etat, 1.6.1954.

⁶⁸ This statement was published in *Paris-Match* on 4 June 1954. *Le Monde*, 5.6.1954.

⁶⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.375, Tunis to Paris, no.724/726, 9.6.1954.

les éléments les plus représentatifs de la population française et tunisienne, y compris certaines personnalités du Néo-Destour.' This was the first time that the French had contemplated the need for overt talks with the Neo-Destour since January 1952, though they had no intention of discussing the modification to Tunisia's protectorate status as outlined in the treaty of Bardo.⁷⁰ Troubles were compounded for the French when the Laniel Government fell on 12 June. On the following day, the election for the Tunisian Economic Chamber was held, but most of the elected Tunisian members had expressed opposition to the Voizard plan.⁷¹ Day after day, terrorist incidents were reported in which many French and Tunisian people were killed or wounded. Local people were discouraged from going to shops or cinemas managed by French people and clerks received letters threatening them not to work at those shops.⁷²

On 16 June 1954, four Tunisian government ministers offered their resignation to Prime Minister Mzali. Voizard noted: 'C'est la première fois qu'un Ministre tunisien abandonne le pouvoir sans en avoir reçu expressément l'ordre du Bey.'⁷³ Furthermore, Mzali himself offered his resignation on the same day. 'The Bey seems definitely to have lost whatever popularity or respect in which he was held by a great number of Tunisians', as the Americans correctly put it.⁷⁴ However, the Bey requested Mzali to remain in place provisionally, as the appointment of a successor appeared extremely difficult, all the more so because of the ministerial crisis in Paris.⁷⁵

Mzali's resignation triggered a clear change in the French way of thinking. A note dated 17 June argued that the political situation in Tunisia was quickly deteriorating. This was partly due to the activities of the Fellaghas, who had established semi-independent political regimes in several areas. This note continued:

le Ministère démissionnaire n'a jamais... joui d'une grande popularité dans l'opinion tunisienne. [L']attitude du [Néo-]Destour semblait surtout dictée par son dépit d'avoir été tenu à l'écart des négociations et l'on pouvait espérer qu'influencée par la ferme position du Souverain, il se rallierait finalement à une attitude d'opposition constructive, excluant le recours à l'agitation...

[N]ous irions probablement au devant de difficultés plus graves encore si nous envisagions... de rechercher, avant que la situation ne soit redressée sur le plan de l'ordre public..., un accord avec le Néo-Destour en vue de la constitution d'un nouveau Ministère politique...

⁷⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Paris to Tunis, no.340/342, 11.6.1954.

⁷¹ *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.226.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p.225.

⁷³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.375, Voizard to Paris, no.767/768, 16.6.1954.

⁷⁴ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/6-1654, Hughes to the State Department, Despatch no.268, 16.6.1954.

⁷⁵ *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.226.

Dans l'immédiat, notre effort devrait donc... tendre à ramener rapidement l'ordre et la sécurité en Tunisie, et à assurer... l'administration du Pays.⁷⁶

Therefore, this note recommended that the government reinforce French forces in Tunisia to restore order and security. The Quai d'Orsay was aware that agreement with the Neo-Destour was fundamental in forming a new Tunisian government. This was the first time that agreement with the nationalist party had been conceived as indispensable to Tunisia's future.

Why did the Quai argue for the resumption of negotiations with the Neo-Destour? This was because the French had realised that it was no longer possible to form a new Tunisian government without its agreement. So far, the French had set up puppet governments counting on the Bey who had retained popularity among the people, and had been trying to introduce pseudo-internal autonomy under the guise of those governments. Now that the Bey's authority had collapsed due to the activities of Bourguiba and the Fellagha, the French had to find a new way of legitimising their control, otherwise the privileges of France and French settlers would be at peril. In fact, as will be argued below in detail, it was indirect control through collaboration with the nationalist party that they would adopt. Logically, these French concessions did not mean that they decided to abandon their interests in Tunisia but that they would change their way of control.

At the same time, Pierre Mendès-France was appointed as the new French prime minister on 18 June 1954, which was to bring about a dramatic change in the French attitude to the Tunisian problem. In his speech before being elected, he displayed his intentions to 'reprendre avec la Tunisie et le Maroc, les dialogues malheureusement interrompus'. Mendès-France obtained 419 votes in favour and 47 against for his nomination in the National Assembly. This meant that the Parliamentarians approved his new policy with an overwhelming majority. Nationalist circles in Tunisia received this news with enthusiasm,⁷⁷ because his liberal stance on overseas territories was well known.⁷⁸ The following day, he set up the Ministry for Tunisian and Moroccan Affairs, with Christian Fouchet as the Minister. Now North African affairs, which had been under the control of Maurice Schumann since the beginning of 1953, were handed over to Fouchet.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.375, Note pour le Ministre, 17.6.1954.

⁷⁷ Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.209; PRO, FO371/108588, JF1015/46, Tunis to FO, no.901/601/48, 19.6.1954.

⁷⁸ He had previously advocated that the government resume negotiations with North African nationalists. *Le Monde*, 18.6.1954.

⁷⁹ *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.232.

Immediately after, whilst negotiations for a peace settlement in Indochina were going on in Geneva, Mendès-France and his advisors discussed the development of their 'Tunisia strategy', its main points being: (1) a restoration of some of the moral authority of the Bey, providing limited assurance of the continuity of Tunisian legitimacy and (2) involving the Neo-Destour in negotiations.⁸⁰ Then, Mendès-France wanted to achieve a renewal of Franco-Tunisian relations, which went further than a resumption of dialogues with the Neo-Destour. A Quai d'Orsay memorandum dated 26 June 1954 argued that, as opposed to the Voizard plan, the opening of new negotiations on the status of Franco-Tunisian relations would be a pre-requisite for the Neo-Destour's agreement on a new Tunisian government.⁸¹

Paris desperately needed Bourguiba's agreement on this 'strategy', but it was politically dangerous to contact him officially. Therefore, Mendès-France asked Alain Savary to tell Bourguiba on 4 July 1954 that important decisions were about to be made, but that they could not possibly bear fruit without the Neo-Destour's agreement and support. Bourguiba gave Savary an encouraging reply.⁸² In fact, the day before, Bourguiba had written an article in *l'Express*, stating: 'les forces armées françaises continueront sous l'autorité du Résident Général'.⁸³ On 10 July, in an interview of *Le Monde* he confirmed that the French head of police would remain in post during the first stage of 'tunisification' of political institutions in his programme.⁸⁴ Having been informed of Mendès-France's intentions, Bourguiba was undoubtedly trying to make the French prime minister's new thinking more acceptable to French opinion.

Meanwhile, the Tunisian situation continued to worsen. On 5 July, the Bey finally accepted the Mzali Government's resignation and appointed Georges Dupoizat, the Secretary-General of the Tunisian government, as an interim prime minister.⁸⁵ A French national being appointed to this post, this was criticised by the Neo-Destour and even the Bey's entourage. In mid-July 1954, a group of French settlers in Tunisia wrote to Mendès-France: 'les « arguments du bon sens » soient substitués aux « atouts de la force »'.⁸⁶

⁸⁰ Lacouture noted that Mendès-France had talks with his advisors around 23 and 24 June 1954. Jean Lacouture, *Pierre Mendes France*, (Paris: Seuil, 1981), pp.246-247.

⁸¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Note pour le Ministre, 26.6.1954.

⁸² Lacouture, *Pierre Mendes France*, pp.246-247. No official record can be found concerning the Savary-Bourguiba talks. Savary was known for his liberal positions on colonial questions. *Ibid.*, p.200.

⁸³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Note pour le Ministre, 28.7.1954.

⁸⁴ *Le Monde*, 10.7.1954.

⁸⁵ *Le Monde*, 7.7.1954-10.7.1954.

⁸⁶ *Le Monde*, 17.7.1954.

The note of 16 July 1954 drafted by the Ministry for Tunisian and Moroccan Affairs argued for a more comprehensive plan to be introduced in place of the Voizard plan.⁸⁷ First of all, this note pointed out that ‘la politique des réformes’ based on the Convention of Marsa had failed, and that ‘dans le domaine institutionnel, la politique des réformes a abouti à zéro’, as all the political institutions that France had established, such as the Grand Council and even the Tunisian government itself, had ultimately failed to function. It went on to argue:

Une seule institution subsiste, celle qui existait déjà lors de l’établissement du Protectorat ; la dynastie beylicale. Mais le Bey, ... ignoré de son peuple quand ses relations avec le Résident s’améliorent, n’est plus qu’un symbole... et sans aucune autorité politique.

This note suggested that the main reason for this failure was the *principe de co-souveraineté*.

The final collapse of ‘la politique des réformes’, which had become apparent since the Mzali Government’s resignation, brought about a fundamentally new way of thinking in the French government. So far, the French had aimed to establish a political regime in which French settlers’ special position would be institutionalised through their participation in the national and local assemblies, thereby depriving the Tunisian people of a right to self-determination and, ultimately, achieving Tunisian participation in the French Union. The French now realised, however, that it was no longer possible to maintain their goal by making use of the Bey’s pseudo-traditional authority, although the maintenance of the Bey was still considered highly helpful in preventing the radicalisation of indigenous opinion on whether to uphold close relations with France. The experiences after the March 1954 plan made them understand that France’s control of Tunisia must be based on the consent of the indigenous people, who desired to restore sovereignty and constitute a political community composed of Tunisian nationals alone. In fact, this was what Bourguiba meant when he noted ‘la légitimité n’est pas l’apanage du Bey, mais plutôt du peuple « source de tout pouvoir »’ in March 1954.⁸⁸ Hence the French decided to grant internal autonomy to the Tunisians so that the latter could establish a new regime based on their own sovereignty, in accordance with Bourguiba’s Seven Points of April 1950.⁸⁹

This change of course did not mean that the French accepted the retreat of their position in Tunisia, however. They now turned to a new way of securing the indigenous

⁸⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Note pour le Ministre, 16.7.1954.

⁸⁸ This Chapter, p.121.

⁸⁹ Chapter 1, pp.22-23.

people's consent to the privileges of France and French settlers. The note of 16 July 1954 concluded that the only possible solution was 'un réseau d'engagements, étroitement solidaires les uns des autres, et comportant une série de Conventions'.

Cet ensemble conventionnel... permettrait à la France de renoncer à la Convention de la Marsa de 1883 et se substituerait au Traité du Bardo de 1881... [L]es engagements pris tireront leur valeur et leur autorité de la satisfaction d'amour-propre des Tunisiens, dont la souveraineté sera ainsi reconnue et confirmée.

The Ministry for Tunisian and Moroccan Affairs reasoned that this new way was much more effective in achieving their aim. Simply put, its essence was that '[I]l abandon de l'initiative des réformes constituera la concession essentielle de la France en contrepartie des garanties qu'elle obtiendra pour elle et pour les Français de Tunisie.'⁹⁰

The note of 16 July 1954 continued that the French government should start negotiations with the purpose of concluding several particular agreements replacing the Convention of Marsa, and conclude a general treaty which would offer the framework within which those agreements would be concluded. Firstly, with regard to the general treaty, since France decided to give Tunisia internal autonomy but not independence, it must define new Franco-Tunisian relations without giving equal status to Tunisia.⁹¹ Furthermore, the new policy was not meant to abandon Tunisia's future adherence to the French Union, as this note argued that the envisaged general treaty 'devrait ouvrir la voie à la participation tunisienne aux institutions de l'Union française'.⁹² That is, the French assumed that Tunisia's foreign relations and defence would continue to be their responsibility. Secondly, the envisaged particular agreements were aimed at defining what kind of internal autonomy Tunisia would enjoy.

On the international scene, it was reported to Paris on 17 July 1954 that the Arab-Asian countries had decided to bring the Tunisian problem to the UNGA.⁹³ Their move prompted French reactions. Fouchet sketched out the French programme about Tunisia's internal autonomy when he discussed the matter with US Ambassador Dillon

⁹⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.389, Note pour le Ministre, 28.7.1954.

⁹¹ This note argued that it 'serait fondé sur le double principe de la reconnaissance de la souveraineté tunisienne et de l'interdépendance de la France et de la Régence.'

⁹² In fact, by October 1954, the Quai d'Orsay would start exploring a way of reactivating the High Council of the French Union, an organisation which was then a dead letter. Indeed, as a result of the recognition of Tunisia's internal autonomy, the French now had to make the High Council more attractive to the Tunisians so that they would accept participation in it. L'Institut Pierre Mendès France (hereafter IPMF), Territoires d'Outre-mer/l'Union Française, 1, 1/1/1, Note pour M le Président, 5.10.1954.

⁹³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.374, Tunis to Marotuni, no.54, 17.7.1954. *Le Monde* reported that French diplomatic approaches could also be made towards Cairo and Tripoli, but there is no governmental document referring to these moves. *Le Monde*, 28.7.1954.

on 27 July, referring to the ‘tunisianisation’ of public service including police.⁹⁴ The Council of Ministers on 30 July approved Mendès-France’s proposition regarding the new policy.⁹⁵ Then, on 31 July 1954, Mendès-France, accompanied by Fouchet and General Juin,⁹⁶ flew to Tunisia, where he made the so-called Carthage declaration to the Bey. He announced:

‘L’autonome interne de l’Etat tunisien est reconnue et proclamé sans arrière-pensée par le gouvernement français... [N]ous sommes prêts à transférer à des personnes et à des institutions tunisiennes l’exercice interne de la souveraineté.’

He continued that the interests and rights of French people must be respected and that France and Tunisia would enter into negotiations to secure both countries’ new relations.⁹⁷ While the Tunisians welcomed Mendès-France’s proposal, the *Rassemblement français* criticised his plan, emphasising: ‘il ne pouvait pas accepter que les Français deviennent, en Tunisie « des étrangers privilégiés et protégés »’.⁹⁸

Preparations for the opening of negotiations started immediately. On 2 August 1954, the Bey entrusted Ben Ammar with the task of forming a new government, whose purpose was negotiating on internal autonomy with France.⁹⁹ Two days later, the Neo-Destour Political Bureau approved the party’s participation in the Ben Ammar Government, following Bourguiba’s advice which had been given to Slim, whereas Salah Ben Youssef refused to side with Bourguiba’s line.¹⁰⁰ The constitution of the Ben Ammar Government, with the participation of four Neo-Destour members, was announced on 7 August.¹⁰¹ The Neo-Destour National Congress, held eight days later, unanimously gave a vote of confidence to the new government. On the other hand, however, the Vieux-Destour announced its reservation, ‘en rappelant son opposition à tous pourparlers avec la France qui n’auraient pas pour objectif l’indépendance totale de la Tunisie.’ This party also announced its opposition to the country’s secularisation that

⁹⁴ In reply, Dulles commented: ‘[the] Department is heartened by [the] outlines of [the] French plans’. NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/7-2754, Paris to Dulles, no.376, 27.7.1954; 772.00/7-3054, Dulles to Paris, no.3067, 30.7.1954.

⁹⁵ Mendès-France’s position was supported by Faure and Mitterrand but opposed by General Koenig, who feared that a future Tunisian assembly might demand independence without strong links with France. Périllier, *La Conquête*, pp.214-215.

⁹⁶ Juin accompanied Mendès-France in order to show French settlers that Paris was not intent on abandoning them.

⁹⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.390, la Déclaration de Carthage.

⁹⁸ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie*, 1952-1956, p.255.

⁹⁹ *Documents Diplomatiques Français* [hereafter DDF], 1954, Doc.184, p.186, footnote 1.

¹⁰⁰ Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.227.

¹⁰¹ Four Neo-Destour members joined the new government: Sadok Mokadem (Justice), Nouira (Commerce), and Slim and Mohammed Masmoudi (Ministers of State in charge of negotiation). The other Minister of State for negotiation, Aziz Djellouli, was not from the Neo-Destour. *L’Année Politique*, 1954, p.548

Bourguiba advocated.¹⁰² Subsequently, the French and Tunisian governments jointly declared that negotiations would be opened at the beginning of September 1954.¹⁰³

In the meantime, the French government had decided to reinforce French troops in Tunisia, an essential precondition of entering into negotiations with the nationalists. On 19 July 1954, Mendès-France had met General Pierre Boyer de Latour,¹⁰⁴ the CSTT, to give instructions for the reestablishment of order in Tunisia by reinforcing French troops. Furthermore, he sounded out Latour as to whether he would accept the nomination as the Resident-General, and the latter's reply was in the affirmative.¹⁰⁵ The French National Assembly approved on 27 August, by a vote of 451 to 122, the government's Tunisian policy as outlined in the Carthage declaration.¹⁰⁶ The US State Department, nevertheless, had concluded one day before that the Americans 'should not make any commitments at this time' but that 'the most the US can do is to note with interest that negotiations are being resumed in an atmosphere of cordiality', since the details of the programme had not yet been announced.¹⁰⁷

5.4 Franco-Tunisian Negotiations and the Fellagha problem

Franco-Tunisian negotiations started in Tunis on 4 September 1954. In the first session, Fouchet showed the following eight Conventions to the Tunisians, emphasising that all of them must be accepted and put into force as a whole. They were, the General Convention (previously called a general treaty), the Convention Related to the Rights and Interests of French people in Tunisia and Tunisian people in France, the Convention Related to Administrative and Technical Cooperation, the Military Convention, the Diplomatic Convention, the Judicial Convention, the Cultural Convention and the Economic Convention.¹⁰⁸ Certain Tunisian leaders noted that the French position had been set back compared with that of the Carthage Declaration.¹⁰⁹ Salah Ben Youssef declared on 7 September in Cairo that the Tunisian negotiators must confine themselves to Mendès-France's Carthage declaration, but that if the negotiations failed, the Tunisian people should fight for complete independence. The French were aware that

¹⁰² DDF, 1954, doc.84, Boisseson to Fouchet, no.269, 20.8.1954.

¹⁰³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Boisseson to Marotuni, no.254/256, 16.8.1954; vol.375, Note, La Situation en Tunisie depuis le 1^{er} août 1954, 23.8.1954.

¹⁰⁴ Latour was nominated as the CSTT on 13 February 1954. *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.187.

¹⁰⁵ Périllier, *La Conquête*, pp.210-211. Latour arrived in Tunis in mid-August 1954.

¹⁰⁶ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Note, 'Franco-Tunisian negotiations under way following approval by the National Assembly of French policy in Tunisia.', 7.9.1954.

¹⁰⁷ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/8-2654, Office Memorandum, 26.8.1954.

¹⁰⁸ In the course of negotiations, the Military and Diplomatic Conventions would be absorbed into the General Convention.

¹⁰⁹ *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.261.

full independence was the desire of the Neo-Destour's rank-and-file members and that the nationalist party would possibly call for it as the next step.¹¹⁰

In mid-September 1954, Latour argued that it was important to avoid 'les excès auxquels le nationalisme tunisien... est inévitablement conduit.' According to him, the task of constructing a Tunisian constitution should not be left to the Neo-Destour as, if this occurred, they would abandon the monarchy and establish a dictatorship, thereby enabling the abrogation of the expected Conventions for internal autonomy. Moreover, '[...]a naissance d'une république tunisienne ne manquerait pas d'exalter le séparatisme algérien'. At the same time, he maintained that it was essential to keep the responsibility for public order under the French director, because otherwise troubles would endanger French settlers and the envisaged Conventions.¹¹¹

In relation to these circumstances, Bourguiba was not allowed to return to Tunisia nor to take part in the negotiations. This was probably because his intervention might cause the flare-up of nationalist sentiment, leading to the formulation of a new Tunisian constitution. In fact, in an interview on 2 August 1954, Bourguiba replied 'nécessairement' when he was asked whether Tunisia would have a constitution. He added that he personally preferred a constitutional monarchy as Tunisia's newly-established regime.¹¹² At any rate, French settlers never accepted that he should be able to return to Tunisia. Their position could be summed up in Puaux's following statement in a newspaper *Tunisie-France* on 15 September 1954: 'Sur le chemin où s'est engagé M. Mendès France, je ne vois qu'une suite d'abandons en face de croissantes exigences'.¹¹³

In the course of Franco-Tunisian discussions, it turned out that the Fellaghas posed the gravest problem. The French speculated that the Fellaghas were now acting in collaboration with Salah Ben Youssef in Cairo and that the arms were being provided by Egypt and Libya. The French suspected they were also receiving orders from exiled nationalist elements, which were believed to be acting in full accord with the Arab League.¹¹⁴ On 11 September 1954, when Latour met Ben Ammar and other ministers, the Tunisians demanded that French troops' activities against the Fellaghas be terminated.¹¹⁵ This remark reflected a Tunisian desire that a Tunisian national army

¹¹⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Latour to Fouchet, no.359/362, 10.9.1954.

¹¹¹ Ibid., Latour to Fouchet, no.237, 13.9.1954.

¹¹² Périllier, *La Conquête*, p.226. Bourguiba added: 'N'oubliez pas « Destour » veut précisément dire « Constitution »'.

¹¹³ Ibid., p.243. Gabriel Puaux was a leader of French settlers.

¹¹⁴ DDF, 1954, doc.179, Latour to Fouchet, no.238, 14.9.1954.

¹¹⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Latour to Marotuni, no.381/384, 11.9.1954.

should be created in place of the existing police under French control and should deal with the problem. In fact, the Treaty of Bardo did not prohibit the constitution of a Tunisian army. The Resident-General refused, stating that it would cause serious danger. Latour instead asked whether the Tunisian government was prepared to call for the surrender of the Fellaghas, but the Tunisian reply was evasive. Two days later, the Tunisian government demanded that the Fellaghas be given a truce of one month. Latour once again refused, stating that this would only give the Fellaghas a rest, thereby allowing them to strengthen their military power.¹¹⁶ In fact, the French were aware that the Tunisians were trying to transform the Fellaghas into the *de facto* Tunisian army.¹¹⁷ The French once again refused this demand and instead, on 16 September, Latour appealed to the Fellaghas to surrender.¹¹⁸

The three Tunisian Ministers of State in charge of the negotiations met Mendès-France on 24 September 1954. The latter asked the Tunisian government to invite the Fellaghas to return their arms and go back to their original tribes.¹¹⁹ The Tunisians did not accept this, however, so the meeting ended without results.¹²⁰ Therefore, both sides went their own ways. On 2 October 1954, Mendès-France wrote to Fouchet that a total amnesty was necessary¹²¹ and, in a press conference on the following day, Latour announced that the French had reached a decision to give amnesty to the Fellaghas.¹²² On the other hand, the Tunisian government merely announced on 4 October that it condemned individual terrorist activities.¹²³ Consequently, there was no solution to the Fellagha problem. As for the reasons for the Tunisian attitude, Latour noted:

1^o Le gouvernement tunisien souhaite certainement la réussite des négociations. Il sait qu'une grande partie de l'opinion publique tunisienne ne lui pardonnerait pas un échec des pourparlers...

2^o Les éléments néo-destouriens ont considéré et considèrent encore le mouvement fellagha comme un moyen de pression...

3^o Mais l'attitude très ferme prise par le président Mendès France... fait craindre au Néo-Destour un durcissement de notre part qui risquerait d'affecter les négociations.

¹¹⁶ *Ibid.*, Latour to Fouchet, no.405/407, 14.9.1954.

¹¹⁷ *DDF*, 1954, doc.179, Latour to Fouchet, no.238, 14.9.1954.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, doc.173, p.356, footnote 2.

¹¹⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Note, 2.10.1954.

¹²⁰ *DDF*, 1954, doc.227, Fouchet to Latour, no.214/219, 27.9.1954.

¹²¹ *Ibid.*, doc.238, Mendès-France to MAE, no.3993/3994, 2.10.1954. On the same day, Fouchet instructed Latour to make plans to that effect. *Ibid.*, doc.238, footnote 3. Interestingly, Fouchet added: 'il y avait une occasion à saisir pour leur [les Tunisiens] faire comprendre que leur avenir aussi bien que celui de la Tunisie était « à l'Occident et non vers la Ligue arabe ».' The French were perhaps afraid that the creation of the *de facto* Tunisian Army out of the Fellaghas would allow pro-Arab League elements inside the Tunisian government.

¹²² MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Latour to Fouchet, no.524/529, 3.10.1954.

¹²³ *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.267.

4º [Les Néo-destouriens] redoutent sincèrement d'être débordés par le mouvement qui n'a cessé de s'amplifier et qui pourrait conduire à une situation révolutionnaire.

5º Ces différentes considérations poussent les uns par sincérité, les autres par tactique, à souhaiter que les fellaghas suspendent leurs activités.¹²⁴

The Tunisian government was in a difficult position. It had to reach accord successfully with the French on the agreements for internal autonomy. On the other hand, it had to take into consideration the opinion of radical Neo-Destour members, but without the regime being overthrown. For these reasons, the Tunisian government confined itself to announcing its disapproval of individual terrorist activities, but not of the Fellaghas themselves.

Reflecting the failure to reach a Franco-Tunisian agreement on the Fellagha problem, the ongoing negotiations on the agreements for internal autonomy had not made much progress. At the beginning of October 1954, agreement had almost been achieved only on the Convention on Administrative and Technical Cooperation. With regard to the Convention on the Interests and Rights of French People in Tunisia and Tunisian People in France, the Tunisians opposed having French as the second official language, although they approved in principle the French people's participation in municipal assemblies. As for the Judicial Convention, the French insisted on the maintenance of existing French jurisdiction in Tunisia, but the Tunisians refused it, demanding the immediate transfer of all affairs concerning Tunisian nationals to the competence of Tunisian courts. Finally, concerning the Military Convention, the Tunisian delegation called for the creation of a Tunisian army, demanding that the stationing of French troops must be limited to the strategic bases determined in advance. In relation to this, the Tunisians discussed the Treaty of Bardo without questioning it. In turn, they requested the maintenance of the Treaty, because it did not forbid the creation of a Tunisian army.¹²⁵

Meanwhile, Tunisia witnessed the rise of radical opinion. The slow progress in the Franco-Tunisian negotiations diminished the Tunisian government's prestige in the eyes of local opinion. This was all the more so because of the intensification of the Fellaghas' activities, which were now extending to Algeria. Moreover, they were taking on the appearance of a liberation army.¹²⁶ Latour reported to Paris:

¹²⁴ DDF, 1954, doc.243, Latour to Fouchet, no.539/550, 4.10.1954.

¹²⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Note, 2.10.1954. Discussions had not started on the Cultural Convention, the Economic and Financial Convention.

¹²⁶ *L'Année Politique*, 1954, pp.266-267.

‘Le climat politique en Tunisie... est mauvais... Toute mesure de détente est dépassées par une surenchère orchestrée, avant d’avoir pu produire un effet quelconque. [L]e parti [néo-]destourien est dominé par la fraction extrémiste’.¹²⁷

The party’s radical section had pressed Bourguiba to convene its National Council, and the latter agreed that it be held in Tunis on 14 November 1954. Conversely, the Neo-Destour’s moderate members expected that Bourguiba’s intervention would pacify the radicals.¹²⁸ In the light of this situation, Mendès-France also decided to count on Bourguiba. They secretly met at the end of October 1954 and discussed a solution to the Fellagha problem. Knowing the difficulties that Mendès-France was facing at the National Assembly, Bourguiba promised to take responsibility for putting an end to the Fellaghas’ dissidence and in appealing for their return to their homes if the French guaranteed their liberties.¹²⁹

Nonetheless, the outbreak of the Algerian rebellion on 1 November 1954 further radicalised opinion in Tunisia. On the other hand, Nouira, the Minister of Commerce from the Neo-Destour, repeatedly emphasised to the French that the situation in Algeria was not caused by the Neo-Destour or the Arab League.¹³⁰ Latour pointed out that the purpose of holding the National Council would be to get the French to accept Bourguiba’s participation in the negotiations regarding the Fellaghas. More embarrassingly, he also indicated that Salah Ben Youssef’s attitude was becoming aggressive to the extent that ‘il n’hésiterait pas à provoquer... éprouve de force destinée à faire échouer les pourparlers.’¹³¹ In fact, the divisions between Bourguiba and Salah Ben Youssef, who refused to agree with the French on internal autonomy, became increasingly apparent at this time. In addition, the Algerian rebellion had a grave effect on the French Parliament. The opposition to Mendès-France, such as the Independents, the Peasants, the Radical Socialists and the Gaullists, more than ever criticised the government’s conciliatory attitude towards the Fellaghas, insisting that his North African policy had given birth to the Algerian fiasco.¹³²

Thus the Algerian problem hardened both French and Tunisian attitudes, thereby making Franco-Tunisian agreements more difficult to achieve. At the beginning of November 1954, the French government informed the Tunisians: ‘l’adoption définitive

¹²⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.376, Latour to Paris, no.637/640, 17.10.1954.

¹²⁸ DDF, 1954, doc.304, Seydoux (Ministre délégué à la Résidence générale de France à Tunis) to Fouchet, no.739/747, 29.10.1954.

¹²⁹ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, p.264.

¹³⁰ DDF, 1954, doc.313, Seydoux to Fouchet, no.766/777, 4.11.1954.

¹³¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Latour to Paris, no.819/827, 9.11.1954.

¹³² PRO, FO371/113789, JF1015/2, Intelligence Brief, no.1714, 18.11.1954.

des conventions franco-tunisiennes serait subordonnée à la fin de l'activité des fellaghas.’¹³³ Conversely, the motion adopted by the Neo-Destour National Council on 14 November authorised the Tunisian government to work out a solution to the Fellagha problem with the French, ‘garantissant... leur sauvegarde, leur liberté individuelle’.¹³⁴ The first part of the motion stated that the Fellagha question could not be separated from the general political problem, i.e. a solution to the latter required dealing with the former. The second part stated that the pursuit of the politics of repression did not correspond to the politics of negotiation and that Bourguiba and Salah Ben Youssef should be allowed to return immediately. Latour noted: ‘Il y a une volonté délibérée de nous tromper et de nous amener... à une abdication des positions que nous tenons encore.’¹³⁵ French newspapers fiercely condemned the Neo-Destour, insisting that it justified violence conducted by the Fellaghas, and French parliamentarians urged the government to take a harder line with the Tunisians.¹³⁶

It was at this moment that Bourguiba presented a solution to the Fellagha problem and the Franco-Tunisian negotiations with three conditions. In an interview with *the New York Times* on 17 November, he stated that the first condition was that the Fellaghas would have to be protected from retaliation. The second was that they should never be considered as bandits or outlaws, because ‘[c]e sont... des Tunisiens patriotes qui luttent pour le même idéal que... Bourguiba et les autres. Ils sont nés de la politique criminelle de De Hauteclocque.’ The third and particularly important one was ‘de donner au Gouvernement tunisien la responsabilité immédiate du maintien de l’ordre dans les régions où opèrent les bandes de fellaghas.’ According to him, the Neo-Destour would lose face with Tunisian opinion if it accepted the French proposition that they should maintain responsibility over the police for ten years after the conclusion of the Franco-Tunisian Conventions. He added that for the Tunisians internal autonomy was only a step in the battle for independence, but that they wanted to stay in France’s orbit as an independent country.¹³⁷

Bourguiba’s declaration enabled both parties to move ahead quickly on the Fellagha question. On 17 November 1954, Franco-Tunisian talks were held in which Faure, the acting Prime Minister, Fouchet, Ben Ammar and Djelloui participated. On the following

¹³³ *L’Année Politique*, 1954, p.278.

¹³⁴ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie*, 1952-1956, p.266.

¹³⁵ DDF, 1954, doc.346, Latour to Fouchet, no.867/869, 15.11.1954.

¹³⁶ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie*, 1952-1956, p.267.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p.266; MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Bonnet to Paris, no.6447, 16.11.1954.

day, they met again and reached agreement in principle.¹³⁸ Mendès-France showed strong determination to go ahead, as he wrote to Fouchet:

La question n'est pas de savoir si le Gouvernement sera renversé ou non. Cela est secondaire... La question est de savoir si nous aboutirons à une solution tunisienne qui aura ensuite ses répercussions dans un sens ou dans l'autre en Algérie ou au Maroc. Seul ce point compte, et je vous demande de le rappeler à nos collègues et à nos amis au Parlement.¹³⁹

A joint communiqué was issued two days later, in which, in order to promote the reintegration of the Fellaghas into society, both governments appealed to them to surrender, guaranteeing that those who returned their arms to the French authorities would not be punished.¹⁴⁰ The Americans noted that the Tunisian government conceded, fearing that the negotiations for internal autonomy would be broken off because of French reaction to the Neo-Destour's hard-line motion if it did not agree to the Fellagha accord.¹⁴¹ However, this was not the case. The Tunisians conceded because the French showed a flexible attitude on defence and police issues. On 26 November, Latour was notified that Mendès-France had decided to draft the General Convention, which would deal with these issues, in a way more acceptable to the Tunisians.¹⁴²

The agreement on the Fellagha question was immediately put into practice. Latour met Ben Ammar on 26 November 1954, when they agreed that the Tunisian government should appoint twenty-one delegates to visit simultaneously each of the areas where the Fellaghas were present. Ben Ammar revealed that he had already sent secret emissaries to contact them, and requested that France suspend military operations against the Fellaghas. Latour agreed that it would do so from the following day onwards.¹⁴³ This agreement had a remarkable effect: after receiving the emissaries, the Fellaghas at once accepted the offer of surrender on 30 November.¹⁴⁴ Latour proudly announced the success of the operation early in December 1954, stating that 1,998 Fellaghas had surrendered 1,553 weapons and that the Fellagha problem was 90% solved.¹⁴⁵ Against the background of this success, the Mendès-France Government managed to obtain a vote of confidence by 294 votes to 265 in the National Assembly

¹³⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.376, Faure to Mendès-France, 17.11.1954. Mendès-France was then in Washington. Chapter 6, p.148.

¹³⁹ IPMF, Tunisie II/5, Négociations Questions diverses, C) Débats sur la Tunisie du 10/12/54, Mendès-France to Faure, Fouchet, Pélalon, no.6526/6529, 19.11.1954.

¹⁴⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Note, 18.11.1954.

¹⁴¹ FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.897-898, The Chargé in France to the State Department, no.2182, 22.11.1954.

¹⁴² DDF, 1954, doc.386, p.795, footnote 1.

¹⁴³ *Ibid.*, doc.385, Latour to Fouchet, no.962/968, 26.11.1954.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, doc.432, Latour to Fouchet, no.1055/1060, 10.12.1954.

¹⁴⁵ PRO, FO371/108589, JF1015/123, Tunis to FO, no.29, 8.12.1954.

debate on 11 December. In addition, this success had a favourable effect on the international scene; the UNGA plenary session decided on 17 December to adjourn discussions on the Tunisian problem.¹⁴⁶

5.5 The Franco-Tunisian Conventions

The solution to the Fellagha problem prompted the resumption of negotiations for internal autonomy. In January 1955, negotiations on the General Convention, which would look at diplomacy and defence, were opened. Early in November 1954, the Tunisian delegation had already shown their reluctance to agree to the maintenance of France's right to control diplomacy and defence. Latour reported to Paris: 'Slim s'était retranché derrière son [le Bey] autorité pour récuser la convention des Affaires Extérieurs.' Astonished by Slim's attitude, the Bey told Latour that the problem of defence and foreign affairs must be dealt with by the Bey and the Resident-General, based on the Treaty of Bardo, and the latter agreed.¹⁴⁷

When both parties started discussions on these matters in Paris on 4 January 1955, the Tunisians attitude hardened than in the previous year. The Tunisian delegations insisted that the General Convention should not mention a Tunisian army and diplomacy because the Treaty of Bardo did not prohibit Tunisia from exerting these rights, whereas the French argued that the General Convention should confirm the maintenance of French responsibility for these issues. That is to say, '[a]u total, les négociateurs français veulent s'en tenir à la stricte autonomie interne tandis que pour les Tunisiens cette autonomie doit tendre vers l'indépendance.'¹⁴⁸ Conflict also arose around the issue of the Southern Territory, which had been administered by the French military authorities since the end of the 19th Century. The French delegation demanded that the Tunisians accept France's special power in this area, because of its strategic importance in the light of the defence of Africa.¹⁴⁹ Faced with this mutual impasse, both parties looked to the Bey to arbitrate.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁶ Having adopted the North African problems as agenda on 8 October 1954, the UNGA First Committee recommended that the plenary meeting adopt this resolution on 16 December 1954. *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1954, pp.82-83.

¹⁴⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.392, Latour to Paris, no.802/805, 6.11.1954.

¹⁴⁸ DDF, 1955, II, doc.7, Instructions du Ministère des Affaires Marocaines et Tunisiennes au Ministre Délégué de France à Tunis, 5.1.1955; *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.176.

¹⁴⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.394, Note, sur les Territoires Militaire du Sud Tunisien; vol.393, Paris to Tunis, no.340/346, 11.4.1955.

¹⁵⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.393, Paris to Tunis, no.5, 5.1.1955. The French perceived opposition inside the Tunisian government: Djellouli and Nouira pressurised the Bey to support Slim's hard line, while Ben Ammar insisted on the acceptance of the French proposal. *Ibid.*, Latour to Paris, no.112/115, 11.1.1955.

Bourguiba's declaration on 11 January 1955 put the Tunisian delegation in a difficult position in the light of Tunisian opinion. Bourguiba stated: 'Pour nous, l'autonomie interne est une étape vers l'indépendance totale'.¹⁵¹ After returning to Tunis, Djelloui, one of the three Tunisian delegates, had talks with Latour and highlighted the profound effect that Bourguiba's declaration would have on the Tunisian negotiators: 'rompre les négociations constituerait certes une catastrophe, mais accepter ce que propose la délégation française serait une catastrophe plus grande encore'.¹⁵² However, the political organisations and the trade unions which Ben Ammar had consulted were unanimous in their desire not to break off the negotiations, as he said to Latour on 18 January. In addition, he maintained, he had obtained clear authorisation from the Neo-Destour and the UGTT permitting him to resume conversations personally in Paris. Even so, it was clear to the Resident-General that Ben Ammar, following Bourguiba's declaration, considered that internal autonomy was only a step towards independence. He wrote to Paris: 'Si... la France demandait l'insertion de clauses diplomatique et militaires dans les conventions, la Tunisie demanderait à les assortir en échange de dispositions permettant de reprendre la discussion de son accès à la souveraineté externe dans un certain délai'.¹⁵³

The second round of the negotiations started in Paris on 23 January 1955. In this round, over the issue of the police, both sides agreed on the presence of the Residency's authority for two years but they did not agree on the period on how long the transition thereafter would last, the French favouring eight years and the Tunisians two. Negotiations progressed on the Southern Territory issue and the Tunisians agreed to the maintenance of French troops and French authority for security in this territory. However, they refused to allow the Resident-General to nominate the *caids*, a right which should, the Tunisian delegations argued, belong to their government.¹⁵⁴

On 5 February 1955, the Mendès-France Government suddenly fell as a result of debates in the National Assembly over North Africa that had started three days before. It was reported to Paris that a feeling of deception and disillusionment had spread among the Muslim population, but that French settlers generally did not hide their satisfaction.¹⁵⁵ A ministerial crisis followed, which inevitably interrupted the Franco-Tunisian negotiations. Faure, who announced his desire to recommence negotiations rapidly with Tunisia before being elected, became the new prime minister on 23

¹⁵¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.377, Situation Politique en Tunisie (janvier 1955).

¹⁵² MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.394, Latour to Paris, no.160/171, 14.1.1955.

¹⁵³ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.393, Latour to Paris, no.229/240, 18.1.1955.

¹⁵⁴ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, pp.176-177.

¹⁵⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.377, Latour to Marotuni, no.406/407, 8.2.1955.

February 1955 and appointed Pierre July as the new Minister for Tunisian and Moroccan affairs.¹⁵⁶ France and Tunisia agreed early in March that negotiations should be resumed on 15 March 1955.¹⁵⁷

In the meantime, the Tunisians were voicing their demand for Bourguiba's return to Tunisia more loudly. The Neo-Destour Political Bureau concluded on 11 March 1955:

- 1/ affirmer solennellement la ferme volonté de faire aboutir les négociations sur les questions déjà réglées sous le Gouvernement de M. Mendès-France, mais se montre le plus possible intransigeants sur celles restant à régler (police, territoires du sud):
- 2/ Réaliser instamment le retour en Tunisie de Bourguiba, seul capable d'empêcher les extrémistes du parti de commettre des excès.¹⁵⁸

This meant that the nationalist party itself could hardly contain the growing demands from rank-and-file members, largely instigated by Salah Ben Youssef. Only the party's president, it was believed, could satisfy their demands. Two weeks later, Masmoudi, a Tunisian delegate for the negotiations, called for Bourguiba's return on behalf of the Tunisian government.¹⁵⁹

When negotiations were resumed on schedule, several important issues remained unsettled. Firstly, the question of a Franco-Tunisian 'permanent link' remained unsolved, as the French wished to substitute it for the Treaty of Bardo whereas the Tunisians did not want the General Convention to refer to it. Secondly, the problem of the security of the Southern Territory was being discussed on the basis of Tunisian control of the civil police and French control of the frontier military police but both sides had not yet reached final agreement. Thirdly, the issue of French representation on the municipal councils was disputed. The Tunisians argued it should be proportional to the number of residents in the community while the French requested parity.¹⁶⁰ At this point, the negotiations were on the point of failure. On 29 March, July declared that the French delegation had to take into account the views expressed in the National Assembly, as the Tunisian delegation had to do with Tunisian opinion.

However, French concessions on Bourguiba's return to Tunisia paved the way to conclude agreements.¹⁶¹ On 31 March 1955, Slim remarked that it would be possible to accomplish an accord before Ramadan, which was to start on 21 April 1955. The

¹⁵⁶ Ibid., Situation Politique en Tunisie (février 1955).

¹⁵⁷ DDF, 1955, I, Seydoux to July, no.637/645, 11.3.1955.

¹⁵⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.393, Seydoux to Paris, no.699/704, 13.3.1955.

¹⁵⁹ The French settlers wasted no time in publishing their opposition to his return. Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, pp.311-312.

¹⁶⁰ PRO, FO371/113790, JF1016/24, Williams to Bromley, no.410/601/24, 25.3.1955; *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.220.

¹⁶¹ Although no materials had been located determining French reactions, it seems that the French had responded favourably to the Tunisian request considering later developments.

French and Tunisians decided to conclude the negotiations before 20 April. Franco-Tunisian negotiations were reopened on 5 April 1955, and with the attendance of Faure and Ben Ammar after the first week, the remaining problems were beginning to be smoothed away. Both sides compromised on the issue of the Southern Territory, whereby they agreed: ‘cette région participera au droit administratif commun, sauf consultation des autorités civiles et militaires de sécurité, et comportera une zone frontière où la police relèvera exclusivement de l'autorité militaire.’¹⁶² Subsequently, Faure announced on 13 April that Bourguiba would be allowed to travel throughout France. As for his return to Tunisia, Faure stated that at that moment it was impossible to authorise this, but that ‘la chose était du domaine du possible’.¹⁶³

On 21 April 1955, Faure invited Bourguiba to the *hôtel de Matignon*. This was the first time that the French prime minister had officially met the latter.¹⁶⁴ Bourguiba’s participation and Faure’s acceptance of it largely contributed to the successful conclusion of the negotiations.¹⁶⁵ Faure’s recognition of the Tunisian people’s special position in France enabled Bourguiba to propose that the Tunisian delegation compromise in the negotiations. The French government agreed that French seats in municipal councils would not be over three out of seven. Both sides agreed that Arabic would be the only official language, but that French would also be used in public life.¹⁶⁶ However, the most important compromise was made when the French permitted Bourguiba’s return to Tunisia, whilst the Tunisians accepted Faure’s insistence that ‘la notion de liens étroits et permanents entre les deux pays’ should be introduced in the preamble of the General Convention.¹⁶⁷ This meant that Tunisia was not allowed to have responsibility for external affairs and defence. Both sides wanted to avoid the breakdown of the negotiations, from which Salah Ben Youssef, and ultimately Egypt, would profit. This would result in the disappearance of the French presence in Tunisia.

The French and Tunisian delegations signed a protocol of agreement on 22 April 1955. Then on 3 June 1955, Faure and Ben Ammar officially signed the Franco-

¹⁶² *Ibid.*, pp.220-221.

¹⁶³ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, p.312.

¹⁶⁴ It seemed that Faure had reached the conclusion in early April 1955 that Bourguiba should be allowed to participate in the negotiations for internal autonomy. Edgar Faure, *Mémoires II*, pp.179-184, pp.191-196.

¹⁶⁵ The British appreciated Faure’s courage and realism in inviting Bourguiba to the negotiations. PRO, FO371/113790, JF1016/32, Jebb to FO, no.158, 22.4.1955. As for the text of the Conventions, see *L’Année Politique*, 1955, p.643.

¹⁶⁶ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, p.288. He also accepted that French be the second official language; *L’Année Politique*, 1955, p.223.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p.222.

Tunisian Conventions,¹⁶⁸ which meant that the Convention of Marsa was terminated. However, Tunisian opinion was not entirely satisfied with the results. In the text on the Franco-Tunisian Conventions, there was no reference to the possibility of Tunisia's future independence. In fact, Latour noted that the Tunisians received the signature of the Conventions with less enthusiasm than had been expected. The Vieux-Destour and Salah Ben Youssef were very disappointed at the Conventions. However, French settlers, facing the fait accompli, reacted violently. Latour observed '[l]es sentiments qui dominent chez eux dont ceux d'une grande amertume suscités par l'impression d'avoir été abandonnés par la Métropole.'¹⁶⁹ Thus, although Tunisia obtained internal autonomy, the situation would not be stable, with opposition forces continuing to attack the government and Bourguiba. Nevertheless, the latter's return was approved by France. Backed by Bourguiba's prestige, the Tunisian government was to consolidate the new regime without demanding further steps for independence at least for the time being. The French, on the other hand, knew that Bourguiba's return would inevitably increase nationalist demands in the long term, but were satisfied that Tunisian demands would focus on internal autonomy for the moment.

¹⁶⁸ Shortly before this, the French National Assembly had passed a resolution on 24 May 1955 declaring that Title VIII of the Constitution was *révisable*. Mortimer, *France and the Africans*, p.221.

¹⁶⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.393, Latour to Paris, no.1211/1222, 29.4.1955.

Chapter 6: The Restoration of Mohammed V; Morocco, August 1953 to October 1955

6.1 Terrorism and impasse: August 1953 to December 1954

The deposition of Mohammed V in August 1953 allowed the French government to promulgate a series of *dahirs*; two of which were concerned with the structure of the Sharifian government and restricted the Sultan's power. As in Tunisia, the French now began forming a Moroccan government and setting up municipal commissions. The 31 August *dahir* provided for the establishment of the *Conseil restreint*, and the 9 September *dahir* was intended to grant increased power to the *Conseil des Vizirs et Directeurs*. The executive and legislative powers, which hitherto the Sultan had theoretically exercised, were to be entrusted to the *Conseil restreint* and *Conseil des Vizirs et Directeurs*, respectively. Both councils would comprise of the same numbers of Moroccan and French ministers.¹ In addition, the 1953 plan was expected to give Morocco elected assemblies at the national and municipal levels. At the national level, the 16 September *dahir* aimed to reorganise the Government Council, made up of a Moroccan and French section, with an equal number of representatives. In accordance with the 18 September *dahir*, eighteen towns selected as municipalities were to be administrated by elected municipal commissions, consisting of an equal number of French and Moroccan members.² These municipal councils would remain consultative in character.³ Therefore, the French project remained with the *principe de co-souveraineté* and was not intended to devolve any significant powers to the Moroccan people. Rather, the French were keen to pave the way for Morocco's adherence to the French Union through French settlers' participation in the future national assembly and the removal of the Sultan's legislative power.

The deposition caused resentment among the indigenous people. The Istiqlal's exiled leaders and the Arab countries, especially Egypt, generated anti-French and anti-Arafa broadcasts, which led to a popular legend portraying Mohammed V as a national resistance hero. The expulsion of nationalist leaders in December 1952 had left rank-

¹ As for details of the two councils, see MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.89, Rabat to Paris, 12.10.1955, no110/8; vol.87, 'Les Relations de la France avec la Tunisie et le Maroc', no.159AL, 18.10.1954.

² *L'Année Politique*, 1953, pp.283-284. Municipal assemblies were to be presided over by the pasha or *caid*.

³ PRO, FO371/102977, M1015/108, Rabat to FO, Despatch no.88, 30.9.1953; *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.632-634.

and-file nationalists no alternative but to resort to violence in order to influence appeals to the French authorities. The first terrorist acts were launched immediately after the deposition and Arafat himself narrowly escaped assassination in September 1953. After October 1953, terrorist activities increased especially in urban areas such as Casablanca. Terrorist activities, which mostly targeted the pro-French Moroccan population, made Moroccan notables less co-operative towards the French plan. At every level of the structure, including the municipal assemblies, the Moroccan people held themselves aloof from the executive or administrative organs.⁴ Consequently, there would be no progress towards the realisation of the French plan except the reorganisation of the Sharifian government.

Angered by the deposition, the Arab countries continued their efforts to bring the Moroccan problem to the UNGA in the autumn, despite their failure in the UNSC of August 1953. The US position turned out to be much more favourable to the French, for the reasons analysed before.⁵ When the Egyptians submitted a draft resolution to the GA First Committee on 7 October 1953, the French UN delegation requested the US to discourage any Latin American moves to introduce another one. US Secretary of State Dulles replied that the US should neither discourage nor encourage the LA countries' move to introduce a moderate draft resolution calling for UN intervention to ease tension and the respect of the Moroccan people's right to free political institutions.⁶ However, Dulles reconsidered his position as a result of the conversations with Bidault on 16 October and instructed Lodge in New York to vote against this draft resolution.⁷ Three days later, the First Committee including the US voted against the Bolivian draft resolution, and on 3 November 1953, the GA plenary meeting also rejected it with US opposition and decided to postpone further consideration of the problem.⁸ The French were on the whole satisfied with the Americans.⁹

Mohammed V's dethronement had created a new enemy for France. This originated in the fact that the northern part of Morocco had been under Spanish control since the

⁴ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.190.

⁵ Chapter 4, p.96.

⁶ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.634-635, Editorial Note; NARA, RG59, CDF, 320/10-753, Dulles to New York, GADEL no.19, 7.10.1953.

⁷ NARA, RG59, CDF, 320/10-2053, Dulles to Paris, no.1505, 20.10.1953.

⁸ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, pp.635-636, The Acting Secretary of State to the Embassy in the United Kingdom, 15.10.1953. This draft resolution received thirty-two votes to twenty-two with five abstentions, so did not obtain the two-thirds majority. *L'Année Politique*, 1953, p.299.

⁹ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.655, Hoppenot to MAE, 13.11.1953. The British noted the French considered the situation in both Tunisia and Morocco to be more satisfactory than a year previously. PRO, FO371/102937, JF1015/33, FO Minute by Price, 8.12.1953.

Franco-Spanish agreements of 1904 and 1912. In Spanish Morocco, the Sultan's deputy, the Khalifa, was the native ruler. As the Khalifa was appointed by the Sultan, the Spanish government insisted that the deposition also affected Spanish Morocco and, shortly after, started to condemn France for not having consulted it in advance. The anti-French campaign by the Spaniards culminated in a meeting of pashas and *caids* at Tetuán on 21 January 1954. The Spanish High Commissioner accepted their petition that repudiated French policy in the French zone and declared that the dignitaries would not recognise the new Sultan's authority. In January 1954, the French government had asked the US State Department to contribute to improving Franco-Spanish relations, but had failed to achieve their wholehearted cooperation.¹⁰ Spanish activities further damaged Arafa's legitimacy in the eyes of the Moroccan people, thereby increasing political instability in French Morocco. As a precaution, the French government decided to transfer Mohammed V from Corsica to Antsirabé in Madagascar, where he arrived on 29 January.¹¹ On 9 February 1954, General Franco announced that 'la zone marocaine espagnole sera maintenue sous la souveraineté de ... Moulay el Mehdi, khalifa du Sultan', but later in February 1954, the Spanish adjusted their position when they admitted that the Khalifa would continue to exercise the 'droits souverains' delegated by the Sultan in accordance with the Franco-Spanish agreement of November 1912.¹²

In French Morocco, the elections for the members of municipal commissions, which were due in March 1954, could not take place amidst the climate of terrorism.¹³ In April 1954, terrorist activities surged in Casablanca and a boycott of French products, cigarettes in particular, started.¹⁴ In early 1954, an examination started in Paris of a solution to the Moroccan crisis. The necessity of removing Arafa was being realised, but the problem was who would rule afterwards. An unofficial study group called the *Centre d'étude et de documentation* worked out a plan of setting up a Regency Council after Arafa's departure, which would consist of representatives of Mohammed V, Arafa and the traditionalists, as a means of breaking the deadlock.¹⁵ Mohammed V's restoration was unthinkable and therefore there would be no Sultan who could enjoy popularity among the Moroccan people.

¹⁰ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.161, Note Pour le Président du Conseil, 12.11.1954.

¹¹ *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.180.

¹² *Ibid.*, p.185.

¹³ *Ibid.*, p.198.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p.205, p.214.

¹⁵ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp.229-234.

The French government also felt the necessity of breaking the deadlock, and the appointment of Francis Lacoste as the new Resident-General was announced on 20 May 1954.¹⁶ He was instructed to implement the following policy: reorganisation of the police; distinguishing of moderate nationalists from terrorists when applying repressive measures; and resumption of contact with nationalist opposition groups of diverse tendencies.¹⁷ Needless to say, these measures hardly contributed to solving the Moroccan problem. Si Ould Embarek Bekkaï, the former pasha of Sefrou,¹⁸ publicised his own proposal:

1. La souveraineté marocaine doit être solennellement affirmée... ;
2. Un Conseil supérieur marocain doit être constitué qui, en attendant que le peuple marocain puisse être consulté sur le choix de son souverain, détiendra provisoirement cette souveraineté ;
3. Les moyens propres à développer la souveraineté du Maroc jusqu'à son indépendance complète seront recherchés par le Conseil supérieur marocain et le gouvernement français ;

Thus Bekkaï called for Morocco's sovereignty and future independence without the ex-Sultan's restoration.¹⁹ In this sense he was categorised as a moderate nationalist, whereas more radical nationalists like the Istiqlal demanded Mohammed V's return.

Lacoste arrived in Morocco in June 1954, but terrorist activities continued undiminished particularly in Casablanca, Marrakech and Oujda.²⁰ Tension increased partly owing to the approach of the first anniversary of the deposition. On 9 July 1954, Ahmed Balafrej, the Istiqlal's exiled Secretary-General, declared in Madrid that Franco-Moroccan dialogue could start only with 'le seul vrai et légitime porte-parole du Maroc, celui en qui le peuple marocain a placé toute sa confiance, le Sultan Mohammed V.'²¹ In the international scene, the fourteen countries²² of the Arab-Asian bloc demanded, four days later, that the Moroccan and Tunisian problems be placed on the agenda of the next GA session.²³ On 1 August 1954, a demonstration took place in Fez, demanding Mohammed V's return with the cry 'Vive Allal el Fassi'. In the first week of the month,

¹⁶ US newspapers reportedly welcomed this decision because he was a civil, not a military officer, unlike his predecessors. MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.3, Washington to Paris, no.3230/3232, 22.5.1954.

¹⁷ *Ibid.*, Note, 8.6.1954.

¹⁸ Together with Si Fatmi Ben Slimane, the former pasha of Fez, he pledged loyalty to Mohammed V in August 1953, and therefore was obliged to resign after the deposition.

¹⁹ *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.217

²⁰ *Ibid.*, p.227.

²¹ *Ibid.*, p.239.

²² They were: Afghanistan, Burma, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Pakistan, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand and Yemen. *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1954, pp.84-85.

²³ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.87, Situation Politique au Maroc (Juillet 1954).

several terrorist attacks occurred in Casablanca and in Port-Lyautey, killing forty-six people in total.²⁴ However, the French government ruled out Mohammed V's restoration because it did not want to alienate el-Glaoui. As for the divisions in Moroccan opinion, Lacoste noted that while in Tunisia a national sentiment existed, in Morocco there were two worlds: urban areas and rural areas, the former counting on Egyptian and Iraqi support and the latter being ruled by traditional, feudal elites.²⁵ On 4 August, the PDI (Parti démocratique de l'indépendance) publicly demanded '[le] [r]etour du roi légitime sur le trône marocain et reprise du dialogue'. Four days later, Balafrej warned the French that unless they applied a sincere solution, '[l]es leaders emprisonnés... ne pourraient pas exercer longtemps un influence modératrice' vis-à-vis the rank-and-file.²⁶

Later in the month, Lacoste argued that finding a solution to the dynastic problem was fundamental:

le nationalisme marocain... a trouvé... un point de cristallisation générale; la personne de l'ancien Sultan... [B]eaucoup de nationalistes avisés reconnaissaient-ils que la France ne pouvait pas consentir au retour sur le trône de l'ancien Sultan...²⁷

Accordingly, Lacoste maintained that if it was impossible to obtain nationalist cooperation under Arafa's reign, the French had to search for an alternative, either a Regency Council or a new sultan. He continued that many nationalists would compromise on the acceptance of Mohammed V's transfer to France without a restoration, as this would improve his living conditions and make his acceptance of the settlement process appear 'voluntary'.

Meanwhile, Paris was preoccupied with other issues such as the EDC, Indochinese and Tunisian affairs. As analysed in Chapter 5, the French had recognised Tunisia's sovereignty when Mendès-France made the Carthage Declaration on 31 July 1954. In Morocco, however, the French had no intention of taking a significant step until the Tunisia problem was settled, since Tunisia was always considered easier to deal with than Morocco. On 27 August 1954, Mendès-France stated before the National Assembly: 'Nous devons, avec le Sultan Ben Arafa, appeler progressivement, mais aussi rapidement que possible, le peuple marocain à gérer ses propres affaires dans le

²⁴ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.250.

²⁵ DDF, 1954, doc.23, Lacoste to Mendès-France, no.192, 30.7.1954.

²⁶ IPMF, Cartonniers DPMF, Maroc 2, 2/V/3 "opinion" Entretiens, - Sous-chemise <Balafrej>, Note sur nos conversations avec Hadj Ahmed Balafrej - Genève, 8.8.1954.

²⁷ DDF, 1954, doc.86, Situation Politique au Maroc en Août 1954. Lacoste to Fouchet, no.529, 22.8.1955.

cadre de la souveraineté marocaine', although he admitted that there was no time to be spent on dealing with the Moroccan problem.²⁸ He also promised that the government was ready to take steps to improve the ex-Sultan's personal situation but that, at the same time, his restoration must be excluded. The National Assembly approved his policy by 419 votes to 112.²⁹

French difficulties derived from the lack of a moderate nationalist party, unlike in Tunisia. El-Glaoui and his fellow dignitaries who had been committed to Mohammed V's deposition were opposed to his transfer to France, let alone his restoration. In contrast, el-Fassi announced in September 1954:

tant que la France n'aura pas remis sur le trône le Sultan déposé... les nationalistes ne discuteront même pas de réformes avec les Français... L'objectif des nationalistes marocains est l'indépendance complète et l'unification des zones française et espagnole du Maroc'.³⁰

As a moderate nationalist, Bekkaï declared on 6 September 1954 that the Moroccan problem would not be successful 'si la question du premier interlocuteur... n'est pas résolue'. He then suggested that Mohammed V be transferred to France and that ultimately his restoration must be allowed.³¹ Bekkaï's view was that France should, after recognising Mohammed V as the *interlocuteur*, grant internal autonomy to Morocco and that Mohammed V should be restored after a certain period.

Paris was reluctant to start addressing the problem. Christian Fouchet, the Minister for Moroccan and Tunisian affairs, sent instructions to Lacoste on 8 September 1954. These instructions suggested that the French were changing their ideas but were buying time until the conclusion of the Franco-Tunisian negotiations. Briefly, Fouchet pointed to the necessity of establishing a Moroccan government composed of Moroccan ministers and French ministers. As well, he agreed with Lacoste that the dynastic problem must be given priority and that Arafa must be dethroned, although these policies must not be put into practice immediately. Instead, as an immediate measure, Fouchet proposed the release of political prisoners and the creation of *un Conseil d'Étude des Réformes* through which the Moroccans would be consulted regarding the

²⁸ *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.252.

²⁹ DDF, 1954, doc.144, p.289, footnote 3. Mohammed V requested his return with his sons to France in a letter to Mendès-France dated 25 June 1954; doc.2, Note du Ministère des Affaires marocaines et tunisiennes, 22.7.1954.

³⁰ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.88, Situation politique au Maroc et en Tunisie (septembre 1954), 27.10.1954.

³¹ Ibid; DDF, 1954, doc.287, p.595

political reforms. Likewise, Fouchet argued that the nationalists should be informed: ‘la question dynastique doit pour le moment rester à l’arrière plan... le retour de Sidi Mohammed ben Youssef sur le trône ne pouvant être envisagé par le Gouvernement français’. Lastly, these instructions were aimed at preventing UN discussion of the Moroccan problem.³² Lacoste published these proposals on 20 September, one day before the opening of the GA session.³³

The French programme was not welcomed by the Americans. Some State Department officials simply pointed out that this programme ‘contained nothing new.’ Irritated by the lack of progress towards internal autonomy, they recommended that Dulles approach Mendès-France:

We hope some further and perhaps dramatic steps can be taken in Morocco urgently, otherwise the US... could not work to avoid debate in the 9th General Assembly nor a resolution again urging progress through bilateral negotiations.³⁴

Herbert Hoover, the acting Secretary of State, agreed and suggested Dulles, in Paris, should talk with Mendès-France, if possible.³⁵

In September 1954, Georges Izard visited Mohammed V in Antsirabé and revealed the Regency Council plan.³⁶ The latter consented on condition that the Istiqlal approved.³⁷ On the other hand, Paris was contemplating the establishment of a new sultan. As such, Paris sent the Dubois-Roquebert mission to Antsirabé on 18 October 1954, with the aim of obtaining Mohammed V’s renunciation of the throne in return for his transfer to France on condition that he would agree to the designation of a new sultan. However, the ex-Sultan immediately rejected this and instead requested his own restoration, mentioning that there was no justification for abdication. He insisted that he could not play any political role in Madagascar and that it was essential that he consult representatives of Moroccan public opinion before he made up his mind.³⁸

French difficulties burgeoned with the breakout of an insurrection in Algeria on 1 November 1954. Two Radio stations in Hungary and Egypt harshly attacked oppressive French policy towards North Africa, and this further helped encourage Moroccan

³² MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.3, Fouchet to Lacoste, 8.9.1954.

³³ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.655, Mendès to Fouchet, no.182/SC, 21.9.1954.

³⁴ FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, pp.657-658, Memorandum by Byroade and Merchant to Dulles, 15.10.1954.

³⁵ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/10-2154, Hoover to Tangier, no.74, 21.10.1954. No record of the Dulles-Mendès-France conversations is found.

³⁶ This was the plan mentioned above, which had been examined in Paris since March 1954. See this chapter, p.143. Izard was a lawyer and a close friend of Mohammed V.

³⁷ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp.229-234.

³⁸ DDF, 1954, doc.287, p.596, footnote 1; Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp.229-235.

nationalists' violent activities.³⁹ Likewise, the Spanish multiplied their efforts to promote anti-French feeling. Driven into a corner, the French sought US support. Mendès-France visited Washington and had conversations with Dulles on 20 November, invoking the question of Spanish and Egyptian broadcasting activities. In response, Dulles considered the question sympathetically;⁴⁰ although regarding Mendès-France's request for a public statement of US support against outside intervention, Dulles replied that the Americans could not give France a blank cheque.⁴¹ Overall, however, the Americans were supportive because they had already been notified in October 1954 that the French had decided on Arafat's dethronement.⁴² Firstly, Henry Byroade, the assistant Under Secretary of State, drew the attention of the Egyptian ambassador to US concern over *the Voice of the Arabs*. Secondly, on 21 November, Dulles told the Syrian ambassador in Washington: 'les États arabes se gardent de tout ce qui pourrait nuire aux possibilités de règlement qui existent actuellement en Afrique du Nord'. On the following day, Dulles instructed the American ambassadors in Cairo and Madrid to request that each government restrict anti-French broadcasting.⁴³

The French also asked the Americans for support in the UN. The GA First Committee started debating the North African problems in December 1954. Bonnet asked Dulles on 9 December to exert influence on the Arab delegations to postpone the GA examination of the problems until the following session.⁴⁴ Therefore, a moderate resolution was put forward by the Arab-Asians, and Dulles instructed Lodge on 11 December to vote against it, because the '[s]ituation in Paris [was] so delicate and balance in favour of sustaining Mendès-France on London-Paris accords [over German rearmament] so precarious'.⁴⁵ Two days later, in the First Committee, Lodge voted against the Arab-Asian resolution, which asked France to open negotiations with the true representatives

³⁹ DDF, 1954, doc.335, Lacoste to Fouchet, no.1146/1158, 11.11.1954.

⁴⁰ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.161, Mendès-France to Marotuni, no.6582, 20.11.1954.

⁴¹ The Dwight D. Eisenhower Library [hereafter DDEL], White House Office NSC Staff, Papers, 1948-61, OCB Central Files Series, Box. No.61, OCB091.4 Africa, (File #1) (2), [3.1954-11.1956], 'Detailed Development of Major Actions Relating to US policy on French North Africa.', 14.4.1955.

⁴² NARA, RG59, Lot58 D45, Entry 1293, Box 2, [French Policy], Memcon, 19.10.1954. In addition, it can be assumed that the forthcoming debates on German rearmament in the French National Assembly, scheduled at the end of December 1954, made Dulles feel the necessity of removing French difficulties.

⁴³ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.161, Bonnet to Paris, no.6740/47, 29.11.1954. Bonnet reported that not only Radio Cairo but the Egyptian press changed their tone. It was also reported from Madrid that the US Ambassador supposed Franco had just decided to modify his French policy and that the High Commissioner would renounce his anti-French campaign. *Ibid.*, La Tournelle to Paris, no.709/710, 2.12.1954.

⁴⁴ DDF, 1954, doc.426, Bonnet to Mendès-France, no.7011/7013, 9.12.1954.

⁴⁵ FRUS, 1952-1954, XI, p.662, Dulles to Lodge, no.316, 11.12.1954.

of Morocco.⁴⁶ Nevertheless, the Americans did not forget to keep a balance between the French and the Arabs. Before voting Lodge affirmed: ‘the US still adhered to President Eisenhower’s declaration of 29 June in support of the principles of self-government.’⁴⁷ The GA plenary meeting at any rate adopted, on 17 December, a resolution providing for the postponement of the Moroccan question until the following session.⁴⁸

6.2 The Lacoste plan

Following the failure of the Dubois-Roquebert mission, the French government formulated a new plan on the settlement process after Arafa had been persuaded to depart. In December 1954, Izard was once again sent to Antsirabé with a plan to establish the Regency Council. The ex-Sultan promised that he would consult nationalist leaders and on 26 December, confirmed his own agreement to a settlement, after having obtained agreements from the nationalists including the Istiqlal. What Mohammed V accepted was the establishment of a Throne Council⁴⁹ rather than a new sultan, and a provisional government as a basis for unofficial negotiations with the French government. Then he specified that the provisional government’s role would be: to negotiate an agreement affirming the integrity of Moroccan sovereignty; to organise Franco-Moroccan relations on a basis of interdependence; and to put into effect the reforms that would transform Morocco into a modern country under a constitutional monarchy. Lastly, the ex-Sultan demanded that the Moroccan people freely choose their own sovereign once calm was restored.⁵⁰ Thus, by rejecting a formula for a new sultan, Mohammed V left the door open to his own restoration in the future. The important subject of how to obtain Arafa’s abdication was not discussed at this time.

However, Rabat disagreed. In January 1955, Lacoste made a long report, in which he articulated a serious dilemma regarding Arafa’s position: on the one hand, as long as he reigned, the French government could count on support from French settlers and the traditionalists; on the other hand, it was clear that terrorist activities would never cease

⁴⁶ *DDF*, 1954, doc.443, Hoppenot to Mendès-France, no.3532/353, 13.12.1954; UNGA Official Records, vol.9, 1954, First Committee, p.518.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, p.534. On 29 June 1954, in relation to Indo-Chinese affairs but without nominating any countries, US President Eisenhower and UK Prime Minister Churchill issued a declaration to affirm the principle of the unification of diverse nations through free elections. *DDF*, 1954, no.443, p.906, footnote 1.

⁴⁸ *FRUS*, 1952-1954, XI, p.662, Dulles to the US Mission at the UN, 11.12.1954, footnote 3.

⁴⁹ This was in substance ‘Regency Council’. The Quai preferred the term ‘Throne Council’ because ‘Regency’ implied the existence of a sultan, and thereby Mohammed V’s return.

⁵⁰ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.255; Georges Izard, ‘Le “Secret” d’Antsirabé’, in *Etudes Méditerranées*, no.4, (printemps, 1958).

under his reign since, for the nationalists and the mass of people in the towns, Arafa's presence 'sur le trône... suffit à justifier... l'action terroriste.'⁵¹ Nevertheless, he believed that Arafa should be dethroned and argued for the establishment of a new sultan. The Regency Council should be rejected, because firstly, '[l]l'histoire du Maroc n'offre... aucun précédent de Conseil de régence'.⁵² Secondly, this solution was a clear violation of the Treaty of Fez, since it stipulated that France would guarantee the Sultan's status. Consequently, he recommended the second option, namely the 'troisième homme'. Thirdly, making use of the absence of the Sultan, the *Ulama* might declare that Mohammed V was the legitimate sovereign.⁵³ Therefore, he stressed the importance of obtaining the ex-Sultan's promise of non-restoration.⁵⁴

The National Assembly debates on North African affairs proved fatal to the Mendès-France Government. Mendès-France was criticised for his policies towards North Africa and Algeria in particular. He was forced to resign on 5 February 1955 and Edgar Faure became the new Prime Minister on 23 February.⁵⁵ Meanwhile, the Moroccan situation again worsened. In mid-March 1955, Lacoste reported to Pierre July, the new Minister for Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs, on the increase in terrorist attacks in Casablanca.⁵⁶ The terrorists began deliberately attacking European people rather than the Moroccan population, on whom the terrorists' attention had been concentrated since the deposition.⁵⁷ Yet Faure was so preoccupied with the ongoing Franco-Tunisian negotiations that Lacoste was not given any instructions during his stay in Paris from 2 to 10 March 1955.⁵⁸

The increase in terrorist activities made Lacoste more reluctant to take action. On 15 May 1955, he submitted a new plan to July, asking the government to reverse its position on the dynastic problem.⁵⁹ He argued that the following elements necessitated a fresh examination of the problem: the evolution of the Franco-Tunisian negotiations for internal autonomy, the extension of troubles in Morocco, the aggravation of the

⁵¹ DDF, 1955, I, doc.26, Lacoste to Fouchet, no.110(1 to 5, 7), 12.1.1955. Particularly in Casablanca, December 1954 saw a series of attacks, killing three people. *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.289.

⁵² DDF, 1955, I, doc.26, p.75.

⁵³ *Ibid.* p.77.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.* p.79.

⁵⁵ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.91, Situation politique au Maroc (Février 1955).

⁵⁶ DDF, 1955, I, doc.131, Lacoste to July, no.545/560, 15.3.1955.

⁵⁷ PRO, FO371/113831, JM1016/13, Casablanca to Hayman, 24P/55, 14.3.1955.

⁵⁸ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.213.

⁵⁹ DDF, 1955, I, doc.280, Lacoste to July, no.1517/1-2, 14.5.1955.

Algerian situation and the psychological effect of the Bandung Conference.⁶⁰ According to him, the dynastic problem was only a pretext for those who were committed to violent acts and the real objective of the nationalists, notably of the Istiqlal, was to drive France out of not only Morocco but also North Africa as a whole. He pointed to the importance of the *caïds*, since the majority of them still had extraordinary power in the rural areas, and their support was indispensable for the French position. The Pasha of Marrakech ‘incarne... la fidélité à la France’.⁶¹ Since Arafa’s departure would be regarded as a betrayal by France, regardless of whether the Regency Council or a third person would come after, Lacoste now concluded that Arafa should stay on the throne, contrary to his January 1955 report and that a Moroccan government should be established under his reign.

The new report of May 1955 brought about a change in Paris. Now the French government decided that Arafa should stay on the throne despite the agreement with Mohammed V in December 1954. However, in contrast to Lacoste, the French government, especially Faure, attached more importance to the nationalists, as later developments showed. At the end of May 1955, Faure agreed with July on Lacoste’s dismissal.⁶² Shortly after the signature of the Franco-Tunisian conventions on 3 June 1955, Faure set up an interdepartmental Committee for Coordination of North African Affairs.⁶³ The Moroccan situation was so pressing that Lacoste noted: ‘La sécurité de nos compatriotes et celle même de l’établissement français au Maroc peuvent se trouver en jeu.’⁶⁴ Economic activities in Casablanca and Rabat were being paralysed because of shop closures, partly encouraged by foreign broadcasts, particularly Radio Damascus.⁶⁵ On 11 June, Lemaigre-Dubreuil,⁶⁶ who had been searching for a dialogue between French people and moderate Moroccan nationalist elements, was assassinated. French shops in major cities closed because of strikes at the end of June 1955.⁶⁷

⁶⁰ The Algerian situation so deteriorated that the French National Assembly passed an act declaring a state of emergency on 31 March 1955. The Bandung Conference was held from 18 to 24 April 1955, and indicated the development of Third-World anti-colonialism.

⁶¹ At that time there was a rumour that the French government was considering Arafa’s deposition. On 9 May 1955, El-Glaoui declared to the press: ‘la question du sultanat était religieuse, ce qui en excluait toute ingérence extérieure’. *DDF*, 1955, I, no.280, p. 640, footnote 1.

⁶² Edgar Faure, *Mémoires II*, (Plon; Paris, 1984), p.265.

⁶³ The other principal members of this Committee were Marshal Juin, General Marie-Pierre Koenig (Minister of War), Maurice Bourgès-Maunoury (Minister of Interior), Pierre Pflimlin (Minister of Finance).

⁶⁴ *DDF*, 1955, I, doc.325, Lacoste to Ministry of Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs, no.1802/1807, 7.6.1955.

⁶⁵ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.89, Lacoste to July, no.1909/1917, 12.6.1955.

⁶⁶ He was the *directeur d’importantes affaires industrielles au Maroc et de France-Presse*.

⁶⁷ *L’Année Politique*, 1955, p.246.

On 20 June 1955, the French Council of Ministers decided on the replacement of Lacoste by Gilbert Grandval.⁶⁸ Faure announced the governmental programme before the National Assembly the following day. Its main points were: (1) the permanence of the French presence in Morocco, (2) the abolition of the system of direct administration, (3) the creation of modern governmental institutions and (4) the organisation of genuine interdependence between the two countries.⁶⁹ This announcement showed that Faure was giving consideration to internal autonomy, which was similar to what Tunisia had been granted as a result of the Franco-Tunisian Conventions. After their experiences in Tunisia in 1954, the French were starting to search for a way of coming to terms with the Moroccan nationalists.

At the same time, US and UK officials were increasingly concerned about Moroccan affairs, largely because they were accused by French newspapers of failing to apply the principle of the North Atlantic alliance in support of French North African policy.⁷⁰ On 16 June 1955, Ambassador Dillon urged Dulles to pay attention to Morocco, stressing that French leaders 'have become suspicious and resentful of U.S. policy in that area' because of its 'unwillingness to allow the transfer of helicopters from Indochina to North Africa'.⁷¹ On 23 June, the Americans were informed that while the FO felt the French should realise 'the days of old-time colonialism are over', it would still continue its policy of supporting the French position.⁷² As discussed before, the British knew that Anglo-Saxon advice would merely irritate French opinion thereby increasing the probability of French failure. Jebb had written to Eden in March 1955:

During the last years we have... succeeded... in placing the French firmly together with Western Germany in the general defensive system of the West... We shall still, however, have to continue to work very hard to prevent her from slipping out of this system as a result either of internal, or of external pressure, or of both... [T]he attitude of the "Anglo-Saxons" towards France generally may have a certain influence on the issue of the struggle... [W]hat is evident above all

⁶⁸ DDF, 1955, I, doc.343, p.779, footnote 1. It seems that a few days before 20 June, Izard had revealed to Faure the outline of the plan drawn up at Antsirabé. Izard, 'Le "Secret" d'Antsirabé', *Etudes Méditerranées*, no.4, (printemps, 1958), p.74.

⁶⁹ *L'Année Politique*, 1954, pp.245-246.

⁷⁰ PRO, FO371/113806, JF1072/6, Paris to the Western Department, FO, no.10723/37/55, 24.6.1955.

⁷¹ DDEL, Dulles, John Foster Secretary of State: Papers 1951-1959, Subject Series Box no.6 North African Survey - 1955 Julius Holmes [re U.S. policy toward North African countries], Dillon to Dulles, 16.6.1955. On 25 May, the French had asked Washington to consent regarding the transfer of the helicopters provided for French use in Indochina to Algeria, but the American reply was not favourable. DDF, 1955, I, doc.300, Pinay to Couve de Murville, no.7878/7881, 26.5.1955; doc.351, MAE to Washington, no.9205/9210, 20.6.1955.

⁷² NARA, RG59, CDF, 751S.00/6-2355, London to State Department, despatch no.3764, 23.6.1955.

is that if the French really lose their grip on Africa North of the Sahara, the left wing and neutralist forces in France itself will be immeasurably increased.⁷³

Jebb continued that the defence of Western Europe in the face of a neutralist or quasi-hostile France was impossible in the long run. British concern was the avoidance of French withdrawal from the Western Alliance, which was highly likely if France was driven out of North Africa. Since Anglo-Saxon intervention would increase this probability, the British were extremely hesitant to advise the French. The FO was certain that French opinion would not put the blame on the Anglo-Saxons as long as France failed to solve the North African problems without their intervention.

State Department officials had little faith in French competence in handling colonial affairs, as the British noted.⁷⁴ This was presumably because Faure's announcement of 21 June 1955 did not mention the dynastic problem. As a country which advocated national emancipation, the Americans could not afford to be so tolerant as the British. Later in June 1955, Dillon strongly conveyed American concerns to Faure. The latter, however, did not react favourably and instead produced a list of complaints about the failure of British and American policy to support the French in North Africa.⁷⁵ Nevertheless, immediately after this, on 2 July 1955 Faure told American officials that he was paying close attention to Moroccan affairs and that 'he would welcome at any time an expression of Washington's views' especially on the dynastic problem.⁷⁶ The Americans welcomed this move as evidence that the French had finally recognised US good-offices and were now seriously addressing the Moroccan problem. They had no immediate reaction, fearing that it could still be interpreted as interference.⁷⁷

6.3 The Grandval plan

The new Resident-General Grandval arrived at Rabat on 7 July 1955. Just before his departure, he had received lengthy instructions from the Ministry for Moroccan and Tunisian affairs. It was stated at the outset:

⁷³ PRO, FO371/113803, JF1051/3, Jebb to Eden, 23.3.1955.

⁷⁴ PRO, FO371/113806, JF1072/5, Makins to Kirkpatrick, no.10643/1/55/55, 30.6.1955.

⁷⁵ PRO, FO371/113806, JF1072/6, Paris to Western Department, no.10723/37/55, 24.6.1955.

⁷⁶ NARA, RG59, CDF, 751S.00/7-255, Paris to Dulles, no.24, 2.7.1955. It is not clear why Faure suddenly decided to sound out American intentions on this matter, but one possible reason is that he considered American support could be useful in encouraging liberal tendencies among French opinion, if its timing was carefully calculated.

⁷⁷ NARA, RG59, CDF, 751S.00/7-555, Tangier to the Dulles, no.2, 5.7.1955.

C'est... en transférant effectivement l'exercice du gouvernement et de l'administration aux Marocaines eux-mêmes que leur consentement passif à la présence permanente de la France se transformera en consentement actif ...

Il ne saurait être question de supprimer la souveraineté chérifienne qui doit au contraire être consacrée et qui ne saurait être partagée. Il y a donc lieu d'écartier rigoureusement toute formule de « co-souveraineté »...⁷⁸

These instructions partially exceeded what Faure had mentioned in the previous month, as it referred to Morocco's sovereignty, though the recognition of it remained a future goal. The *principe de co-souveraineté*, to which the French had long been committed, should be abandoned when the protectorate system was replaced by 'une nouvelle formule d'association'⁷⁹ between France and Morocco. This meant that the French realised, as was the case in Tunisia, that cooperation with the nationalists was necessary to sustain French rule in Morocco and therefore the *principe de co-souveraineté* must be abandoned. This note maintained that a Moroccan government should be established, although this government was to include French ministers. This government was expected to implement administrative decentralisation, but no transfer of power to the Moroccan people was envisaged in the short term.

Nevertheless, the French had already been aware that the formation of such a government was impossible under Arafa's reign:

Arafa... n'est parvenu depuis lors à imposer ni son autorité ni son prestige... Parallèlement, s'est créée la légende de Mohammed V qui pourtant n'était pas populaire lorsqu'il régnait.

This was a frank admission that the establishment of Arafa had been a complete failure and, worse, had enhanced Mohammed V's prestige. Yet, crucially important is that the establishment of a Moroccan government was considered possible with Arafa staying on the throne. The French decided to transfer him to another place in Morocco and to set up a Moroccan government during his absence from Rabat. They also clung to the idea that 'nous ne pouvons faire abstraction du crédit dont Mohammed V dispose encore au Maroc' at the time of the formation of a Moroccan government. Desperate to exclude his influence in a newly-created government, they hoped that its formation would be completed before his transfer to France.

Grandval was instructed to inform Paris if he agreed to this solution of the dynastic problem. Therefore, upon his arrival, he wasted no time in sounding out the

⁷⁸ DDF, 1955, II, doc.27, July to Faure, 12.7.1955.

⁷⁹ It is unclear what this phrase meant, but undoubtedly, the French never accepted the idea that Moroccan independence could be achieved outside the French Union.

representatives of all shades of Moroccan opinion, especially the traditionalists. On 13 July 1955, he had long talks with el-Glaoui, whose position was: ‘Toute idée de restaurer Mohammed ben Youssef ou ses fils est... absolument à proscrire. Mohammed ben Arafa est le sultan légitime du Maroc’.⁸⁰ However, at the end of July 1955, it emerged that the *caïds* appeared to be resigned to the Sultan’s departure, provided they received assurances that Mohammed V and his descendants would be kept from the throne.⁸¹ When he had conversations with *caïds* in Meknès, he found fifty-one of the fifty-two *caïds* adopted the position: « Nous ne connaissons que Dieu et la France... ».⁸² The chieftains’ orientation was perhaps decisive in changing the stance of el-Glaoui, who now felt that he had to make concessions. El-Glaoui, nevertheless, imposed an important condition: he approved Arafa’s dethronement only if he was immediately replaced by another sultan chosen among six candidates that el-Glaoui himself listed.⁸³ For him, the absence of a sultan was unthinkable, since it would lead directly to Mohammed V’s return.

In the meantime, the British and the Americans were exchanging views. As mentioned above, the British were worried that the US had a low opinion of French ability to handle colonial situations. They were intent on moderating US attitudes vis-à-vis France, so perhaps under the instructions of Eden, who had originally been advised by Jebb, Makins began ‘urging the Americans to be sympathetic towards the French in North Africa’.⁸⁴ It was probably these British efforts, together with Dillon’s advice to the same effect on 16 June, that made Dulles pay more attention to Moroccan affairs. On 13 July 1955, he ordered Julius Holmes, the US Consul General at Tangier, to undertake a survey in North African areas.⁸⁵

By now, the prospect of the Moroccan problem being discussed in the UN emerged again. On 26 July, considering the spread of disturbances in those territories, the Afro-Asian UN delegations⁸⁶ decided to demand the inscription of the Algerian and Moroccan problems on the GA agenda. The French position remained as in previous years; ‘les Nations Unies ne sont pas compétentes... [I]l est souhaitable que la question

⁸⁰ DDF, 1955, II, doc.28, Grandval to July, no.2326/2333, 13.7.1955.

⁸¹ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.265. His argument is based on Grandval’s memoirs.

⁸² DDF, 1955, II, doc.63, Grandval to July, no.2542/2545, 28.7.1955.

⁸³ *Ibid.*, doc.75, Grandval to July, no.2594/2600, 2.8.1955.

⁸⁴ PRO, FO371/113806, JF1072/7, Jebb to FO, 18.7.1955.

⁸⁵ DDEL, Papers 1951-1959, Subject Series Box no.6 North African Survey - 1955 Julius Holmes [re U.S. policy toward North African countries], Dulles to Dillon, 13.7.1955.

⁸⁶ They were: Afghanistan, Burma, Egypt, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Lebanon, Liberia, Pakistan, the Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Thailand and Yemen. *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1955, pp.63-65.

ne soit examinée que le plus tard possible',⁸⁷ as Antoine Pinay, the French Foreign Minister, instructed the UN delegation.

Grandval sent an action plan to Paris on 2 August 1955, whereby he clearly suggested that Arafa abdicate, unlike the government's plan.⁸⁸ In sharp contrast to el-Glaoui, he recommended that the Regency Council be created, not 'the third person', because he believed that there was no ruler who could stay on the throne without following Arafa's fate. This plan was defined by its strict time schedule:

Le large crédit dont je dispose dans tous les milieux marocains me serait retiré si aucune décision sur ce point n'intervenait avant le 20 août. Le désespoir populaire alimenterait alors le fanatisme... [D]ans un conflit ouvert avec la majeure partie du pays, disparaîtrait l'autorité de la France et de son Résident...

20 August 1955 was the second anniversary of the deposition. Grandval warned that if the French government did not take action before that date, Morocco would descend into anarchy. Also, the ex-Sultan's involvement was central to this plan. Grandval argued that Mohammed V should make 'une déclaration publique par laquelle il recommanderait à ses sujets de tenir pour légitime l'autorité provisoire'. Therefore he suggested that the government start negotiations with Mohammed V, whose legitimacy could no longer be ignored. This was a clear deviation from Paris's position to keep his involvement to a minimum.

The Ministry for Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs analysed the Grandval plan with grave interest. A memorandum of 3 August 1955 began by stating: 'L'importance de mesures proposées par M. Grandval... montre... la gravité de la situation au Maroc, où les risques d'insurrection tendent désormais à se substituer à la pression du terrorisme'.⁸⁹ Although this note did not recommend whether to accept the Grandval plan or not, it made a number of comments on it, namely:

1. A Council composed of the grand Vizier and two representatives of Moroccan opinion would be more stable and solid than a 'khalifa'⁹⁰
3. Fatmi ben Slimane⁹¹ was the best choice as the head of a future provisional government...

⁸⁷ *DDF*, 1955, II, doc.98, Pinay to diplomatic representatives, circular no.62, 9.8.1955.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, doc.76, Grandval to July, no.2601/2645, 2.8.1955. In his plan, a new Sultan would be established after two years' absence.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, doc.80, Note de la Direction générale au Ministère des Affaires marocaines et tunisiennes, 3.8.1955.

⁹⁰ 'Khalifa' here meant a deputy of the Sultan.

⁹¹ Grandval had suggested him as the prime minister. Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan conflict*, p.265.

4. A provisional government could not be entitled to negotiate about future Franco-Moroccan relations.
5. Mohammed V's public support for the solution must be his appeal not as the sovereign but as a technician.
6. It was essential that the Spanish government be informed of the French government's decisions.
7. If it was useful to announce Mohammed V's transfer to France, that transfer should be done after the Throne Council and the Moroccan government had established their authority.

This memorandum thus agreed with the Grandval plan to establish a Throne Council, and to secure the ex-Sultan's involvement in the settlement process, albeit as a 'technician'.

In parallel to the Afro-Asian moves in the UN, the Americans were gradually more sensitive to their approach. From 1 to 3 August, a meeting was held in Paris on North African problems in which John Jernegan and US officers from North African posts participated. The meeting concluded:

there has been recent evolution in French thinking and events in North Africa shocked Metropolitan France from its complacency... Influence of colons in France is probably diminishing... [The] program which Grandval outlined and general approach of Faure and Mendes-France to North Africa do appear worthy of our support...⁹²

The Americans welcomed the Grandval plan, since this included Arafa's dethronement. Actually, they had already noted in July 1955 that 'there is unquestionably [a] new spirit developing in France', as was indicated in the 'Socialists' call for basic revision [of the] constitution [of the] French Union in order [to] permit free association [of] all three North African areas with France'.⁹³ Yet this meeting emphasised that their support for the French position in the UNGA would depend on whether the French could take action before its opening, and that the French should be warned of this. Finally, the meeting recommended that Dulles issue a public statement to show American satisfaction on the Franco-Tunisian Conventions, thereby giving support to Grandval's efforts.⁹⁴

Meanwhile, US Ambassador Dillon and Holmes, who presided over the above meeting, had conversations with Faure on 2 August.⁹⁵ Faure repeatedly asked them whether they considered Arafa's dethronement indispensable or not. Holmes

⁹² *FRUS*, 1955-1957, XVIII, doc.28, Paris to the State Department, no.526, 4.8.1955.

⁹³ NARA, RG59, CDF 771.00/7-2155, Dillon to Dulles, no.282, 21.7.1955.

⁹⁴ *FRUS*, 1955-1957, XVIII, doc.28, Paris to the State Department, no.526, 4.8.1955.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, doc.182, Paris to the State Department, no.489, 2.8.1955.

mentioned: ‘The solution envisaged by the Resident-General... is on the right lines. But it must have the approval of Ben Youssef.’⁹⁶ Dillon then expressed ‘the personal view that the United States might find it very difficult to give France the kind of support on the Moroccan problem we have given [in] the past two Assemblies, if the situation there has not substantially improved’. Thus the US informed the French of their possible attitude at the UNGA. The Americans, nevertheless, had the impression that Faure had already decided to tackle the dynastic problem. In addition to the approach to Faure, on 1 August 1955, Dulles had proposed to the British an Anglo-American joint intervention in this matter. The Americans ‘doubted the ability of the French to handle the situation effectively... [The French] action in removing to North Africa [the] American equipment which they had obtained through MDAP for their NATO forces created a serious problem for the State Department’,⁹⁷ as Dulles explained to Makins. However, the FO turned down this proposal, reasoning that there was, in French opinion, ‘a growing realisation that new relationship between the metropolitan country and the overseas territories will have to be worked out’. Two days later, the FO instructed Makins to notify Dulles of its views: if either the UK or the US government intervened, it might have a reverse effect on the French.⁹⁸

US officials were irritated with the lack of progress in Morocco, which had made the State Department’s position extremely difficult in terms of US opinion. Two and half years had already passed since the UNGA resolution in December 1952 and Mayer’s declaration ‘de guider les populations de Tunisie et du Maroc vers l’administration de leurs propres affaires’ in January 1953. As well, as Maurice Couve de Murville, French Ambassador in Washington, put it, the Americans were particularly sensitive to the rise of Third-World nationalism, exemplified by the Bandung Conference in April 1955. He pointed out that the détente in the Cold War encouraged the Americans to turn their attention to such phenomena. Couve then warned that the US would vote against a resolution unless the French started solving the problem.⁹⁹ Actually, Holmes had written to Dulles that it was important ‘to determine our attitude toward France and toward the Afro-Asian Group, bearing the Bandung Conference in mind.’¹⁰⁰

In contrast, the British proposed a far more indirect way of dealing with the French.

⁹⁶ PRO, FO371/113806, JF1072/11, Paris to FO, no.290, 4.8.1955.

⁹⁷ PRO, FO371/113806, JF1072/10, Makins to FO, no.1790, 1.8.1955. MDAP stands for Mutual Defense Assistance Program.

⁹⁸ PRO, FO371/113806, JF1072/10(b), FO to Washington, no.3158, 3.8.1955.

⁹⁹ DDF, 1955, II, doc.99, Couve de Murville to Pinay, no.4217/4228, 9.8.1955.

¹⁰⁰ NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.71A/7-2655, Tangier to Dulles, no.36, 26.7.1955.

Instead of putting pressure on the French government, their aim lay in encouraging French opinion to be liberal. One British official argued that French politicians, press and people were beginning to have new thoughts on France's relations with North African dependencies:

This "immobilisme" on the part of successive French Governments has reflected a basic unconcern on the part of the French men in the street... Now, however, that decisions have been taken in [Indo-China and the EDC], the men in the street and the political parties have had time to turn their attention to the problems of North Africa...

One which seems feasible is to encourage publicity for the new turn of thought in France in the... weighty British papers...¹⁰¹

Echoing this suggestion, an editorial entitled 'Unjust Suspicions' appeared in *The Times* on 5 August 1955, which argued that Britain should assist French efforts in North Africa. The British views were soon to be agreed upon by Dulles.

Along with the necessity to take action, the Moroccan situation appeared gloomy. On 5 August, Arafa announced in *Le Monde* that under no circumstances would he consider withdrawing. This 'coupait bien évidemment toute possibilité d'adoption rapide du plan Grandval', to use Faure's expression.¹⁰² With some ministers blaming Grandval for his surrender to terrorism, the Council of Ministers on the following day could not reach a decision to approve his plan or not. Moreover, Arafa's dethronement was vigorously opposed by the principal members of the Laniel Government, who had decided on Mohammed V's deposition, including Bidault.¹⁰³ This group was undoubtedly backed by French settler groups like the *Présence française*. On the other hand, the Americans were trying to encourage Paris to accept the Grandval plan. On 10 August Dulles issued a statement indicating American satisfaction with the Franco-Tunisian agreement, which the French Senate had ratified five days earlier, in order to 'help Grandval on Morocco'.¹⁰⁴ This statement meant that Dulles not only followed the recommendation of the 1-3 August meeting mentioned above, but also agreed to the British proposal to encourage liberal tendencies in French opinion instead of making a joint approach.¹⁰⁵ In

¹⁰¹ PRO, FO371/113806, JF1072/10(b), Ramsden Minute, 2.8.1955. Using newspapers had originally been an idea of Jebb.

¹⁰² Faure, *Mémoires II*, pp. 391-392.

¹⁰³ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/7-2855, Paris to Dulles, no.419, 28.7.1955.

¹⁰⁴ FRUS, 1955-1957, XVIII, doc.28, Paris to the State Department, no.526, 4.8.1955.

¹⁰⁵ PRO, FO371/113806, JF1072/14, Makins to London, no.464, 18.8.1955. However, Dulles added to the British: 'I do not believe we should close our minds to the possibility that some positive action may become necessary.'

fact, unlike Britain, Dulles had not issued such a statement at the time of the signing the Franco-Tunisian agreement in April 1955, despite Dillon's repeated requests.¹⁰⁶

The Sultan's refusal, nonetheless, greatly changed Faure's strategy. In the Committee for Coordination held from 11 to 12 August and in the Council of Ministers on 12 August, he presented a plan and obtained agreement in both meetings. The Faure plan instructed the Resident-General to:

suggérer à Moulay Arafat la constitution immédiate d'un gouvernement marocain largement représentatif dont les membres seraient choisis sur une liste agréée par un « Comité des Cinq » où siégeront le président du Conseil, MM. Schuman, Pinay, July et le général Koenig. Si le Sultan peut constituer ce Gouvernement, ses membres seront invités à se rendraient dès le 18 août en France où ils seront reçus par la délégation gouvernementale. En cas d'échec, il m'appartiendra de désigner sur cette liste un certain membre de Marocains qui seront reçus à la même date par la même délégation. C'est après cet échange de vues que le Gouvernement déterminera... les mesures à prendre pour résoudre la crise marocaine. Celle-ci devrait en tout cas être « sortie de la phase critique » le 12 septembre au plus tard.¹⁰⁷

Apparently, the Faure plan side-stepped the dynastic problem for a while and was not aimed at meeting the due date set by Grandval. However, importantly, this plan put more emphasis on the nationalists' role than the Grandval plan. Firstly, it intended to impress Moroccan opinion with Arafat's inability to deal with the crisis and secondly, to illustrate that France relied on the nationalists in establishing a new regime. Faure announced that the government had agreed upon a plan, but without revealing its tenor.¹⁰⁸ According to Grandval, who considered that the Faure plan would pave a way to the ex-Sultan's restoration, he angrily told Faure on 13 August: 'Votre Politique..., va ramener Ben Youssef sur le Trône!' and the latter replied 'En avez-vous jamais douté ?'¹⁰⁹ Based on this, Faure could have judged that the force of events might bring him back to the throne in the future.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁶ DDEL, Dulles, John Foster Secretary of State: Papers 1951-1959, Subject Series Box no.6 North African Survey - 1955 Julius Holmes [re U.S. policy toward North African countries], Dillon to Dulles, 16.6.1955.

¹⁰⁷ Gilbert Grandval, *Ma Mission au Maroc*, (Paris: Librairie Plon, 1956), p.193; CARAN, Edgar Faure, 505APII, 345, Maroc, [Août 1955, Comité de Coordination], untitled, undated.

¹⁰⁸ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp.276-277.

¹⁰⁹ Grandval, *Ma Mission*, p.201.

¹¹⁰ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp.292-296. However, it is difficult to interpret that Faure expected his restoration would be realised in several months, as it actually was. The abolition of the Ministry for Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs on 20 October 1955 seemed to indicate that, in French judgement, the establishment of the Throne Council settled the matter for the time being. See this chapter, p.173.

On 15 August 1955, Grandval tabled Arafa Faure's letter, demanding that he constitute a government composed of representatives of all shades of Moroccan opinion before 18 August.¹¹¹ However, it was clear by 17 August that the Istiqlal and the PDI, without whose agreements no solution was possible, were hostile to any talks with Moroccan traditionalists. Understandably, they did not trust French sincerity to negotiate with them, and rejected the idea of having talks with the traditionalist elements responsible for Mohammed V's deposition.¹¹² Therefore, the Resident-General suggested that July send a delegation to Antsirabé with the purpose of obtaining at least passive cooperation from the ex-Sultan 'd'extrême urgence'.¹¹³ Grandval received a letter dated 17 August from the Sultan that he had given up the attempt to constitute a government.¹¹⁴ This impasse forced the French government to change its position concerning Mohammed V's involvement: it finally decided to rely on his authority in order to sell the governmental plan to Moroccan opinion. The Committee of the Five decided on 19 August to send a mission to Antsirabé, and to open a Franco-Moroccan meeting at Aix-les-Bains on 22 August.¹¹⁵ The ex-Sultan's expected approval moderated the nationalists' attitude.¹¹⁶

Meanwhile, the Moroccan situation became even more strained as the anniversary of the deposition approached. Terrorist attacks multiplied from the night of 17 August in Casablanca. Troubles spread throughout Morocco by 20 August.¹¹⁷ Particularly serious was the massacre in Oued-Zem where forty-nine Europeans were killed. Disorder continued in Marrakech, Mazagan and Safi the next day.¹¹⁸

It was in this explosive atmosphere that Franco-Moroccan discussions began at Aix-les-Bains on 22 August 1955. On the French side, the representatives were the members of the Committee of the Five. Principal Moroccan attendants were el-Mokri, the representatives of the Maghzen, el-Glaoui and other chieftains, the delegates of both the Istiqlal and the PDI, and moderate nationalists like Bekkaï and Ben Slimane.¹¹⁹ In

¹¹¹ *DDF*, 1955, II, doc.107, p.241, footnote 1.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, doc.113, Grandval to July, no.2855/2861, 17.8.1955; doc.117, Grandval to July, no.2884/2887, 18.8.1955.

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, doc.116, p.259, footnote 1, Grandval to July, no.2873/2878, 17.8.1955.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, doc.118, Grandval to July, no.2894/2899, 18.8.1955.

¹¹⁵ *Ibid.*, doc.129, p.296, footnote 2.

¹¹⁶ There is no document available regarding French soundings of the nationalist parties about the forthcoming Aix-les-Bains meeting.

¹¹⁷ Holmes had already pointed to this danger on 9 August 1955. *Ibid.*, doc.112, Couve de Murville to Massigli, 16.8.1955.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.* doc.131, p.302, footnote 2.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, doc.144, Note, Conversations franco-marocaines d'Aix-les-Bains, 27.8.1955.

accordance with the negotiations at Aix-les-Bains, the Committee reached the following conclusion on 26 August.

- retraite du sultan Ben Arafa
- constitution d'un Conseil du Trône dont le personnage central serait Si Bekkaï...
- formation d'un gouvernement représentatif chargé de négocier avec la France...

The French Council of Ministers approved this decision three days later.¹²⁰ Now Arafa's dethronement was considered essential, but this conclusion was a logical consequence of the Faure plan to consult the nationalists.

The Aix-les-Bains meeting and the French decision thereafter brought about favourable reactions in the international scene. Early in August 1955, the Arab-Asian countries' attitude towards the Moroccan problem had been so firm that they had demanded Dag Hammarskjöld, the UN Secretary-General, to intervene against the French government.¹²¹ However, after the talks started, attitudes abroad moderated. On 23 August, Hammarskjöld discussed Moroccan affairs with the delegates of six Arab-Asian countries,¹²² and focussed their attention on the importance of the forthcoming conversations at Aix-les-Bains. He estimated: '[les] Arabes et Asiatiques commençait à réduire fortement leurs prétentions'.¹²³ This group announced on 30 August their decision to bring the matter to the UNSC, but '[a]fin de tenir compte des exigences de leur opinion publique, les Arabes ont voulu donner l'impression que leur décision était inébranlable', as one of their delegates said to journalists. In fact, they had already been informed that the US would vote against the inscription of the question on the SC agenda.¹²⁴ In the final analysis, the Arab-Asian countries did not formally request the UNSC to discuss the Moroccan question.¹²⁵ Moreover, Dulles announced on 30 August that the US government agreed on French policy towards Morocco, and hoped a Moroccan government could be established before the UNGA session.¹²⁶ This was the first time that the Americans had openly revealed their support for France over Morocco.

¹²⁰ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.263.

¹²¹ *DDF*, 1955, II, doc.125, Lucet to Pinay, no.1530/1538, 19.8.1955.

¹²² They were: Lebanon, Iraq, Iran, Egypt, India, and Burma.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, doc.135, Lucet to Pinay, no.1580/1586, 24.8.1955.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, doc.149, Alphand to Pinay, no.1672/1677, 30.8.1955.

¹²⁵ *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1955, p.64

¹²⁶ *Le Monde*, 31.8.1955.

6.4 The Departure of Arafa

On 30 August 1955, General Latour, former Resident-General in Tunis, was nominated as the new Resident-General in Morocco.¹²⁷ In the instructions given to him, the French government emphasised that the settlement of the dynastic problem ‘constituait, malheureusement, une condition préalable, indispensable à la formation du gouvernement marocain’.¹²⁸ Thus Paris definitely decided to dethrone Arafa. To begin with, Latour was told to ask Arafa to abdicate voluntarily. After his departure, he should ask el-Mokri to constitute the Throne Council, which would include el-Mokri himself,¹²⁹ Bekkaï and the last one yet to be decided. The Council’s first task would be to appoint Ben Slimane as the prime minister in accordance with the Grandval plan, and then make sure to include members of the PDI and the Istiqlal as ministers.¹³⁰ This government would establish modern and democratic institutions, while guaranteeing the French people’s interests. Then, and this was a novel part of the programme, the government was to negotiate new relations with France, a point that the French memorandum of 3 August 1955 had not mentioned.¹³¹ This was considered essential, because of the necessity of obtaining Mohammed V’s approval. The French Council of Ministers, nevertheless, had not yet decided at this stage ‘si des aménagements devront être ou non apportés au traité de Fès’. Finally, the instructions highlighted that the programme must be implemented by 12 September 1955. In addition, Latour, as a military officer, was instructed to assume responsibility both for the maintenance of order and for the application of the new policy.¹³²

At the same time, the French government was preparing for a mission to Antsirabé. It instructed General Catroux on 1 September, to ‘convaincre l’ex-Sultan qu’après les conversations d’Aix-les-Bains, le gouvernement est décidé à mettre un terme à l’administration directe en facilitant la constitution d’un gouvernement marocain

¹²⁷ On 23 August Grandval had already asked the government to accept his resignation. MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.3, Grandval to July, no.33/42, 23.8.1955.

¹²⁸ DDF, 1955, II, doc.150, Instructions du Gouvernement au Général Boyer de Latour Résident général de France au Maroc, 30.8.1955.

¹²⁹ Securing el-Mokri’s participation was considered fundamental in showing the continuity of the Sharifian State.

¹³⁰ At the Aix-les-Bains meeting, though, it had been agreed that the Istiqlal would not participate in the government until after Mohammed V’s transfer to France, but nevertheless give support to the government. *Ibid.*, doc.144, Note de M. Duhamel, Conversations franco-marocaines d’Aix-les-Bains, p.366.

¹³¹ This Chapter, pp.156-157.

¹³² *Ibid.*, doc.165, circular no.68, Pinay to French diplomatic representatives, 3.9.1955.

largement représentatif des diverses tendances de l'opinion'.¹³³ He was also instructed to obtain Mohammed V's recognition of the envisaged settlement process and his promise not to engage in political activities, and to tell him that he would be authorised to enter France as soon as a new regime was established, on 15 October 1955 for instance. In addition, the instructions clarified that the Throne Council would be convened by the Grand Vizier, and consisted of a nationalist and a traditionalist besides himself.

On his arrival at Rabat, Latour had talks with Arafa on 5 September 1955, and found him inclined to abdicate voluntarily, because the growing opposition made it more difficult to fulfil his role.¹³⁴ Four days later, he went so far as to talk to the Resident-General on what he wanted as compensation for his abdication.¹³⁵ Meanwhile, at a conference on 6 and 7 September, the Istiqlal had published a communiqué to affirm the Aix-les-Bains agreement on condition that:

- le départ définitif de Ben Arafa
- l'accord librement exprimé par S.M. Sidi Mohammed Ben Youssef aussi bien sur le principe de l'institution d'un Conseil de Régence que sur la composition de ses membres.
- la constitution d'un gouvernement marocain reste conditionnée par une déclaration d'intention du gouvernement français réaffirmant l'unité et la souveraineté marocaines et l'intégrité territoriale du Maroc et proclamant sa volonté de conduire le Maroc au statut d'État indépendant et souverain dans le cadre d'une interdépendance entre le Maroc et la France librement élaborée et négociée.¹³⁶

The French obtained a satisfactory result at Antsirabé. The Mohammed V-Catroux conversations were almost concluded by 8 September, when Catroux presented to the former a draft of a declaration by Faure. Its main points were:

1. La politique de la France est fondée sur l'affirmation... de la souveraineté marocaine. Elle vise à conduire le Maroc au statut d'état moderne libre et souverain; uni à la France par des liens permanents d'une interdépendance librement consentie.
2. [L]e gouvernement français donnera son accord à toute formule sauvegardant la permanence et la mission historique du trône alaouite...

¹³³ *Ibid.*, doc.157, Instructions to Catroux and Yrissou, 1.9.1955. As the instructions showed, the French were aware that the ex-Sultan's position had hardened in comparison with that in December 1954, due to the events in Morocco which had happened since then. They were concerned that he might not recognise the Throne Council and could claim more than his transfer to France.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, doc.171, Latour to July, no.3174/3177, 6.9.1955.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*, doc.198, Latour to July, no.3290/3210, 10.9.1955.

¹³⁶ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.269.

3. Un gouvernement... devra être largement représentatif des diverses tendances de l'opinion... Il devra élaborer... les institutions démocratiques modernes... Il aura également vocation à engager le dialogue avec le gouvernement français afin de définir contractuellement d'une part les garanties des droits et intérêts de la France et des Français au Maroc, d'autre part les liens permanents qui uniront dans l'avenir les deux pays.

Ces liens permanents comporteront:

- a. L'association des états par des institutions communes, de type fédéral, constituant en un Conseil exécutif chargé de gérer les affaires présentant un intérêt commun aux deux états...
- b. La communauté des peuples, par l'institution d'une citoyenneté commune se superposant à la nationalité française et à la nationalité marocaine, et à laquelle sera attachée la jouissance réciproque des droits...¹³⁷

However, to French embarrassment, Mohammed V's attitude hardened as a result of the *demande* by Bekkai's delegation. It was noted on 9 September: 'Il revient sur l'abrogation du traité de Fès, qu'il tient pour la condition première d'une négociation... entre le gouvernement français et le gouvernement marocain pour définir de nouveaux rapports entre les deux pays.'¹³⁸ Later that day, the ex-Sultan finalised his position: he accepted the first and second paragraphs of the French draft of 8 September. Nonetheless, he did not accept the third paragraph on the basis that: 'il y retrouvait esprit Union Française dans laquelle à plusieurs reprises, les Marocains avaient refusé de s'intégrer.'¹³⁹ Catroux issued a communiqué on the same day: 'Ben Youssef a accepté de soutenir la politique qui tend à créer un Etat libre, souverain, lié à la France par un acte d'interdépendance.'¹⁴⁰

Thus, one crucial point remained unsolved: to the end Mohammed V did not agree on the nature of future Franco-Moroccan relations, despite his acceptance of the preservation of permanent Franco-Moroccan links. More precisely, he refused to agree to Morocco's adherence to the French Union, contrary to French hopes. Catroux noted:

ne faut-il pas prévoir que la contagion de l'exemple ne gagne de proche en proche autres territoires outre-mer? Je pense... que ce statut fédéral doit représenter régime final de l'Union française, mais j'estime que cette évolution doit être conduite et je me pose question de savoir si le choix du Maroc... ne comporte pas des risques...¹⁴¹

¹³⁷ DDF, 1955, II, doc.185, Teitgen, to Soucadaux, no.162/166, 8.9.1955.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, doc.188, Soucadaux to Teitgen, 9.9.1955. Bekkai's delegation had arrived at Antsirabé on 5 September.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, doc.190, Soucadaux to Teitgen, no.347/352, 9.9.1955.

¹⁴⁰ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, pp.269-270.

¹⁴¹ DDF, 1955, II., doc.190. In Catroux's comment, 'ce statut fédéral' meant the Moroccan status as had been defined in the first paragraph of the draft dated 8 September.

It is not clear to what extent this apprehension was shared within the French government, but some leading politicians had already been aware of the dysfunction of the French Union,¹⁴² which was supposed to include Morocco as a member. If Morocco failed to accept its participation in it, the secession of other overseas territories could follow. Mohammed V's claim spectacularly revealed that realistically the Union was unlikely to survive. Therefore, the French now faced an urgent problem as to how to restructure the Union. Having such an importance, the Antsirabé agreement was not publicised at this moment.¹⁴³

This sense of crisis was shared by the British. The record of a secret meeting of British diplomats in early September 1955 was transmitted to Paris. They argued:

nous considérons de notre devoir de conseiller que notre diplomatie s'efforce... d'amener le gouvernement français à envisager une association du type fédéral permettant... de remplacer les structures actuelles, de donner un cadre à l'interdépendance de la France et de ses anciennes possessions... Y aboutir nous semble être la solution utile pour éviter le départ en lambeaux de l'Empire français, avec tout ce que cela comporte de dangers pour l'Angleterre en Afrique.¹⁴⁴

Thus the British considered that transforming the Union into a federal organisation in which a wide range local autonomy was permitted was the only solution and hoped this would avert the danger to the British colonies in Africa that a break-up of the French Empire could entail. This view was soon to be accepted by the French government. In fact, Paul-Henri Teitgen, the Minister of Overseas France, had already started examining the *Loi-Cadre* as a device to achieve administrative decentralisation in Africa and a federal structure *within* the French Union by the autumn of 1955.¹⁴⁵

However, even if the ex-Sultan's attitude created a new problem, having obtained his general agreement on Arafa's departure and the procedure thereafter, was of great importance to the French. The next steps were an approach to the Spanish and a decision on the members of the Throne Council.

As will be argued below, the Spanish government aimed to internationalise the problem thereby securing their say on it. On 9 and 10 September 1955, Pinay had conversations with José de Casa Rojas, the Spanish Ambassador in Paris, to inform

¹⁴² *L'Année Politique*, 1954, p.297.

¹⁴³ This agreement was approved by the French Council of Ministers on 12 September, but was not publicised until November 1955. *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.270; *Le Monde*, 8.11.1955.

¹⁴⁴ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre, Pinay, vol.13, *Position Anglaise sur la Question Arabe*, undated.

¹⁴⁵ Kent, *The Internationalization*, pp.306-307; Joseph Roger de Benoist, *L'Afrique Occidentale Française de 1944 à 1960* (Dakar, 1982), pp.162-163.

Madrid of the accords with Mohammed V.¹⁴⁶ Yet the French were suspicious of Spanish intentions. It had been planned that after his abdication, Arafa would be transferred to Tangier, which was controlled by the Tangier Control Committee.¹⁴⁷ Therefore, Latour insisted that it was indispensable to agree with the Spaniards in advance on Arafa's transfer, although Pinay rejected this idea on the ground that they would intervene in any case, taking advantage of the French request.¹⁴⁸ Pinay told the Spanish Ambassador on 13 September about the possible installation of Arafa in Tangier,¹⁴⁹ but his prediction about Spanish intentions were realised. The Spanish handed over a letter to the president of the Tangier Control Committee, requesting: 'les autorités de la zone française ne prennent aucune décision sur la matière avant que les gouvernements des puissances représentées à Tanger décident'.¹⁵⁰ The British and Italian ministers at Tangier immediately promised their aid.¹⁵¹ On 20 September, the State Department instructed the US representative on the Committee to indicate: 'US would oppose any action... impeding Faure programme for solving [the] Moroccan crisis.' The Committee meeting on 21 September decided that 'action on Spain's request was beyond [the] possibilities of [the] committee'.¹⁵² The Western allies of France thus prevented Spanish attempts to block the French plan.

Concerning the Throne Council, July had suggested on 10 September 1955 that a traditionalist would be appointed as the third member, as '[c]eci doit équilibrer la personnalité de Si Bekkai et par conséquent être recherchée dans le milieu traditionaliste ami de la France'.¹⁵³ The French knew that they could not appoint a nationalist because French settlers would never consent and many parliamentarians still doubted the ex-Sultan's promise not to return to the throne.¹⁵⁴ The French and Moroccans had a meeting as to the third member on 17 September, but did not reach agreement.¹⁵⁵

On the other hand, the growing authority of Mohammed V, due to the Antsirabé meeting, had made Arafa change his mind. On 16 September, during a talk with the

¹⁴⁶ DDF, 1955, II, doc.204, Pinay to de La Tournelle, no.705/708, 12.9.1955.

¹⁴⁷ As for this Committee, see Introduction, footnote 40.

¹⁴⁸ DDF, 1955, II, doc.205, Pinay to Latour, no.1231/1233, 12.9.1955.

¹⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, doc.213, MAE to Tournelle, no.722/726, 14.9.1955. Moreover, on 15 September, the State Department instructed its embassies in Paris and Madrid to inform the Spaniards of the hopes that the latter would facilitate Arafa's proceeding to Tangier. NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/9-1555, Hoover to Paris, no.1042, 15.9.1955.

¹⁵⁰ DDF, 1955, II, doc.225, p.525, footnote 3.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, doc.225, Tanger to July, no.164/167, 18.9.1955.

¹⁵² NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/9-2055, Hoover to Tangier, no.154, 20.9.1955; 771.00/9-2155, Tangier to Dulles, no.141, 21.9.1955.

¹⁵³ DDF, 1955, II, doc.196, July to Latour, no.1200/1203, 10.9.1955.

¹⁵⁴ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.271.

¹⁵⁵ DDF, 1955, II, doc.223, Réunion du samedi 17 septembre chez M. July, Procès-verbal.

Resident-General in the presence of el-Mokri and el-Glaoui, he declared that his abdication would be harmful to the interests of France and Morocco. This was partly due to a nationalist press article which mentioned that Mohammed V would tolerate Arafa only for three months.¹⁵⁶ Arafa's orientation was also greatly affected by some Ministers of the Faure Government, presumably including General Koenig, who had pushed for a more intransigent attitude.¹⁵⁷

The polarisation of Moroccan opinion became far more conspicuous, due to protest movements organised by the *Présence française*. A very pessimistic report was made from Rabat on 20 September:

C'est contre un éventuel retour de Mohammed V que se cristallise la résistance des Français. Ils ont maintenant acquis la conviction que l'institution d'un Conseil du trône impliquait automatiquement ce retour...

Des troubles sanglants sont inévitables dans ces conditions... Seule la délégation d'un troisième homme peut ramener le calme dans les esprits.¹⁵⁸

Seriously alarmed by the pressing situation, this report even proposed to proceed to the establishment of the Throne Council before the abdication. The Resident-General had a new meeting with Arafa on 22 September only to find that he confirmed 'son intention de ne pas quitter le trône'. Latour observed that his intransigent attitude was encouraged by '[des] pressions [qui] viennent de Paris et souvent de milieux officiels, par exemple la mission de M. Montel'.¹⁵⁹

The greater the prospect of civil war, the more internationalised the Moroccan problem was becoming. The Istiqlal turned to the Spanish to break the deadlock. On 22 September 1955, Balafrej declared to the press:

les négociations avec le gouvernement français étant bloquées par suite de l'opposition de certains milieux français du Maroc et de la métropole, il convenait d'envisager de placer le problème marocain sur le plan international: l'Espagne lui paraissait être le plus qualifié pour convoquer une conférence internationale sur le Maroc.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, doc.221, Latour to July, no.3171/3173, 16.9.1955.

¹⁵⁷ PRO, FO371/113806, JF1072/18, Conversation between the Secretary of State and Holmes on October 6 1955. Holmes noted: 'M. Faure's Aix proposals... were at once torpedoed by members of his own Cabinet who had telephoned to their friends in Morocco'.

¹⁵⁸ DDF, 1955, II, doc.227, Panafieu to July, no.3290/3291, 20.9.1955.

¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, doc.235, Latour to July, no.3297/3302, 22.9.1955. Pierre Montel was the *président de la commission de la Défense nationale à l'Assemblée Nationale*.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, doc.240, footnote 3.

On the same day, an American official notified the French that the Spanish Ministry for Foreign Affairs wanted to convene a tripartite Franco-Spanish-Moroccan conference.¹⁶¹ In addition, the bureau of the UNGA decided to include the Moroccan problem on the agenda.¹⁶² July noted: ‘Ce débat sera redoutable pour notre prestige aux Nations Unies. Mais surtout il risque, par l’exploitation qu’en feront les propagandes hostiles, de déclencher au Maroc une nouvelle vague d’agitation et de violences’.¹⁶³ As was the case in earlier years, the French had already decided to vote against placing North Africa on the UNGA agenda. As July put it to the Americans, Faure wanted to reverse the previous French position of refusing discussions by pointing out French achievements in Tunisia and, to a far lesser extent, in Morocco, but he felt unable to do so because of the Algerian problem.¹⁶⁴

The growing outside pressure made Paris determined to break the stalemate: it decided on the Sultan’s dethronement at any cost. On 23 September, July instructed Latour to tell Arafa that the French considered recognising the Throne Council even if he persisted in his refusal and in staying at the palace.¹⁶⁵ On 27 September, Latour was once again instructed to warn him in the same way as before, all the more because Pinay was going to make an announcement in the UNGA on Morocco two days later.¹⁶⁶ The latter cabled Faure from New York on 29 September stressing the urgency of implementing the Moroccan programme from the viewpoint of the UN timetable.¹⁶⁷ Finally the Sultan surrendered, although this was not in time for Pinay’s declaration in the GA: Pinay stated on 29 September that ‘France intended to make of Morocco a modern, democratic and sovereign state, united with France by the ties of freely accepted interdependence’.¹⁶⁸ Arafa was persuaded to abdicate during the night of 29-30 September and departed for Tangier on 30 September.¹⁶⁹

¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*, doc.234, Pinay to Tournelle, no.763/765, 22.9.1955.

¹⁶² The Bureau consisted of the GA President, and vice-presidents and presidents of the seven committees. Its recommendations had to be confirmed by GA plenary meetings. *Le Monde*, 23.9.1955.

¹⁶³ *DDF*, 1955, II, doc.233, July to Latour, no.1318/1320, 22.9.1955.

¹⁶⁴ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/9-1255, Dillon to Dulles, no.1123, 12.9.1955.

¹⁶⁵ *DDF*, 1955, II, doc.237, July to Latour, no.1331/1334, 23.9.1955.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, doc.250, July to Latour, no.1361/1364, 27.9.1955.

¹⁶⁷ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/9-2955, Dillon to Dulles, no.1445, 29.9.1955.

¹⁶⁸ UNGA Official Record, vol.10, Plenary Meetings, p.154; The Moroccan question was included in the UNGA agenda on 30 September, but the GA plenary meeting decided, on 3 December 1955, to postpone further consideration of the item by fifty-one votes to none, with five abstentions. *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1955, p.63-65.

¹⁶⁹ Before departure, Arafa announced: ‘Nous avons délégué... à notre cousin Moulay Abdallah Ben Moulay Abu Hafid le soin de s’occuper des affaires relatives à la Couronne.’ That is, he officially refused to recognise the Throne Council’s legitimacy by delegating his power to his cousin. This allowed the *Présence française* to do so. *L’Année Politique*, 1955, pp.273-275, pp.283-284.

6.5 The Establishment of the Throne Council

In the Aix-les-Bains agreement, Arafa's departure was the first significant step. The French needed more time than expected to accomplish this, but his dethronement before the debates on Morocco in the National Assembly on 6 October 1955 offered a better prospect of the Faure Government maintaining a majority.¹⁷⁰ On 1 October 1955, the French government made a declaration on the next step of its programme:

- I. [L]a France... entend conduire le Maroc au statut d'état souverain et démocratique et maintenir avec lui les liens permanents d'une interdépendance librement consentie.
- II. [L]a formation d'une élite marocaine moderne permet aujourd'hui de confier à celle-ci des responsabilités de plus en plus larges dans la gestion des affaires publiques. L'autorité marocaine doit donc exercer pleinement les attributs et pouvoirs... dans le cadre du traité de Fès.
- V. Il s'agira, dans le maintien intégral des responsabilités confiées à la France en matière de défense et d'Affaires étrangères dans l'intérêt commun des deux pays, d'édifier une construction moderne, librement discutée, définie et acceptée et traduisant dans des institutions communes l'association des deux états et la communauté des deux peuples...¹⁷¹

This declaration on the whole reflected both the Aix-les-Bains and Antsirabé agreements. However, there was a critical difference: it stated that new Franco-Moroccan relations should be defined within the protectorate treaty, negating Mohammed V's desire to modify the protectorate system itself. Nonetheless, the French had to refer to the revision of Franco-Moroccan relations, considering the Istiqlal's position publicised on 6 and 7 September 1955.¹⁷²

However, two serious events occurred before and after the French declaration, and poured cold water on their programme. Firstly, on 22 September 1955, Egypt and Czechoslovakia had signed an arms deal. This was a clear sign that the Soviet Union had started supporting Egypt's military build-up. Egypt was embarking on a neutralist course under the initiative of Prime Minister Gamel Abdel Nasser, who was then advocating the solidarity of the Arabs. What was a problem for France was that Moroccan opinion was so attracted by Nasser that the nationalists raised their demands

¹⁷⁰ PRO, FO371/113835, JM1016/151, Jebb to FO, no.382, 29.9.1955.

¹⁷¹ DDF, 1955, II, doc.259, July to Latour, no.1418, 1.10.1955. Points III and IV concerned the new Moroccan government. Its role was, in agreement with the French government: to pursue Morocco's modernisation and democratisation; to guarantee the interests of France and French settlers; to maintain permanent Franco-Moroccan links.

¹⁷² This chapter, p.164.

accordingly. The French were thus forced to confront new circumstances created by the arms deal.

The second event was more serious, at least in the immediate term. On the night of 1 October 1955, Moroccan commando groups attacked two frontier posts in the Rif: Tizi Ouzli and Boured. The next night the observatory at Bou Zineb, an enclave in the Spanish Zone of Morocco, was also attacked. Another group of Moroccan guerrillas attacked the outpost of Imouzzer des Marmoucha in the Middle Atlas.¹⁷³ On 3 October, *Al Oummah*, a Tetuán daily newspaper, published a proclamation by the Arab Maghreb Liberation Army¹⁷⁴ announcing a national insurrection against the French, an encirclement of the military posts in the Rif and the Middle Atlas, and the continuation of the fight until Morocco and Algeria achieved full independence.¹⁷⁵ The situation was so alarming that on 3 October, Latour had reported: 'il ne s'agissait plus de mettre en place rapidement un Conseil du trône mais de sauver le Maroc dans l'immédiat'.¹⁷⁶ The ex-Sultan in Madagascar warned the French, on the same day, that if the situation was not stabilised within the week, there would be a risk of uprisings throughout North Africa.¹⁷⁷ The absence of an indigenous sovereign was beginning to drag Morocco into civil war.

The sudden Russian involvement in Egypt had made the State Department anxious to pressurise the French to come to term with the nationalists. On 29 September, Holmes suggested a change of US policy towards the North African problems, arguing: 'in the face of the riptide of nationalism in Africa and Asia... US [should] not premise its approach to North Africa... on French considerations to the same degree as in the past, but instead place more emphasis on preserving the area for the West, regardless of temporary inconveniences which may arise in our relations with the French.'¹⁷⁸ On 3 October, Dulles and several State Department officials had a meeting in which Holmes referred to the arms sale to Egypt, to the establishment of the diplomatic relations with Libya, and to the possibility that the Russians could decide to take their seat on the Tangier Control Committee, as recent evidence of Soviet interest in North Africa.¹⁷⁹

¹⁷³ DDF, 1955, II, doc.275, p.617, footnote 2.

¹⁷⁴ This was organised in the Rif by Moroccan nationalists like Dr Khatib and was operating in liaison with Algerian nationalists. Roger Le Tourneau, *Évolution Politique de l'Afrique du Nord Musulmane 1920-1961*, (Paris: Librairie Armand Colin, 1962), p.245. Tetuán was a city in the Spanish zone.

¹⁷⁵ Pierre Boyer de Latour, *Vérités sur l'Afrique du Nord*, (Paris, Librairie Plon, 1956), p.173

¹⁷⁶ DDF, 1955, II, doc.275, p.617, footnote 2.

¹⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, doc.271, p.610, footnote 1.

¹⁷⁸ FRUS, 1955-1957, XVIII, doc.29, Memorandum, Holmes to Dulles, 29.9.1955.

¹⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, doc.184, Memorandum of a Conversation, State Department, 3.10.1955.

The talks concluded that they should again consult the British on a joint approach to the French.

Holmes tried to induce the British to take a similar stand when he met Harold Macmillan, the British Foreign Minister, on 6 October 1955.

The French were trying to set their faces against the tide of nationalism in Morocco instead of trying to come to reasonable terms... M. Faure's Aix proposals for a Council of Regency and a Moroccan Government had been reasonable... Mr. Dulles thought that it was necessary... to try to bring home the seriousness of the situation to the French [at the time of the next meeting between Ministers on October 24 1955].¹⁸⁰

However, the British did not agree. Macmillan told Winthrop Aldrich, the US Ambassador in London: 'there was no course open to us except to play the situation by ear'.¹⁸¹ In fact, the principal British position was that 'the French policy in North Africa is the domestic concern of the French. We should therefore continue to refrain from any lecturing since this would defeat its object'.¹⁸² Consequently, the Americans once again gave up the idea of a joint approach.

The Istiqlal's position was hardening. It did not accept the governmental declaration of 1 October 1955, claiming that it had agreed at Aix-les-Bains to participate in a Moroccan government 'in exchange of French promise of "independence within an interdependence liberally negotiated"'.¹⁸³ What is more, el-Fassi in Cairo announced on 4 October 'la formation d'une « armée de libération du Maghreb » et la constitution d'un « commandement unifié » pour diriger la « lutte de libération en Algérie et au Maroc ». He was also voicing opposition to the Aix-les-Bains agreements.¹⁸⁴ To a large extent encouraged by the rise of Arab nationalism advocated by Egypt, el-Fassi thus gave verbal support to the rebels. July announced that the French government would not negotiate with the Istiqlal unless the party condemned him.¹⁸⁵ Moreover, on 6 October, the Istiqlal openly revealed its disenchantment with the application of the Aix-les-Bains agreement.¹⁸⁶ In fact, the failure to establish the Throne Council, the rebellion in the Rif

¹⁸⁰ PRO, FO371/113806, JF1072/18, Conversation between the Secretary of State and Holmes, 6.10.1955.

¹⁸¹ PRO, PREM11/951, Conversation between the Secretary of State and the American Ambassador, 14.10.1955.

¹⁸² PRO, FO371/113806, JF1072/20, FO Minute by Phillip, 5.10.1955.

¹⁸³ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/9-2955, Allen to Tangier, no.201, 20.10.1955. Note that the Istiqlal increased its demand 'independence' from 'au statut indépendant'. This chapter, p.164.

¹⁸⁴ *Le Monde*, 6.10.1955.

¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 7.10.1955.

¹⁸⁶ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.287.

and el-Fassi's declaration of commencement of armed struggle 'provoquent en France une vive émotion et créent au Parlement... une atmosphère de crise'.¹⁸⁷

Nevertheless, Faure judged co-operation with the Istiqlal as possible and essential. He considered exploiting a rift growing rapidly inside the party. In the National Assembly debate on Morocco during 6 and 9 October 1955, he made an impassioned speech:

[il est] indispensable d'obtenir... la collaboration de l'Istiqlal... Cet homme (Allal el Fassi) n'est pas tout l'Istiqlal. Demain il lui sera peut-être. Cela dépend de nous. Évitons que d'autres hommes déçus par Paris ne se tournent complètement vers le Caire.¹⁸⁸

In fact, one Istiqlal leader declared to the press on 7 October: 'Fassi a parlé en son nom et non en celui de l'Istiqlal', although this was not a clear condemnation of him by the nationalist party.¹⁸⁹ Subsequently, approving Faure's policy, the French National Assembly adopted the Aix-les-Bains agreement on 9 October.

On the Throne Council problem, the French proceeded even without the Istiqlal's final consent. The formation of the Council was announced on 15 October 1955. It consisted of el-Mokri; Bekkaï, representing the Youssefists; *Caid* Si Tahar ou Assou; and Si Hadj Mohammed Sbihi, the pasha of Salé and a nationalist sympathiser. Although Assou represented the traditionalists, the French tried to highlight their concessions to the Istiqlal by co-opting Sbihi as the fourth member.¹⁹⁰

Concurrently, Franco-Spanish relations were becoming strained, although the Spaniards were no longer trying to hold an international conference. The Quai d'Orsay recognised that the Aix-les-Bains agreement could be harmful to Spanish interests in Morocco because French policies could deprive the Spaniards of their advantages, which had been gained since the deposition in August 1953, and which had contributed to appeasing nationalist discontents in the Spanish zone. Also, the possibility of Morocco's democratisation could risk the absorption of their zone into the French zone, since Mohammed V held legitimacy among the people in Spanish Morocco.¹⁹¹ Moreover, the Rif incident made the French even more suspicious of Spanish intentions. It was reported that a significant amount of arms was being smuggled from Spanish Morocco to French Morocco:

¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p.285.

¹⁸⁸ *DDF*, 1955, II, doc.332, p.739, footnote 1.

¹⁸⁹ *Le Monde*, 9/10.10.1955.

¹⁹⁰ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, pp.328-329.

¹⁹¹ *DDF*, 1955, II, doc.273, Madrid to Pinay, no.1882/SGL, 4.10.1955.

C'est par des moyens politiques que les Espagnoles s'attachent implacablement depuis trois ans à nous perdre.

La logique de leur position politique les a amenés à tolérer et même à favoriser prudemment une certaine action subversive contre nous...¹⁹²

Le Monde also reported the transfer of arms via two routes to French Morocco and one route to Algeria.¹⁹³ On 15 October, the French Embassy in Madrid received a Spanish note, which was publicised the next day. The Spanish foreign minister protested about articles in French newspapers which argued that the difficulties in the Rif were due to the Spaniards' complicity with the rebels. He warned: 'Si la campagne contre l'Espagne se poursuivait, le gouvernement de Madrid menaçait de porter ces faits devant l'ONU'.¹⁹⁴ Two days later, however, this controversy temporarily ended when Pinay sent a note of appreciation about the Spanish efforts to reinforce patrols around the border to the Spanish Ambassador in Paris.¹⁹⁵

The Throne Council now set about its task of appointing a prime minister. On 18 October 1955, July instructed Latour to give support to Ben Slimane,¹⁹⁶ and four days later the Council asked him to form a government. However, while the PDI approved the Throne Council, the Istiqlal announced on 21 October its refusal to accept the Council as constituted and rejected participation in the government under its aegis. On the same day, Bekkaï tried to appease the Istiqlal in vain by publishing a document in which Mohammed V had approved it. Nevertheless, the French observed that the Istiqlal 'ne ferme pas la porte à la participation', because the party had added that the Moroccan government must receive 'l'investiture d'une haute autorité dont la légitimité n'est pas constaté'. Even so, the French did not intend to ask the ex-Sultan to advise the Istiqlal on moderation. This was because 'la politique du gouvernement tend... à estomper son prestige en faisant naître au Maroc une vie politique nouvelle, indépendante de sa personne et menée par l'ensemble des tendances, y compris les éléments de l'Istiqlal désireux de coopérer avec la France'.¹⁹⁷

However, a sudden and unexpected development, which would fundamentally transform the Moroccan situation, occurred: on 25 October 1955, el-Glaoui issued an

¹⁹² *Ibid.*, doc.304, Melilla to Pinay, no.179/AL, 15.10.1955.

¹⁹³ *Le Monde*, 22.10.1955.

¹⁹⁴ *DDF*, 1955, II, doc.309, p.687, footnote 1.

¹⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, doc.309, Pinay to diplomatic representatives, 18.10.1955.

¹⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, doc.332, Note of Ministry for Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs. 25.10.1955.

¹⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, doc.332.

announcement to approve ‘la prompte restauration de Sa Majesté Sidi Mohammed ben Youssef et de son retour sur le trône’. He added:

Mon aspiration se confond avec les aspirations de la Nation marocaine tout entière : Elle est l’indépendance de mon pays dans un cercle d’interdépendance entre lui et la France.¹⁹⁸

Rabat reported: ‘les Français du Maroc se rendent compte que l’unanimité marocaine en train de se constituer ne permettra plus au gouvernement français de s’opposer... au retour de Ben Youssef... En ce qui concerne les Marocains, le [sic] joie est unanime dans les villes’.¹⁹⁹ El-Glaoui’s volte-face was reportedly a result of covert negotiations with the Istiqlal, which had started around the end of July 1955.²⁰⁰ Perhaps he realised that his die-hard opposition to the ex-Sultan was no longer supported by the dignitaries and was merely contributing to leaving the country seriously divided. Thus el-Glaoui succumbed to the nationalist pressure, although not fully. The acceptance of the ex-Sultan’s restoration was aimed at preserving a traditional element in Moroccan political society, which was contrary to the nationalist view. It seems that for the French, el-Glaoui’s change of mind was not totally unexpected, although it was much earlier than anticipated.²⁰¹ In any case, the French government was now to accept Mohammed V’s restoration.

¹⁹⁸ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, pp.288-289.

¹⁹⁹ *DDF*, 1955, II, doc.334, Rabat to Ministry for Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs, no.3644/3655, 26.10.1955; *Ibid.*, doc.334, p.744, footnote 1.

²⁰⁰ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/10-2755, Rabat to Dulles, no.184, 10.27.1955.

²⁰¹ This chapter, footnote 110.

Chapter 7: Morocco's independence; Morocco, October 1955 to May 1956

7.1 The Sultan's Return and the formation of the Moroccan government

The about-face of the Pasha of Marrakech completely changed Morocco's political situation, as his approval of Mohammed V's immediate restoration denoted the removal of all the obstacles to prevent it. As a result, the Istiqlal raised its demands. It announced on 27 October 1955, firstly, that the Aix-les-Bains agreement was obsolete and therefore the Throne Council had lost its *raison d'être*; secondly, that now the Moroccan people unanimously supported Mohammed V, the French government had lost its right to intervene in Morocco's internal and foreign affairs in accordance with the Treaty of Fez; and thirdly, the provisional government should not be formed until his return to Morocco.¹ The Istiqlal put the second point, because the Moroccan people's undivided support for Mohammed V deprived the French of an excuse to intervene with the purpose of guaranteeing the Sultan's status against internal opposition. That is, the party was now demanding the termination of Morocco's protectorate status. The party's aim was Morocco's unity, which was unachievable without the termination of the Treaty since its Article I clearly referred to the territorial division of Morocco by the French and Spanish authorities.

The French now had to deal with Mohammed V's return. They were aware that before his return to Morocco, they had to obtain his guarantee of a permanent French presence. The Quai d'Orsay drafted a note that examined his possible attitudes: (1) he would remain disposed to settle Morocco's future with France, not against France, (2) it would be convenient to open negotiations to replace the Treaty of Fez with a new agreement, (3) those negotiations had to be conducted by a government which the Sultan would freely choose and (4) the French Residency must abandon direct administration.

In contrast, the French position outlined in this note was:

- (1) d'éviter à tout prix l'internationalisation de la question marocaine, qui est ouvertement souhaitée par l'Espagne et secrètement désirée par les États-Unis.
- (2) il n'est pas possible désormais de nous en tenir à la thèse de l'intangibilité [du traité de Fès]. Mais il est nécessaire de distinguer parmi ses clauses:
 - a. Celles concernant Tanger et la zone d'influence espagnole, qui ne sauraient être modifiées sans créer des complications internationales;

¹ *Le Monde*, 28.10.1955; NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/11-355, Rabat to Dulles, no.191, 3.11.1955.

- b. Celles concernant les engagements de la France envers le Sultan...
- c. Celles concernant l'initiative des réformes, réservée à la France....
- d. Enfin, celles concernant la Défense et les Affaires étrangères...

(3) de faire reconnaître par [Mohammed V] la nécessité de constituer un gouvernement de large union, comprenant les différentes tendances de l'opinion marocaine.

(4) [N]ous entendons agir loyalement, en abandonnant effectivement les méthodes d'administration directe et renonçant progressivement au contrôle.²

This note was quite remarkable in the sense that the French finally recognised the necessity of revising the Treaty of Fez, i.e. Morocco's protectorate status. The revision was considered inevitable, although, as points (2)c and (2)d indicated, they were determined to preserve the initiative in creating new political institutions and, equally, not to touch their responsibility for defence and foreign affairs. Point (1) was an important concern, given the Moroccan aspiration for the unity of Moroccan territory.

Why did the French decide on the Treaty's revision? This decision was critical, since it could not but bring about certain changes in Morocco's status even though the French were trying to minimise the effect of revision as much as possible. In fact, they felt the need to make concessions to Mohammed V, now the French *interlocuteur valable*, who had not abandoned the hope of its revision. The French were afraid that the Moroccans might abrogate the Treaty. Resident-General Latour noted on 31 October 1955: 'Si le Sultan n'est pas contre cette abrogation, nous allons à une conférence internationale, elle amènera inévitablement la perte de notre protectorat'.³ In fact, on 3 November, Balafrej called for the Treaty's abrogation and for an international conference to be convened.⁴ Furthermore, the concessions to Mohammed V were aimed at appeasing French settlers' anxieties. As the US Consul General noted, while many French settlers felt extremely insecure as a result of the upsurge in nationalist demands, Mohammed V 'might successfully bring about [a] period of calm if he openly espouses a program at least partially resembling that of [the] Istiqlal and the resistance'.⁵ In other words, it was observed that his restoration with a plan resembling total independence could alone calm the country, where there was a possibility of the outbreak of civil war especially after the armed rebellion. Thus the recognition of Morocco's independence under Mohammed V's control was deemed fundamental in containing the Istiqlal's radical

² DDF, 1955, II, no.342, Note du MAE, 31.10.1955.

³ He then developed a domino theory: in the case of the abrogation, '[l]l'Algérie alors ne pourra plus tenir, l'Afrique du Nord sera perdue, le reste de nos possessions d'outre-mer suivra'. *Ibid.*, doc.339, Latour to Pinay, no.3707/3710, 31.10.1955.

⁴ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.335.

⁵ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/11-355, Rabat to Dulles, no.191, 3.11.1955.

demands and appeasing French settlers. The French feared that Mohammed V could not establish his authority, without which Morocco's political unity would be in peril. El-Glaoui had accepted Mohammed V's restoration and Moroccan independence simultaneously, as such these two elements were considered to be complimentary. The problem was that independence was not precisely defined and had already been a somewhat unclear concept for French policy members. They were prepared to accept Morocco's full independence only when the Istiqlal demanded the revision of the Treaty of Fez, and they accepted its full independence and the abrogation of the Treaty as the last hope of retaining influence.

On 31 October, Arafat announced his abdication, giving a legal legitimisation to the returning ruler. On the same day, the French government announced Mohammed V's restoration.⁶ He arrived in Saint-Germain-en-Laye on the next day, where he started to hold numerous consultations with the nationalist leaders and leading French politicians.

On 4 November 1955, the Quai d'Orsay argued that the French must find out:

si le Maroc évoluera vers des structures démocratiques et s'unira à la France par des liens permanentes, les intérêts légitimes des Français du Maroc étant garantis, ou bien au contraire s'il se tournera vers l'Orient et, dans une indépendance acquise de gré ou de force, épousera les thèses idéologiques et les institutions très particulières des pays de la Ligue arabe.⁷

In order not to make the Moroccans turn to the Arab League, Egypt in particular, the Quai maintained that the French programme must be based on two points: firstly, the modernisation and democratisation of Morocco, and secondly, the country's permanent links with France. Thus in the broader context of international relations, the question was seen as the Moroccan people's choice between France and the Arab world. The Quai also underlined that the constitution, which the French viewed should be granted by the Sultan rather than formulated by the people, would have to establish the basic principles of modern states, such as freedom of assembly, association and expression and the separation of powers. Likewise, the representation of French settlers in the future Moroccan national assembly was now considered unrealistic.

From 5 to 6 November, Prime Minister Faure and Mohammed V held talks at La Celle-Saint-Cloud near Paris. A joint communiqué was issued, confirming that the latter would form a government which would negotiate with France with a view to leading Morocco 'au statut d'état indépendant uni à la France par les liens permanents d'une

⁶ *Le Monde*, 1.11.1955.

⁷ DDF, 1955, II, doc.346, Note du MAE, 4.11.1955.

interdépendance librement consentie et définie'.⁸ Importantly, this declaration failed to mention whether the protectorate treaty should be terminated or not, as opposed to the Istiqlal's request. Nevertheless, the reference to 'statut d'état indépendant' reflected French concessions, whereas the 31 October 1955 note had expected to preserve their prerogative in defence and foreign relations. In other words, the Sultan succeeded in getting the French to agree to the word 'indépendant' in return for his acceptance of the French presence in Morocco. Needless to say, however, the details of 'indépendance' and 'interdépendance'⁹ had yet to be defined, so both sides hoped that there remained room for manoeuvre.

Why did Mohammed V prefer to collaborate with the French? A French official, who had conversations with him on 7 November, noted that Mohammed V was fully aware of the serious divisions in Moroccan opinion that existed among the Liberation Army, the nationalists, the traditionalists and French settlers:

Alors que l'Istiqlal, pressé par les exigences de ses exilés impatients, durcit ses positions... que les pachas, caïds... et autre « traditionalistes »... manifestent leurs désarrois devant l'effondrement d'une féodalité sapée par un puissant mouvement de masses, Sa Majesté Sidi Mohammed ben Youssef... est indiscutablement en quête, tant dans les milieux français que marocains, d'hommes susceptibles de l'aider à concilier les tendances contradictoires. La France, qui alimentait jusqu'à ce jour les foyers de dissension en opposant les Marocains les uns aux autres, peut, dans son esprit, devenir l'aillée idéale pour éviter une véritable guerre civile.

This official recommended that the French government respond to his appeals and added: 'Il semble bien que la pire faute consisterait à appliquer à l'échelle nationale le vieux principe des Affaires indigènes *divide ut imperes*'.¹⁰ Mohammed V himself needed the French presence in order to avoid a civil war. Perhaps he was intent on recapturing the initiative from the Istiqlal, especially its radical group, whose stands would certainly alienate French settlers and the traditionalists. However, the declaration at La Celle-Saint-Cloud did not satisfy el-Fassi. He proclaimed on 8 November: 'le communiqué de Saint-Germain est inacceptable par le peuple marocain'.¹¹ He was trying to convince the Sultan to accept the abrogation of the protectorate treaty.

On 11 November 1955, André-Louis Dubois, who had replaced Latour as the Resident-General, arrived at Rabat.¹² Mohammed V subsequently arrived in Morocco

⁸ *Ibid.*, doc.369, p.817, footnote 4.

⁹ Hereafter I will use a term 'close link' as a translation of 'interdépendance'.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, doc.353, Note de la Direction générale des Affaires marocaines et tunisiennes, 9.11.1955.

¹¹ *Le Monde*, 9.11.1955.

¹² DDF, 1955, II, doc.366, p.812, footnote 2.

and returned to the throne, and on 18 November, made an important declaration. After reporting that both countries would enter into negotiations, he stated:

Au terme des négociations le régime de protectorat prendra fin... [Mais] l'indépendance... n'excluent pas entre les Nations... une union toujours plus solide et une coopération de plus en plus étroite. Les rapports avec la France ne sont pas incompatibles avec le maintien des liens... avec les autres peuples arabes'.

He also referred to the future Moroccan government's objectives; the management of public affairs, the creation of democratic institutions under constitutional monarchy, following free elections. On the same day, he received letters from President Coty and Eisenhower welcoming his return.¹³

Meanwhile, the Sultan's return had provoked opposition from Madrid. The Spaniards were not indifferent to the development in the French zone, because his return was bound to increase the prospect of Morocco's independence and unity, or, from the Spanish view, the absorption of their zone into that of the French. Actually, the French later pointed out:

il n'y a pas eu, au cours de ces dernières années, une politique espagnole constructive à l'égard du Maroc... [E]lle supputait que nous serions suffisamment affaiblis et découragés pour être contraints de rechercher son appui au prix de concessions notables.¹⁴

The Sultan and nationalists, on their part, tried not to miss the chance for Moroccan unity. This was because, they realised, unity would be less achievable once either zone gained separate independence. They believed that maintaining contact with the Spaniards would offer a better prospect of unity in the course of the forthcoming independence process.

As early as 27 October 1955, two days after el-Glaoui's turnaround, Guy Le Roy de La Tournelle, the French Ambassador in Madrid, had reported to Paris that Spain opposed Morocco's independence on the ground that the Moroccan social structure was so fragile that the communists would find suitable hotbeds of discontent to develop.¹⁵ Then the US tried to persuade the Spaniards not to obstruct French efforts to resolve the problem when Dulles visited Madrid to meet Franco on 1 November.¹⁶ The State

¹³ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.92, Situation politique au Maroc (novembre 1955).

¹⁴ DDF, 1956, I, doc.3 Annexe, La Tournelle to Dubois, no.342, 31.12.1955. Spanish attitudes could be grounded on another motivation. They admitted to the Americans that General Franco could not order a retreat, because 'the present regime... has frequently criticised the Monarchy for having thrown away the Spanish empire'. NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/1-1356, Madrid to the State Department, no.730, 13.1.1956.

¹⁵ DDF, 1955, II, doc.335, La Tournelle to Pinay, no.503/504, 27.10.1955.

¹⁶ MAE, Afrique Levant, Maroc 1953-1959, doc.21, La Tournelle to Pinay, no.2134/EU, 17.11.1955.

Department considered that the Spanish could be helpful in the independence process, as being on good terms with moderate Moroccan nationalists would avoid ‘throwing [nationalist] movement into Pan Arab extremist hands’, which would ultimately favour the Soviets.¹⁷ However, Dulles’s *demande* did not seem to affect Spanish attitudes significantly. On 2 November, José de Casa Rojas y Moreno told the French that the Spanish should participate in the discussion of the question.¹⁸ Likewise, he directly expressed their desire when he met Mohammed V in Saint-Germain-en-Laye on 11 November. After reminding the latter that the Spanish government had refused to recognise Arafa as a legitimate Sultan, he tried to obtain Mohammed V’s agreement that no decision concerning Morocco’s new status would be taken without consulting Spain. In reply, Sidi Mohammed expressed his hopes that a formula would be found which would take into account Spain’s legitimate interests. Afterwards, he asked a French official ‘si le gouvernement français ne pourrait trouver une formule, destinée à apaiser l’amour-propre espagnol, qui permet d’associer l’Espagne à la phase finale des négociations’, although he stressed that his pro-French position had not changed at all.¹⁹

The French remained opposed to an international conference, but nevertheless they considered it useful to exchange views with Madrid. On 24 November 1955, Pinay instructed La Tournelle to submit a note to Martin Artajo, the Spanish Foreign Minister, stating that Paris was prepared to enter into conversations with the Spanish but that during that period both sides should not approach the Moroccans. In reply, Artajo promised that his government would examine the French offer.²⁰

In Morocco, contrary to French expectations, the Sultan’s return did not end bloody incidents.²¹ This clearly showed that his restoration, together with the vague French promise of Moroccan independence did not satisfy the Moroccan people; rather, there were opposition forces that were still challenging his authority. A number of dignitaries were lynched in major cities including Rabat on 19 November 1955 and there were tax strikes in the Fez region in the name of independence.²² The Sultan appealed for calm without, however, condemning terrorist activities or the Rif dissidence.²³ On 21 November, the Istiqlal’s executive committee, which met in Madrid, announced its

¹⁷ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/10-2955, Hoover to Geneva, no.34, 29.10.1955.

¹⁸ DDF, 1955, II, doc.344, Note d’audience du Secrétaire d’État aux Affaires étrangères, 3.11.1955.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*, doc.359, Note du Département, 11.11.1955.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, doc.367, Pinay to La Tournelle, no.951/955, 16.11.1955; doc.388, La Tournelle to Pinay, no.622/626, 24.11.1955.

²¹ *L’Année Politique*, 1955, p.301.

²² *Ibid.*, p.302.

²³ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.92, Situation politique (novembre 1955).

approval of the Sultan's *grandes lignes* of 18 November, but made it plain that it would not participate in the provisional government unless the forthcoming negotiations were intended to accomplish independence through the abolition of the Treaty of Fez.²⁴ Thus the most influential nationalist party pushed the French and the Sultan to clarify that the purpose of negotiations would be the termination of the Treaty and Morocco's protectorate status themselves.

This situation was perhaps very influential in the French decision on Morocco's total independence. From this time on, the French government became less hesitant to grant a right to foreign affairs and defence to the Moroccans. In fact, on 17 November 1955, Pinay had sent a message to the embassy in Madrid: 'Cela ne veut pas dire que disparaîtraient certaines dispositions fondamentales du traité de Fès, notamment en ce qui concerne le maintien intégral des responsabilités qui ont été confiées à la France en matière de Défense et d'Affaires étrangères.'²⁵ However, the French, fully aware of the necessity of securing the Istiqlal's membership in the Moroccan government, would soon agree to give independence including responsibilities for defence and foreign affairs.

On 22 November, the Sultan gave up an idea of forming a government with Ben Slimane as the head, who had offered resignation because of the Istiqlal's opposition.²⁶ Thus the Sultan started sounding out principal political organisations on nominating a new prime minister,²⁷ and designated Bekkai as Prime Minister on 26 November. Although he did not immediately accept it, Bekkai's nomination implied that the new government would be formed with the purpose of something more than the Aix-les-Bains agreement in accordance with the Istiqlal's increased demands. In addition, the following day Faure made a significant declaration with regard to the French Union:

Nous aurions été obligés... de renoncer à toute notre oeuvre si nous nous étions accrochés au système colonial... [L']Union Française peut se faire sous une forme fédérale ou confédérale et de ne plus être victime des mêmes lacunes qu'en Indochine.²⁸

These developments in turn moderated the Istiqlal's attitude towards the new government, although in Paris, the Faure Government fell on 29 November 1955

²⁴ *Le Monde*, 23.11.1955.

²⁵ DDF, 1955, II, doc.369, Pinay to La Tournelle, no.958/963, 17.11.1955.

²⁶ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.302.

²⁷ *Le Monde*, 24.11.1955.

²⁸ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.92, Situation politique (novembre 1955).

because of the Algeria problem.²⁹ The party announced its acceptance of participation in the Bekkaï Government in principle, ‘mais à la condition de voir confier à ses mandataires des postes en rapport avec son importance’.³⁰ Thus compromise was achieved on Morocco’s independence including responsibility for foreign relations and defence, between the French and the Moroccans on the one hand, and between all major elements in Morocco on the other.

On 30 November, Dubois reported to Paris that Bekkaï had agreed to form a government which consisted exclusively of Moroccan ministers, attributing nine ministers to the Istiqlal, six to the PDI and five to others. In reply, Pinay instructed Dubois to notify the Moroccans that he would consent on condition that ‘les directeurs français devraient être associés, sous une forme à déterminer, par exemple au sein de comités interministériels, à l’élaboration des décisions du Conseil des ministres dans les domaines techniques’.³¹ This suggested that the French had already decided on Morocco’s independence by this time. Moreover, on 30 November, Dubois obtained from Bekkaï a written assurance that the Treaty of Fez would remain the legal basis of Franco-Moroccan relations until the conclusion of the forthcoming negotiations. This meant: ‘les compétences réservées au Résident général aux termes de ce traité... restaient entières; les pouvoirs des ministres marocains seraient en conséquence précisés d’un commun accord entre le gouvernement marocain et la Résidence’.³² The French expected that his assurance would allow them to maintain the initiative in the forthcoming dialogue. Moreover, as will be shown, this assurance gave the French a legal basis on which they were able to negotiate with the Americans on the US military bases in Morocco.

On the other hand, in the party congress held from 1 to 4 December 1955, the Istiqlal unanimously adopted a motion, which demanded that future negotiations be conducted on the basis of mutual respect for the sovereignty of the two countries. In particular, the motion insisted that close links between the two countries be defined only after Morocco’s independence. Hence a crucial difference existed between the position of Bekkaï and the Istiqlal: the former admitted the legal validity of the protectorate treaty until the conclusion of Franco-Moroccan agreement whereas the latter argued that both

²⁹ Jean-Pierre Rioux, *The Fourth Republic, 1944-1958*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p.252. The French National Assembly was dissolved on 2 December 1955.

³⁰ French governmental sources do not indicate the date of the party’s acceptance, but it was probably on 28 November 1955. *Le Monde*, 29.11.1955; MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.92, Situation politique (novembre 1955).

³¹ DDF, 1955, II, doc.404, Pinay to Dubois, no.2094/2100, 2.12.1955.

³² *Ibid.*, doc.399, p.886 footnote 1.

countries should negotiate on an equal legal status. The party also reaffirmed that independence must provide a right to conduct diplomacy and to form a national army. In addition, the nationalist party requested that local administration be based on the principle of the separation of powers and that the *pashas* and *caïds* henceforward should only exercise administrative power. However, despite the Istiqlal's firm position, Dubois observed that its members were divided and that it was only under el-Fassi's leadership that the radical elements were gaining force.³³ In fact, Balafrej told Holmes that his position was 'assez étrange du Chef de l'Istiqlal'.³⁴ Finally, the motion underlined that an independent Morocco would assure French settlers of their rights and interests.

The prospect of Moroccan independence had made the American bases emerge as an important issue in Franco-American relations. On 9 November 1955, the Quai had pointed to the necessity of reaching agreement on the ceiling on the number and status of American troops, which had not been clearly defined in the Franco-American accord in 1950. The French argued:

l'article 2 du Traité de Protectorat donnant au Gouvernement français des pouvoirs suffisants dans le domaine militaire, l'établissement des Forces américaines au Maroc a été autorisé sans intervention des autorités chérifianes. Il est indispensable, afin de conserver l'intégralité de nos pouvoirs militaire au Maroc, d'éviter que le Gouvernement Chérifien ne soit parti aux accords franco-américains sur les Forces américaines stationnées au Maroc.³⁵

The French felt it urgent to reach agreement on these issues, otherwise an independent Morocco and the US could achieve an arrangement without France. As long as the protectorate treaty was valid, in accordance with Bekkai's assurance in November 1955, French-US base negotiations were legal. The Quai suggested on 6 December that the ceiling on American servicemen authorised in Morocco be raised in accordance with US assertions on the ground that a certain level of provision was essential to NATO nuclear strategy. In return, the French hoped to obtain US support in the negotiations with the Moroccans, particularly relating to foreign relations (i.e. in the UN and relations with Spain).³⁶

Perhaps the French considered ensuring US access to Moroccan bases as an effective way to attract US attention to North African affairs. One week later, the Quai underlined

³³ *Ibid.*, doc.408, Dubois to Pinay, no.4167/4177, 6.12.1955.

³⁴ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.162, De Blesson to Pinay, 12.12.1955.

³⁵ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre, Pinay, vol.28, Note pour le Secrétaire d'État, no.1508, 9.11.1955.

³⁶ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.162, Conversations avec M Dulles au sujet de l'Afrique du Nord, 6.12.1955.

that Faure should explain to Dulles that France was treating the Moroccan problem in the most liberal spirit. Then they argued that Morocco, like the rest of North Africa, should remain in the Western community and emphasised that France must be the only Western country to deal with Morocco.³⁷ In Franco-American talks held in Paris on 17 December 1955, Dulles asked Pinay to accept the increase in the number of American servicemen in the bases. The latter replied: 'si les effectifs américains s'accroissent dans des proportions importantes, les Marocains auront l'impression que les États-Unis se substituent à la France en ce qui concerne la sécurité extérieure du Maroc'. Yet he promised to examine the American demands.³⁸ Franco-American talks on this subject would be resumed after Morocco's independence, perhaps because there was no time for agreement beforehand.³⁹

On 7 December 1955, Bekkaï formed a Moroccan government, with the Istiqlal's participation. The following day, the Resident-General submitted to him an official note which reminded the Moroccan government of the agreement that the Treaty of Fez would remain the legal basis for the forthcoming Franco-Moroccan negotiations. On 17 December, thirteen governors of provinces, called *oumal*, were appointed to supervise the management of local affairs by pashas and *caïds*.⁴⁰ Thus at local level, the new Moroccan administration was being set up. Two days later, Bekkaï put forward to Dubois an official response to affirm the French request of 8 December, that is, the Istiqlal had already made concessions by admitting the validity of the protectorate treaty during the negotiation process. In this note, Bekkaï also demanded that the legislative power and the management of public affairs, including internal security and foreign relations, be transferred to the Moroccan government. Dubois commented that the Moroccan note 'n'impliquait pas de divergences essentielles avec la note française'.⁴¹ However, this was not necessarily the case. It was certain that France had already agreed on Morocco's right to external affairs and defence in principle but, with regard to internal security, they were not intent on transferring responsibility to the Moroccans immediately. In fact, earlier in December 1955, the Quai d'Orsay believed that the Sultan's concern about the Rif situation might provide an excuse for the French to curtail negotiations on the ground that the Moroccan people were incapable of maintaining order, and that the Sultan realised that collaboration with the French on this

³⁷ Ibid., Note pour le Président, 13.12.1955.

³⁸ Ibid., Conversations Franco-Américaines, 17.12.1955.

³⁹ Olivier Pottier, 'Les bases américaines au Maroc au temps de la guerre froide (1950-1963): un face à face Franco-Américain', *Revue d'Histoire Diplomatique*, 2003, n° 1.

⁴⁰ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.308.

⁴¹ DDF, 1955, II, doc.436, Dubois to Pinay, no.1132/CC, 21.12.1955.

matter might have a favorable result in view of the Fellaghas' case in Tunisia in the previous year.⁴² It was natural to assume that the French expected the Moroccans to allow them to retain most of the responsibility for this matter.

On the other hand, the Istiqlal approached the Spanish, because a firm opposition to Moroccan greater autonomy had been announced by General Franco on 30 November 1955:

ce serait une erreur de croire que les Marocains laissés à eux-mêmes seraient capables de maintenir l'ordre chez eux... [L]a France commet 'de graves erreurs' en essayant d'introduire des méthodes démocratiques au Maroc.⁴³

However, it was expected that the Spanish attitude would soften as a result of a series of assurances by both the French and Moroccans.⁴⁴ Balafrej stayed in Madrid from 11 to 14 December to talk with Artajo. The former stated that the nationalists 'expected the Spanish Government to grant concessions equal to those which were obtained from the French and commensurate with the new status of an independent and unified Moroccan state'.⁴⁵ The Spanish reactions turned out to be contradictory. On 15 December, General Franco reiterated condemnation of the introduction of democracy in French Morocco, but General García-Valiño, the Spanish High-Commissioner at Tetuán, simultaneously publicised his support for Spanish Morocco's autonomy. These contradictory reactions perplexed the French,⁴⁶ but overall, they speculated that this could be a sign of Spanish moderation.⁴⁷

The Moroccans wanted to open Franco-Moroccan talks on the treaty revision immediately. The sovereign was desperate to establish his authority by obtaining independence, because of his particular concern about rebel activities in the Rif area.⁴⁸ On 21 December 1955, he informed Dubois of his intention to write to Coty, expressing his hope to start negotiations 'à une date rapprochée'. The French shared this hope. Dubois replied that the negotiations should be opened at the earliest date after the general election in France, which had been fixed for 2 January 1956, but that preparatory work could start in Rabat in the first half of January 1956. On 22 December,

⁴² NARA, RG59, CDF, 771A.00/12-955, Dillon to Dulles, no.2775, 9.12.1955. See also Chapter 5, Section 4.

⁴³ MAE, Maroc 1950-1955, vol.92, Situation politique (novembre 1955).

⁴⁴ DDF, 1955, II, doc.406, La Tournelle to Pinay, no.639/646, 4.12.1955.

⁴⁵ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/12-1555, Madrid to the State Department, no.597, 15.12.1955.

⁴⁶ *Le Monde*, 17.12.1955

⁴⁷ MAE, Afrique Levant, Maroc 1953-1959, vol.21, Madrid to Paris, no.2305/EU, 21.12.1955.

⁴⁸ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771A.00/12-955, Dillon to Dulles, no.2775, 9.12.1955.

the Moroccans were notified that the negotiations could commence in mid-February 1956.⁴⁹

7.2 The Franco-Moroccan protocol of 2 March 1956

At the end of December 1955, the Spaniards also took action for political reform. On 28 December 1955, the Spanish ambassador Rojas notified Massigli that they wanted to have Franco-Spanish talks in January 1956.⁵⁰ Accordingly, Dubois and Valiño held talks in Palafito in Spanish Morocco on 10 January, when the former expressed his hope of maintaining contacts between officials and of establishing a liaison between the military of the two countries concerning the Rif rebellion. Valiño promised to co-operate with the French. As for the Spanish shift of attitude, the British speculated: 'the Spanish were at first benevolently neutral towards the Riff [sic] rebels but have lately come to realise that they represent a potential threat to Spanish authority as well as an actual danger to the French.'⁵¹ Valiño pointed out that Moroccan nationalists in the Spanish zone were suspicious of French intentions and added:

il avait la grande peine à contenir certains éléments de sa zone et à entraver... le soutien que ces éléments tentaient d'apporter à la rébellion dans le Rif. Le centre du mouvement est... Allal el-Fassi.

Valiño added that the Spanish authorities were intent on introducing, in their own zone, a phased reform similar to that in the French zone.⁵² On 13 January, the Spanish government declared that it 'prévoyait « l'autogouvernement » de la zone espagnole en accord avec le Khalifa ainsi qu'avec la collaboration des autorités marocaines'.⁵³

Spain's intention to follow the French reforms without mentioning unity aroused apprehensions on the part of Mohammed V and Bekkaï. When Dubois reported the result of the talks, they were afraid that the existence of two governments could result in a de facto territorial division. Moreover, there was a possibility that the government in the Spanish zone would fall under el-Fassi's influence, which would enhance his prestige in Morocco as a whole, ultimately obstructing future Franco-Moroccan negotiations.⁵⁴ Knowing of the Moroccan worries, Pinay instructed Dubois to tell the

⁴⁹ *DDF*, 1955, II, doc.438, Dubois to Pinay, no.4365/4368, 22.12.1955. Dubois noted that the Sultan was willing to open negotiations as early as the first week of January 1956.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, doc.445, MAE to La Tournelle, no.1066/1075, 28.12.1955.

⁵¹ PRO, FO371/119348, JF1015/10, FO Minute by Watson, 10.1.1956

⁵² *DDF*, 1956, I, doc.14, Dubois to Pinay, no.80/98, 11.1.1956.

⁵³ *Ibid.*, doc.16, p.32, footnote 1.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, doc.16, Dubois to Pinay, no.106/118, 12.1.1956.

Spanish about the problem caused by their policies. The French concern was to ‘éviter de donner au Sultan l'impression de la constitution contre les intérêts marocains d'un front franco-espagnol’.⁵⁵ Thus the French and Moroccans were in agreement in avoiding the consolidation of Morocco's de facto territorial division. On 17 January 1956, the French put forward a note to Madrid, confirming their opposition to a separate government: ‘le gouvernement français serait heureux de pouvoir confirmer à Sa Majesté chérifienne... que le gouvernement espagnole... n'a pas l'intention de doter celle-ci [la zone espagnole] d'une organisation gouvernementale qui serait incompatible avec l'unité du Maroc.’⁵⁶

In mid-January 1956, in conjunction with the turmoil growing in Algeria, disorder was persisting in Morocco and threatening the security situation. Firstly, the Rif rebellion continued. Dubois noted that ‘des agitateurs se réclamant d'Allal el-Fassi, seul champion... de la véritable libération nationale’ adversely affected Moroccan soldiers’ morale. El-Fassi’s activities were a heavy blow to Mohammed V’s prestige, allowing soldiers to embrace an idea that the former was a true champion of national liberation. As a countermove, the sovereign once again urged the French to open negotiations.⁵⁷ Secondly, terrorist activities frequently occurred near Oujda and the border with Algeria. The Sultan’s communiqué calling for calm did not have a great effect. For the purpose of maintaining order more effectively, on 18 January Pinay approved Dubois’s suggestion ‘tendant à restituer aux pachas et caïds l'exercice des pouvoirs de police’.⁵⁸ This was a concession in the sense that the French agreed to devolve responsibility for the maintenance of order to the Moroccans, but was simultaneously a refusal of the Istiqlal’s demand to weaken the dignitaries’ power. As Dubois put it to Holmes, the result of this measure was satisfactory in large cities but less so in the countryside where terrorism lasted. Holmes wrote to Washington that in Dubois’s mind ‘[the] [m]atter apparently... seemed to be whether Sultan or El Fassi would prevail.’⁵⁹

Dubois noted that except for the principal cities, ‘le reste du pays demeure soumis à un climat d'incertitude favorable à la reprise ou à la continuation de l'agitation’. According to him, leading Moroccan figures, including the Sultan, thought that independence must be a *fait accompli* by the time negotiations were opened. Obviously this thought reflected the Istiqlal’s position adopted at the beginning of December 1955.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, doc.16, p.32, footnote 1.

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, doc.26, Pinay to Dubois, no.128/130, 17.1.1956.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, doc.25, Dubois to Pinay, no.135/144, 16.1.1956.

⁵⁸ *Ibid.*, doc.33, Dubois to Pinay, no.167/175, 18.1.1956.

⁵⁹ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771A.00/1-2756, Holmes to Dulles, no.275, 27.1.1956.

He warned Pinay that now the sovereign also wanted to abrogate the Treaty of Fez expressly, ‘à gagner de vitesse... dans les ambitions de l’Istiqlal.’⁶⁰ Undoubtedly, that the Moroccan government and the Sultan were under strong Istiqlal pressure.⁶¹ The Sultan went so far as to declare to the press that he did not intend to appeal to the Rif rebels to lay down arms ‘until the French have proved their good faith.’⁶² This remark was aimed at negotiating a call for surrender with the transfer of responsibility for internal security to the Moroccan government.

On 30 January 1956, French officials in Morocco and in Algeria met to exchange views on the general situation. It was pointed out that in the two territories

une même offensive est... engagée qui vise à faire échec au dessein de la France de maintenir avec le Maghreb... des liens étroits d’interdépendance... Tout se passe comme si cette action... ne devait... trouver son terme qu’une fois atteinte, sur les bordes de l’Atlantique, la limite occidentale de ce « troisième bloc » dont rêvent depuis longtemps certains leaders du monde musulman. Encouragée de diverses manières par Moscou, cette ambition semble avoir trouvé, tout au moins temporairement, certaines complicités du côté espagnol.⁶³

The term ‘certain leaders du monde musulman’ was especially meant to be Nasser. The French were aware that Egypt was trying to undermine their presence in North Africa by encouraging the nationalists in both territories to follow his own neutralist stance, with the aim of severing close links with France. Moreover, the French were convinced, not without foundation, that some North African activists were being trained in Egypt.⁶⁴

Regarding Morocco, the meeting argued:

Quant au Palais et au gouvernement... [I]es succès que nous les aiderons à remporter aux yeux de l’opinion publique seront déterminants. Ils pourraient les aider à avoir, le moment venu, le courage d’affirmer non pas leur rupture avec le monde arabe, mais au moins leur volonté de choisir, en toute indépendance vis-à-vis du Caire, la voie médiane que nous souhaitons leur voir prendre.

French officials regarded it as essential to impress Moroccan opinion that the Sultan and the Moroccan government had succeeded, thereby helping them to appease the

⁶⁰ DDF, 1956, I, doc.49, Dubois Pinay, no.266/274, 28.1.1956.

⁶¹ *Ibid.*, doc.45, Dubois to Pinay, no.247/256, 26.1.1956.

⁶² NARA, RG59, CDF, 771A.00/1-2356, Rabat to Dulles, no.269, 23.1.1956.

⁶³ DDF, 1956, I, doc.58, Dubois to Pinay, 30.1.1956.

⁶⁴ PRO, FO371/119367, JF1022/2, Paris to African Department, FO, no.10723/28/56, 18.2.1956. The French had sent a message to the Anglo-Saxons, arguing that the increase of Egypt’s prestige in the Middle East was dangerous to French interests in North Africa. DDF, 1956, I, doc.22, Annexe Aide-mémoire, Paris, 13.1.1956.

opposition inside Morocco and to take a middle way independent from Egypt.⁶⁵ There was no doubt that it would also contribute to the failure of the Egyptian plan to weaken the French presence in North Africa through el-Fassi and other pro-Egyptian nationalists.

As a result of the general election on 2 January 1956, Guy Mollet, the SFIO leader, formed a new government on 31 January. Christian Pineau was appointed as the Minister for Foreign Affairs and Alain Savary as the Minister for Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs. Now being in a position to start negotiations with the Moroccans, the French government was confident that a parliamentary majority existed for a far-reaching settlement, as Savary put it to Dillon.⁶⁶ Subsequently, on 11 February, Franco-Moroccan agreement was concluded over the transfer of power for internal autonomy to the Moroccan government so that it became the ‘gouvernement de gestion et de négociation’ envisaged in the declaration at La Celle-Saint-Cloud.⁶⁷

On 15 February 1956, as the French had planned in December 1955, Franco-Moroccan negotiations commenced. The participants were; Pineau, Savary, Dubois, and Massigli from France and Si Bekkaï, Si M’Hammedi, Si Bouabid and Si Cherkaoui from Morocco.⁶⁸ A memorandum dated 18 February⁶⁹ categorised the issues into four principal points; (1) the legal situation, (2) independence, (3) close links, (4) others. Concerning (1), this memorandum reconfirmed that, despite the Istiqlal’s insistence to the contrary, the Treaty of Fez remained valid at that moment and that therefore the two countries did not have equal status. Regarding (2), the French intention was clear:

il semble bien que l’indépendance du Maroc doive être conçue comme une autonomie interne et externe complète, sans restriction ni étapes’... [T]ous les attributs apparents de celle-ci (armée, diplomatie) doivent être donnés en vue d’éviter... que les nationalistes, partisans de l’Occident, qui sont actuellement au pouvoir, ne soient rapidement dépassés par les fanatiques de l’idéal panarabe...

Si la solution que nous préconisons ne comporte pas tous les attributs apparents de l’indépendance, elle aura peu de chances d’être acceptée.

⁶⁵ The US embassy in Cairo held a similar view: ‘[the] government of Egypt[’s] objective in North Africa is full independence [of Tunisia and Morocco] followed by adherence [of the] states to [the] Arab League and close coordination [of] their foreign policy with those of Egypt.’ NARA, RG59, CDF, 751S.002-756, Cairo to Dulles, no.1526, 7.2.1956.

⁶⁶ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/2-1056, Dillon to Dulles, no.3594, 10.2.1956.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, doc.95, Dubois to Savary, no.418/424, 12.2.1956. See also this chapter, pp.178-179.

⁶⁸ Si M’Hammedi, Si Bouabid and Si Cherkaoui were Moroccan Ministers of State.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, doc.110, Note de la Direction général des Affaires marocaines et tunisiennes. 18.2.1956.

‘Close links’ comprised economic links, technical assistance, solidarity as regards defence and diplomacy, and the community of the two peoples.⁷⁰ As to defence, it was insisted that the maintenance of the French army in Morocco was indispensable, but that its presence must be based on new justifications. Interestingly, it was also pointed out that US support, which the French considered necessary in negotiating with Morocco, would not be forthcoming if the close links appeared as a new form of protectorate.⁷¹

However, in the course of the negotiations, as had been anticipated, the Moroccan negotiators were insistent that Morocco’s independence had to be proclaimed first and, on that presumption, they would negotiate on close links as representatives of a sovereign state. This was not acceptable to the French, because ‘[l]e Parlement n’acceptera pas l’indépendance du Maroc sans l’interdépendance’, as Pineau mentioned.⁷² Yet once again, the French made concessions. In fact, former Resident-General Latour had recommended to Savary on 19 February that ‘to forestall charges of bad faith’, at the outset of the negotiations the French should publicly announce their determination to abrogate the protectorate treaty and to grant Morocco independence, once special ties with France had been defined.⁷³ The actual wording of the declaration appeared to reflect further concessions on the French part. The first stage of the Franco-Moroccan negotiations ended on 2 March 1956, when a joint declaration was issued that the French government confirmed its recognition of Moroccan independence including the foreign service and armed forces and that both parties declared the purpose of negotiations recently opened was to conclude new agreements which would define the two countries’ close links.⁷⁴ In addition, it was agreed: ‘Le statu actuel de l’armée française au Maroc demeure inchangé durant la période transitoire.’⁷⁵ In other words, the French agreed that they could devolve to the Moroccans certain powers relating to this issue only after the conclusion of a Franco-Moroccan agreement over internal security.

⁷⁰ As for economic links, there was a division inside the French government regarding a Franco-Moroccan customs union. The supporters argued that it was the only compensation for French political concessions while the opponents objected that the Moroccans opposed this idea and that it would call into question the treaty of Algeciras, which would necessarily internationalise the problem.

⁷¹ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre, Pineau, vol.28, Note, Réflexions préliminaires sur le problème marocain. 2.1956. The French took the view that Moroccan independence could contribute to the improvement of their relations with Arab countries in general.

⁷² DDF, 1956, I, doc.120, Procès-verbal Séance d’ouverture des négociations franco-marocaines, 22.2.1956.

⁷³ NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.71/2-2156, Dillon to Dulles, no.3776, 21.2.1956.

⁷⁴ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.349.

⁷⁵ *L’Année Politique*, 1956, p.202.

Logically, this declaration did not mark the end of Morocco's protectorate status, although, in general, books and articles on the Moroccan decolonisation process finish their analyses at this date. Important issues such as defence, diplomacy, and a national army had yet to be settled in the course of the following negotiations, as what was obtained by the Moroccans in March 1956 did not have much substance. Massigli summarised the French intentions to the Americans: 'in general what France had done was to follow the line which had been used successfully in the past by the British, namely, giving the Moroccans everything on paper and hoping to retain substantial influence in fact.'⁷⁶

Even so, the psychological impact of this declaration on Moroccan opinion was dramatic. Several days after the declaration, the Quai referred to the reason for the concessions:

Depuis le mois de novembre, nous nous trouvons au Maroc dans une situation révolutionnaire dominée par l'effacement des cadres traditionnels et la cristallisation brutale des aspirations nationales... Sans qu'elle s'étende, la rébellion du Rif ne se rétracte pas. Dans le reste du Maroc et surtout dans le bled, les fonctionnaires locaux, français ou chérifiens, éprouvent des difficultés de plus en plus ardues à maintenir leur autorité. Le moral des troupes marocaines est profondément atteint...

Pour couper court à cette entreprise de subversion, favorisée pour des raisons différentes par l'U.R.S.S., l'Égypte et l'Espagne, il est apparu au gouvernement français que le seul moyen était d'appuyer sans réserve le Sultan.⁷⁷

Indeed, the 2 March declaration enabled the Sultan to receive enthusiastic support from the Moroccan people: 'La signature de la déclaration commune franco-marocaine... a été accueillie par l'opinion marocaine avec le plus grand enthousiasme'.⁷⁸

International opinion broadly welcomed the Franco-Moroccan declaration. On 6 March 1956, the British Ambassador Jebb published a message in which he 'salue les solutions « admirables et dignes d'une grande nation moderne » apportées par la France aux problèmes tunisien et marocain'.⁷⁹ The British remained supportive of the French position in North Africa in order to counter Nasser's influence, as Prime Minister Eden reaffirmed to Mollet at a summit meeting held on 11 March.⁸⁰ On 7 March, the Americans publicised two messages. One was addressed to Mollet, congratulating Morocco on its independence and expressing US support for close Franco-Moroccan

⁷⁶ NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.71/3-356, Dillon to Dulles, no.4004, 3.3.1956

⁷⁷ DDF, 1956, I, doc.159, Note de la Direction général des Affaires marocaines et tunisiennes, 10.3.1956.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, doc.139, Lalouette to Savary, no.582/589, 4.3.1956.

⁷⁹ *Le Monde*, 8.3.1956. Note that the equivalent Franco-Tunisian agreement had not been achieved at this point. This suggested the British attitude was very generous to France. Chapter 8, Section 4.

⁸⁰ DDF, 1956, I, doc.161, Compte rendu des conversations franco-britanniques aux Chequers. 11.3.1956.

collaboration. The other was conveyed to the Sultan celebrating the recognition of independence.⁸¹ Thus some differences of attitudes remained between the British and the Americans, the former giving unconditional support to the French position and the latter putting more emphasis on friendly Franco-Moroccan relations. A more fundamental difference was the timing of recognition: the US recognised Morocco's independence soon after the 2 March communiqué while the British did not.

7.3 Morocco's independence

Upon his return to Rabat, Mohammed V made a triumphant speech on 7 March 1956:

La France a reconnu au Maroc son indépendance et le droit de jouir de tous les attributs de sa souveraineté. De même qu'elle s'est engagée à garantir son intégrité territoriale...

[N]ous exercerons notre devoir législatif, sans restriction aucune, constituerons une armée nationale et assurerons notre représentation diplomatique.⁸²

Then he made an appeal to calm and order although, once again, he did not explicitly condemn the Rif dissidence.⁸³

The French promise of Morocco's independence prompted Madrid to open negotiations with the Moroccans. The following day, Rojas submitted a note to the French, mentioning: 'l'Espagne est prête à reconnaître... l'indépendance, assortie d'une interdépendance, alors qu'on doit noter que la France n'a pas en réalité encore rien accordé au Maroc puisque l'indépendance est liée à l'interdépendance.'⁸⁴ In mid-March 1956, the Spanish government invited the Sultan to pay an official visit to Madrid. The latter wished to use the occasion to realise Morocco's unity, but he knew that his acceptance would create a problem in Franco-Moroccan relations. Knowing his intentions, Savary notified Dubois, now the High-Commissioner in Rabat, that he was not opposed to the Sultan's official visit, reminding him of the benefit that the French would get by faithfully applying the 2 March accords. Savary, however, considered that this visit must not appear to be undertaken without any consultation with the French, so

⁸¹ *Ibid.*, 9.3.1956. Some US officials in Paris were afraid that this difference of position would put the US in an unfavourable position compared with the British in view of French public opinion, which was reportedly increasingly anti-American because of US failure to support France over the transfer of French troops from NATO commitment in Germany to Algeria. NARA RG59 CDF, 751S.00/3-756, Paris to Dulles, no.4060, 7.3.1956. As for the state of French opinion, see DDEL, Papers as President of the US, 1952-1961 (Ann Whitman File), International Series Box 12, France 1956-1960 (6), Murphy to Hoover, 3.3.1956.

⁸² *Le Monde*, 9.3.1956.

⁸³ *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.194.

⁸⁴ DDF, 1956, I, doc.156, Pineau to La Tournelle, no.225/227, 9.3.1956.

insisted that it should be made on his way to France or he must be accompanied by French advisors.⁸⁵ On 17 March, the Moroccan Council of Ministers announced the Sultan's acceptance of the Spanish invitation. Three days later, Dubois reported to Savary that the sovereign preferred to be accompanied by French advisors.⁸⁶

The 2 March communiqué significantly moderated radical nationalist attitudes. On 13 March 1956, el-Fassi affirmed his conviction that the Sultan's appeal would be understood in the Rif,⁸⁷ that is, el-Fassi was becoming loyal to the Moroccan regime under Mohammed V's authority. Thus the 2 March declaration was producing results which had been expected in Paris and Rabat. He publicised his position on the following day: (1) Morocco would be admitted to the UN before the end of 1956; (2) Morocco would join the Arab League; (3) Morocco did not recognise the accords on the American bases; (4) Tangier would be attached shortly to a united Morocco.⁸⁸ On 15 March, Balafrej stated to a journalist of the *A.F.P.*: 'J'ai le sentiment que dans une semaine environ les combats du Rif pourraient s'arrêter...' *Le Monde* also reported that the Moroccan political milieux in Tangier had established contact in recent days with Liberation Army leaders.⁸⁹ Dubois observed: 'Si... l'ordre est suivi, ce sera... une conséquence directe de l'acte de confiance qu'a représenté de la part de la France la déclaration du 2 mars'.⁹⁰ On 18 March, at a meeting of the Istiqlal in Tangier, el-Fassi made a speech, which, according to Dubois, 'se posant désormais en homme d'État... apporte son aval aux résultats jusqu'ici obtenus'. Moreover, he was discreet concerning aid provided by the Arab world for Morocco's liberation.⁹¹ Dubois noted on 20 March that favourable indications had reached him on the progress of appeasement in the troubled regions.⁹² However, it was unfortunate from the French viewpoint that el-Fassi's moderation would be offset by the deteriorating Algerian situation, as will be shown below.

The second stage of the Franco-Moroccan negotiations started on 24 March 1956. Two days later, the Ministry of Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs argued that its objective was to define the modalities of granting independence in the field of (1) military and

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, doc.177, Savary to Dubois, no.605/606, 16.3.1956.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, doc.191, Dubois to Savary, no.790/800, 20.3.1956.

⁸⁷ *Le Monde*, 14.3.1956.

⁸⁸ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/3-1656, Holmes to Dulles, no.423, 16.3.1956.

⁸⁹ *Le Monde*, 17.3.1956.

⁹⁰ DDF, 1956, I., doc.175, Dubois to Savary, no.714/717, 15.3.1956.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, doc.187, Dubois to Savary, no.762/771, 19.3.1956. His attitudes, though, would not henceforward be in perfect conformity with the French line, for he started a campaign calling for the possession of Western Sahara on 28 March 1956. *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.194.

⁹² DDF, 1956, I., doc.175, p.429, footnote 1.

defence questions, (2) administrative and technical cooperation, (3) diplomacy, (4) cultural questions and (5) judicial questions.⁹³ It was decided that each point should be discussed by the corresponding special committees that both parties appointed.⁹⁴ Concerning (1), they argued over how to hold strong influence in Moroccan defence in general and the constitution of the Moroccan army more specifically:

Le Maroc est incapable d'assurer seul sa défense. L'interdépendance est pour lui une nécessité. Cette interdépendance doit reposer sur des responsabilités communes exercées solidairement en ce qui concerne la défense des territoires français et marocaine... [L']armée française au Maroc n'aurait plus de responsabilités en matière de sécurité intérieure.

Regarding diplomacy, they emphasised:

Les deux pays devraient s'engager à n'adhérer à aucun groupement de puissances dont les objectifs seraient contraires aux intérêts de l'un ou de l'autre. De même, ils n'adhéreraient à aucun acte international incompatible avec les droits qu'ils se seraient accordés mutuellement...

They maintained that France should help the Moroccans organise their army, whose soldiers would be conscripted Moroccans and whose officers would be recruited from French and Moroccan officers. Regarding Morocco's diplomacy, the French were willing to support the candidacy in international organisations like the UN but would not allow Morocco to join a pact hostile to France. Evidently, they were afraid of Morocco's adherence to the Arab League and its closer relations with Egypt. Then as early as 27 March, the Franco-Moroccan commission in charge of the problem of the Moroccan army started examining the issue. The Moroccans wanted to constitute the Royal Army as a symbol when the Sultan departed for Spain, to which the French agreed.⁹⁵

In the interim, the Spaniards and the Moroccans were preparing for the Sultan's forthcoming visit to Madrid, both sides wishing to reach agreement before the conclusion of Franco-Moroccan dialogue. Madrid wanted a formula whereby it would be assured of the equal status France would enjoy, but that the Moroccans refused. On 30 March 1956, Dubois noted that no agreement had been reached between the two countries regarding the scope of the Spanish-Moroccan declaration and that there was even a risk of postponing his visit. According to him, the Moroccans had rejected a Spanish proposal, which aimed to ensure the Spanish equal rights with the French.

⁹³ *Ibid.*, doc.202, Note de la Direction générale des Affaires marocaines et tunisiennes, 26.3.1956.

⁹⁴ *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.195.

⁹⁵ *Le Monde*, 29.3.1956; *DDF*, 1956, I, doc.250, p.609, footnote 1.

Instead, the Moroccans had submitted to the Spanish High-Commissioner a counter-proposal to establish the independence and unity of Morocco and affirmed the Moroccan government's intention to respect Spanish interests.⁹⁶ In the final analysis, however, Madrid would soon make concessions.

Owing to el-Fassi's change of attitude, the Rif situation was becoming calm. This was not, however, expected to bring about a truce with the French troops. In fact, the Rif rebels had ambushed French troops on 25 March, killing several soldiers.⁹⁷ On 29 March, the Liberation Army declared a provisional cease-fire and the following day, thirty leaders visited Rabat to pledge their loyalty to the Sultan.⁹⁸ As el-Fassi declared on 2 April 1956, the Liberation Army consisted of two groups, Moroccan and Algerian, and it was only the first group who responded to the Sultan's appeal. He added: 'La démobilisation complète ne viendra qu'après la conclusion des accords franco-marocain et hispano-marocain qui permettront effectivement au Maroc d'agir comme un Etat indépendant et souverain'.⁹⁹ On 3 April, based on this development, the Moroccan government asked the French not to undertake military operations against the rebels.¹⁰⁰

On 4 April 1956, the Sultan left for Madrid. He had a series of meetings with Franco, and a joint Spanish-Moroccan declaration was issued on 7 April, recognising Moroccan independence and unity. Yet again, the Moroccan people welcomed this declaration.¹⁰¹ To French satisfaction, the content of the joint declaration remained principally the same as the Moroccan counter-proposal at the end of March 1956 and it was less restrictive than the Franco-Moroccan declaration on 2 March in the sense that the notion of 'libre coopération' was used instead of that of 'interdépendance'.¹⁰² Later in April 1956, Dubois informed Savary how, in the process of the conversations in Madrid, the Moroccans turned down Spanish demands:

Les Espagnols ont tout d'abord soutenu que la France n'avait pas accordé au Maroc une véritable indépendance... Si Bekkaï a frappé du poing sur la table, donnant « sa parole d'honneur d'officier français » que la France avait réellement accordé l'indépendance au Maroc...

La fermeté du Sultan n'a pas seulement servi le Maroc, elle a également... sauvegardé les intérêts de notre pays.¹⁰³

⁹⁶ DDF, 1956, I, doc.212, Dubois to Savary, no.965/970, 30.3.1956.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, doc.207, Dubois to Savary, no.927/931, 28.3.1956.

⁹⁸ *Le Monde*, 30.3.1956, 1/2.4.1956.

⁹⁹ MAE, Afrique-Levant, Maroc 1953-1959, vol.25, Couve de Murville to Paris, no.2137, 3.4.1956.

¹⁰⁰ DDF, 1956, I, doc.215, Dubois to Savary, no.1013/1015, 3.4.1956.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, doc.236, Dubois to Savary, no.1101/1109, 12.4.1956.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, doc.224, Dubois to Savary, no.1053/1059, 7.4.1956.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, doc.245, Dubois to Savary, despatch, no.643, 14.4.1956.

It appears that the result of the Spanish-Moroccan negotiations convinced the French of Mohammed V's sincerity to collaborate with them. They were delighted to see the Moroccans determined to give less advantage to Spain than to France. Thus, the Spanish government finally agreed to Morocco's independence and unification. The Moroccans, nevertheless, accepted a Spanish offer for assistance in one field; General Franco offered aid for the organisation of the Moroccan army during the period of transition. Realising how desperate the Moroccans were to constitute a national army, Dubois urged that it would be important to assist them in its establishment.¹⁰⁴

On the other hand, the situation on the Algerian-Moroccan border remained troubled in the spring of 1956, since the Algerian group of the Liberation Army did not respond to the Sultan's appeal.¹⁰⁵ The intensification of the Algerian insurgency in March 1956¹⁰⁶ had made the Moroccan situation deteriorate through the penetration of Algerian militants into Moroccan territory. At the same time, increased pressure came from the Moroccans over the pace of the transfer of responsibility for public order. Moroccan ministers, including Bekkai, had talks with the French on 4 April to study the modalities of the transfer of power concerning internal security. Hence Dubois wrote to Paris: 'on ne pouvait retarder davantage l'entrée en fonctions d'un directeur marocain de la Sécurité'.¹⁰⁷ The Spanish decision on 9 April to devolve police power to the Moroccans added to their demands on the French.¹⁰⁸ The French speculated that the Moroccan leaders' attitude was hardening because they were now increasingly aware of the difficulties that they confronted due to the accelerated pace of the independence process. On 12 April, Dubois noted that, after having conversations with the chiefs of the rebels, Moroccan leaders came to understand 'l'importance des liens qui unissaient au sein de l'Armée de libération Algériens et Marocains', although in March 1956 they had insisted on the closure of Algerian-Moroccan border in order to prevent arms smuggling.¹⁰⁹

On 12 April 1956, Savary sent a telegram to Dubois clarifying the conditions under which the French could accept the transfer of responsibility for public order. Firstly, the French authorities must reserve the possibility of using the army and the gendarmerie in

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*

¹⁰⁵ MAE, Afrique-Levant, Maroc 1953-1959, vol.25, Couve de Murville to Paris, no.2137, 3.4.1956.

¹⁰⁶ The Algerian situation worsened to such an extent that on 12 March the French National Assembly had voted Special Powers to the Mollet Government. Martin Thomas, *The French North African Crisis*, p.105.

¹⁰⁷ *DDF*, 1956, I, doc.239, p.580, footnote 1.

¹⁰⁸ *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.199.

¹⁰⁹ *DDF*, 1956, I, doc.236, Dubois to Savary, no.1101/1109, 12.4.1956.

order to protect the persons and the property of French and foreign nationals. Secondly, unless irregular armies were disarmed, the French forces had to deal with them and, in any case, would take the initiative to assure security along the Algerian border. Thirdly, public security should remain under French authority as long as the situation required its necessity, and also the domain of the DST (Direction de la surveillance du territoire).¹¹⁰ This message suggested that the French government intended to retain significant responsibilities over this issue even after the conclusion of Franco-Moroccan negotiations.

The Sultan made an official statement on the Moroccan army on 16 April after his return from Spain:

le désir très net du Sultan de disposer dès la fête l'Aïd Seghir, c'est-à-dire vers le 12 mai, d'une force militaire d'environ 10,000 hommes. Cette force constituerait une première et importante étape dans la création de l'armée marocaine.

Undoubtedly, the sovereign estimated that the army would enable him to remain the arbitrator of the situation and thereby to strengthen his authority. In fact, as well as the Rif rebels and the troubles in the Middle Atlas area, Moroccan insecurity was such that the PDI was openly speaking of the menace of an Istiqlal putsch.¹¹¹ On 25 April, the Franco-Moroccan talks decided on the creation of a Moroccan army of nearly 15,000 personnel.¹¹²

In contrast to the Moroccan army, Franco-Moroccan disagreement remained focussed on the transfer of security responsibilities. On 16 April 1956, Savary repeated his previous position in his instructions to Dubois but, three days later, the Moroccan government issued a declaration requesting the transfer of all necessary means for the maintenance of order to the Minister of Interior. On 20 April, when Roger Lalouette, Dubois's deputy, talked with Bekkaï, the latter confirmed, firstly, that the French would retain the right to intervene to protect French nationals and their property, and secondly that French troops would retain freedom of circulation for security reasons along the Algerian-Moroccan border. Nevertheless, he demanded that if the French wished to reserve their right on the second point, 'nous [les français] examinons la possibilité de le

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, doc.239, Savary to Dubois, no.928/935, 12.4.1956. The gendarmerie was the military police force in the countryside. The DST was in charge of border patrol, especially along the Algerian-Moroccan border.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, doc.250, Lalouette to Savary, no.1202/1205, 17.4.1956. There is no evidence in French sources that support the PDI's insistence. However, the French were seriously concerned about the Istiqlal's campaign for the re-drawing of the Algerian-Moroccan border, which started at the beginning of 1956. The French refused, as it could have constituted a dangerous precedent. *Ibid.*, doc.228, Dubois to Savary, no.1064/1065, 9.4.1956; doc.259, Lacoste to Savary, no.541/S/Sud/2, 19.4.1956.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, doc.268, Savary to Dubois, no.1073/1076, 25.4.1956.

fondre dans les services chargés d'assurer et de ne plus le faire apparaître officiellement.¹¹³ Thus the Moroccans accepted French responsibility for these two issues, but on condition that it did not stimulate Moroccan nationalist sentiment. The Moroccans asked the French for the transfer of power for DST on 25 April, but Savary notified Dubois on the following day that French responsibility for this area should be kept intact in the short term. He was adamant on this point, since 'il ne vous échappera pas que le problème de la DST n'intéresse pas uniquement le Maroc. Une concession faite dans ce domaine aurait des conséquences immédiates en Tunisie'.¹¹⁴

At the same time as the decision on the army, the Sultan decided to take over foreign affairs. It was observed that he intended to 'combine presentation of the Moroccan Army and control of foreign affairs to impress public with fact that essential attributes of independence are being steadily acquired'.¹¹⁵ On 23 April, the Moroccan government decided to create the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and to appoint Balafrej as its minister. Dubois warned the Moroccans: 'L'échange de missions diplomatiques entre le Maroc et les états étrangers ne saurait intervenir qu'avec l'accord exprès de Paris'.¹¹⁶ This development puzzled the Anglo-Saxons, who did not want to waste time before exchanging diplomatic missions with Morocco.¹¹⁷ For this reason, the British and US Ambassadors in Paris informally approached the French, but on 27 April the latter asked them not to appoint their diplomatic representatives until negotiations with the Tunisians and Moroccans on the modalities of conducting diplomatic relations were complete.¹¹⁸

On 28 April 1956, Bekkaï reaffirmed that establishing diplomatic relations with other countries was compatible with the Moroccan acceptance of the French special position. He stated to a French official: 'L'intention du Sultan était d'avoir le plus rapidement possible des représentants diplomatiques en France et en Espagne puis - seulement après - en Égypte et aux États-Unis.' The French noted: '« L'impatience » des Marocains était encouragée par la surenchère espagnole, la hâte de Washington et Londres de voir se régler rapidement la question'.¹¹⁹ Two days later, Savary wrote to

¹¹³ *Ibid.*, doc.262, Lalouette to Savary, no.1272/1278, 20.4.1956, and p.630, footnote 1.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, doc.274, Savary to Dubois, no.1086/1091, 26.4.1956. The issue of the DST was also pending in the ongoing Franco-Tunisian negotiations. *Ibid.*, doc.493. Comptes rendus des négociations franco-tunisienne.

¹¹⁵ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/4-2156, Rabat to Dulles, no.384, 21.4.1956.

¹¹⁶ DDF, 1956, I, doc.276, Savary to Dubois, no.1408/1412, 27.4.1956.

¹¹⁷ NARA, RG59, CDF, 771.00/4-256, Dulles to Tangier, no.506, 2.4.1956.

¹¹⁸ PRO, FO371/119368, JF1023/22, Tunis to FO, 24.4.1956; FO371/119368, JF1023/22(A), Minute, [Diplomatic Relations with Tunisia and Morocco], 27.4.1956.

¹¹⁹ DDF, 1956, I, doc.283, p.682, footnote 1.

Dubois that French government would welcome Balafrej to Paris and discuss the problem over Morocco's foreign relations. He instructed Dubois to tell the Moroccans that their policy aroused apprehension among French parliamentarians.¹²⁰ In fact, the next French concern was to make Franco-Moroccan diplomatic agreements acceptable to the French parliament, which was due to open at the end of May 1956.

At the night of 2-3 May 1956, some twenty people loyal to el-Glaoui were massacred by a crowd near Marrakech. In view of strong Moroccan anti-French sentiment, Bekkaï demanded the suspension of the punishment of criminals by French troops inside Morocco, to which the French agreed.¹²¹ Then Bekkaï and Balafrej visited Paris from 6 to 8 May. On the last day, the French submitted to the Moroccans a proposal for certain diplomatic agreements, and indicated that, if the National Assembly approved the government's policy, the accord would come into force in June 1956, shortly after the debate. On the same day, a communiqué was published announcing that France and Morocco had decided to pursue negotiations for agreements 'qui définiraient l'interdépendance'.¹²² Then Savary was sent to Rabat to complete the negotiations.

The prospect of Franco-Moroccan diplomatic agreement caused an unexpected reaction from London. On 10 May, the British government decided to recognise the independence of Tunisia and Morocco 'pour gagner Nasser de vitesse' and to establish diplomatic relations once negotiations between France and the two countries had been concluded, a decision which came earlier than the French had expected. As was the case in Tunisia, this decision helped accelerate the conclusion of the Franco-Moroccan negotiations.¹²³ Unlike the Americans, the British had not recognised independence at the time of the 2 March communiqué, when there had been no agreement to define strong diplomatic cooperation between France and Morocco and, therefore, the latter had not attained independence according to the French interpretation. The British reached this decision in order not to lose the Moroccan people's good faith to the

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, doc.283, Savary to Dubois, no.1157/1160, 30.4.1956.

¹²¹ *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.202.

¹²² *DDF*, 1956, I, doc.311, Savary to French diplomatic representatives, 12.5.1956. The main points of this accord mentioned that both countries would; (1) 'se tenir mutuellement informés', (2) 'se consulter en cas de menaces et d'établir une procédure de consultations régulières, notamment au niveau des ministres des Affaires étrangères', (3) 'ne pas adhérer à une politique incompatible avec leurs intérêts réciproque', (4) 'ne pas conclure de conventions internationales contraires aux droits qu'ils se sont mutuellement reconnus', (5) 'maintenir une liaison constante entre leurs délégations dans les organisations internationales', and (6) 'dans les pays étrangers où le Maroc n'aura pas de mission diplomatiques, les représentants français assureront la protection des ressortissants marocains à la demande du gouvernement de Rabat.'

¹²³ *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.204. See also Chapter 8, Section 4.

Egyptians, even at the expense of their unswerving policy to support the French position fully.

On 15 May, the Royal Moroccan Army was officially presented to the Sultan. Although the Liberation Army did not participate in the march of the Royal Army, its leaders had promised that they would not disturb the ceremony. Dubois noted that the presentation of the Royal Army ‘apparaît comme une signe tangible et important de la coopération franco-marocaine... [et] incitera peut-être l’Armée de libération à observer plus de prudence à l’égard du gouvernement’.¹²⁴ In mid-May 1956, nonetheless, the Liberation Army remained influential in internal politics. On 14 May, the Sultan had mentioned to Savary, who was in Rabat, that ‘[l]a situation s’est brusquement détériorée au cours de ces derniers jours’, although even then, he neither approved nor disapproved of the Liberation Army. Three days later, it circulated a pamphlet declaring: ‘Nous n’aurons de repos que lorsque notre pays se sera débarrassé des derniers germes du colonialisme.’¹²⁵

To French surprise, on 15 May 1956, the Moroccan government issued a communiqué: ‘le Sultan avait donné son agrément à l’élévation au rang d’Ambassadeur d’Espagne à Rabat’. That is, the Sultan had given an unofficial agreement to the nomination of the Spanish ambassador in Rabat before the French National Assembly approved the government’s policy. Savary immediately protested to Bekkaï: ‘combien une telle décision, survenant au lendemain de la présentation de l’armée royale... pouvait avoir un effet fâcheux sur le Parlement et sur l’opinion française’.¹²⁶ In fact, the Algerian fiasco obliged the Moroccan government to take an apparently independent stand from France. On 18 May, after stressing the increasing influence of the Liberation Army on internal politics, Savary reported to Pineau that, regarding the wording of the diplomatic agreement, the Moroccans suddenly began to assert: ‘le mot « solidaire », qui figure dans le préambule, paraissait particulièrement choquant à plusieurs ministres, alors que la France était engagée dans des opérations en Algérie’. However, the French realised that anti-French sentiment among Moroccan opinion had moderated owing to the presentation of the Royal Army, and therefore the Sultan would choose to reach a diplomatic agreement with France.¹²⁷

¹²⁴ DDF, 1956, I, doc.315, Dubois to Savary, no.1627/1633, 15.5.1956. 20,000 French-trained servicemen were placed at the disposal of the Moroccan government. The initial design of the army relied on 10,000 veterans of the Spanish army and 5,000 former members of the Liberation Army. Moshe Gershovich, *French Military Rule in Morocco*, (London; Frank Cass, 2000), p.212.

¹²⁵ *L’Année Politique*, 1956, p.203.

¹²⁶ DDF, 1956, I, doc.321, Savary to MAE, no.1667/1672, 16.5.1956.

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, doc.325, Savary to MAE, no.1732/1738, 18.5.1956.

On the same day, a faction of the Liberation Army announced that they would never accept the movement of French troops inside Morocco.¹²⁸ On 23 May, an incident occurred in which French soldiers, while patrolling along the Algerian-Moroccan border, were taken prisoner by an armed Moroccan band.¹²⁹ As the French told an American official: ‘the Sultan had no day-to-day control of Eastern Morocco which was controlled by various bands of the Army of Liberation.’¹³⁰ Bekkaï notified Dubois of the demand by the Moroccans that French patrols be suspended and warned that otherwise the Moroccan government could not guarantee the security of French people.¹³¹ However, Savary confirmed in the Senate on 30 May that the status of the French army remained unchanged.¹³²

Nevertheless, the French and Moroccan governments signed the diplomatic agreement on 28 May 1956, the substance of which remained the same as that of the French note of 8 May. The French thus succeeded in reaching a conclusion before the opening of the National Assembly debate.¹³³ The French had suggested concluding a treaty of friendship and alliance with the aim of ensuring the approval of the National Assembly,¹³⁴ but the Moroccans were successful in omitting the word ‘alliance’ from the text of the agreement, unlike in the Tunisian case. In return, Balafrej declared on 19 May: ‘Nous venons de conclure avec la France un traité d’alliance, d’amitié permanence et de coopération’. Subsequently, the debate in the National Assembly on general North African policy opened on 31 May and ended on 2 June 1956. A motion of confidence in the Mollet Government was adopted by 271 votes to 59, with 200 abstentions, enabling the Franco-Moroccan diplomatic agreement to come into force.¹³⁵ This finally authorised Morocco to exchange diplomatic missions with other countries.

In July 1956, France brought the question of Moroccan membership before the UNSC. On the SC’s recommendation, the GA decided on 12 November 1956 to admit Morocco. In the meantime, Morocco’s unity was achieved. On 9 August, the Spanish zone of Morocco came under the control of the Moroccan government. On 29 October, the diplomatic conference at Fedala put an end to the international administration of Tangier. As for the domains of cooperation other than diplomacy and defence, the

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, doc.327, footnote 1.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, doc.338, footnote 1.

¹³⁰ NARA, RG59, CDF, 751S.00/5-2356, Paris to Dulles, no.5574, 23.5.1956.

¹³¹ DDF, 1956, I, doc.338, Dubois to Savary, no.1834/1840, 24.5.1956. The French patrols had been resumed one day before.

¹³² *L’Année Politique*, 1956, p.204.

¹³³ This was in contrast to the Tunisian case. See Chapter 8, Section 4.

¹³⁴ NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.71/5-1156, Dillon to Dulles, no.5296, 11.5.1956.

¹³⁵ Bernard, *The Franco-Moroccan Conflict*, p.369.

agreement on administrative and technical cooperation was signed at Rabat on 6 February 1957, and the cultural agreement was signed at Rabat on 30 May 1957.¹³⁶ Thus Morocco entered the international stage, while its unity was accomplished and its close links with France were maintained.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, pp.369-370.

Chapter 8: Tunisia's independence; Tunisia, June 1955 to June 1956

8.1 Rivalries between Bourguiba and Salah Ben Youssef

Tunisia obtained internal autonomy as the result of the conclusion of the Franco-Tunisian Conventions in June 1955. The French government allowed Bourguiba to return to Tunisia on 1 June 1955 after more than three years' exile, and the Tunisian people enthusiastically received him as 'le père de la Nation'.¹ Many French settlers also welcomed his return by sending letters to him, although some of them still saw him as 'un ennemi irréductible de la présence française'.² Overall, Bourguiba's conciliatory attitude contributed to the development of Tunisia's moderate atmosphere, which the majority of French settlers highly appreciated, as Roger Seydoux put it.³

This did not, however, solve the socio-economic problems, which the Tunisian government now had to tackle. The unemployment rate was high and there were many demonstrations demanding an increase in wages. The Tunisian government was so short of funds that it asked the French government on 25 July 1955 to provide three billion francs.⁴ Discontent spread among trade unions and the UGTT decided at the end of July 1955 to resort to a general strike on 10 August 1955 to obtain a salary increase, although it later abandoned this plan.⁵ Later in August 1955, the government decided on a 30% rise in salaries but this decision did not satisfy the trade unions.⁶

At the same time, conflict between Bourguiba and Salah Ben Youssef, which had already been evident in the process of negotiations on the Conventions, came to the fore, especially because Paris authorised the latter to return to Tunisia and he succeeded in rallying support from the unemployed. He decided not to come back to the country, however, and continued to oppose the Conventions outside Tunisia. He made a public announcement against them in Cairo on 12 July 1955, and one week later, his position was supported by some party members in the party session of Tunis. The Neo-Destour gave him an ultimatum on 15 July, requesting his return within ten days but he ignored this request.⁷ Realising that the conflict inside the party would certainly endanger his

¹ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.247.

² MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.378, Latour to Paris, no.1703/1705, 6.6.1955.

³ Ibid., Seydoux to Paris, no.1915/1920, 29.6.1955. Seydoux was then a French special minister in Tunisia.

⁴ Ibid., Latour to Paris, no.2268/2273, 27.7.1955.

⁵ Ibid., Situation Politique en Tunisie, 8.1955.

⁶ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.265. The government decided on a further 10% salary increase in September 1955. *Ibid.*, p.279.

⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.378, Physionomie de la période du 20 juin au 20 juillet 1955, 23.8.1955.

own position and the prospect of the success of the Conventions, Bourguiba in turn endeavoured to consolidate Tunisia's unity.⁸

Security conditions in Tunisia did not stabilise in the summer of 1955, especially on its border with Algeria. In July 1955, the violent incidents that Algerian armed groups caused were frequently reported especially in El Kef, a city in north-western Tunisia.⁹ In fact, it had already been revealed in the preceding month that substantial amounts of arms were being supplied from Libya to French North Africa.¹⁰ The worsening Algerian situation caused further instability in Tunisia. In August 1955, Algerian military activists often infiltrated Western Tunisia in order to establish contact with the ex-Tunisian Fellagha members. The French observed that these were the direct repercussion of two major incidents in Algeria, which took place that month.¹¹

Meanwhile, Tunisian political institutions were being transformed to conform to the June 1955 Conventions. After their implementation on 31 August 1955, the Ben Ammar Government resigned on 13 September 1955 in order to form a government composed only of Tunisian ministers. Four days later, the Ministries of Finance, Public Works, Public Instruction and Post Office, which had hitherto been run by French ministers, were taken over by Tunisian ministers. On that day, Seydoux was appointed as the French High-Commissioner, a newly-created post to replace the Resident-General, and Salah Ben Youssef returned to Tunisia and was warmly received by the population in Tunis.¹²

However, the Tunisian security situation remained unstable in the autumn of 1955, partly because of Egypt's enhanced prestige.¹³ Its neutralist orientation was encouraging anti-French movements in Tunisia as well as in Morocco. It was noted that French settlers were intimidated by the presence of Algerian rebels, who passed through Tunisian territory 'soit pour chercher refuge ou prendre du repos, soit pour essayer de faire du recrutement et de trouver des armes et munitions'.¹⁴ French settlers' fears were confirmed when two French people were killed near the Algerian border by Algerian Fellaghas, during the night of 3-4 October 1955. The French observed that the Algerian

⁸ Ibid., Situation Politique en Tunisie, 8.1955.

⁹ Ibid., Latour to Paris, no.2171/2173, 20.7.1955.

¹⁰ PRO, FO371/113894, JT10317/112, FO Minute, Kirkpatrick, 18.6.1955.

¹¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.378, Situation Politique en Tunisie, 8.1955. In the first incident on 2 August seventy-one settlers were killed, and in the second on 20 August thirty-seven settlers were killed.

¹² *L'Année Politique*, 1955, pp.279-280. The principal members of the second Ben Ammar Government were, Mongi Slim (Minister of Interior), Kaddem Ben Achour (Justice), Mohamed Badra (Agriculture), Hédi Nouira (Finance), Mohamed Masmoudi (National Economy), Djellouli Farès (Public Instruction), Sadok Mokkadem (Public Health), Albert Bessis (Urbanisme).

¹³ Chapter 6, Section 5.

¹⁴ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.378, Seydoux to Paris, no.3089/3095, 30.9.1955.

Fellaghas were trying to create unrest in the part of Tunisian territory that lay between Libya and Constantine in Algeria.¹⁵ Therefore, Seydoux demanded that the CSTT undertake a systematic clean-up operation and proposed that the French government reinforce the troops stationed along the border with Algeria.¹⁶ He further explained: ‘lors de leurs infiltrations, les rebelles algériens bénéficient auprès de la population tunisienne d’une large complicité, sinon d’une participation active.’¹⁷ He then asked Bourguiba on 4 October to publicise a statement of sympathy in order to ease French people’s fears. The Neo-Destour’s president agreed, mentioning that he had already requested Ben Ammar to issue a statement condemning the Algerian Fellaghas in the name of the Tunisian government.¹⁸

This violent incident was immediately followed by Salah Ben Youssef’s declaration on 7 October 1955,¹⁹ in which he decisively opposed the Franco-Tunisian Conventions; he stated at the *Grande Mosquée* in Tunis that the Conventions allowed France to legalise what ‘colonialism’ had usurped since 1881 and make Tunisia join the French Union. He also exhorted Tunisian people to pursue a battle for total independence and moreover, assured Algerian ‘patriots’ of his solidarity with them. *Le Monde* noted that this was the first occasion that he had held a gathering since his return to Tunisia, and was ‘les premiers indices de la lutte engagée au sein du Néo-Destour.’²⁰ This declaration stunned Seydoux, who straightaway protested to Ben Ammar that it was intolerable that the secretary-general of the Neo-Destour, whose members participated in the government, should make such an aggressive statement.²¹ Tunisia’s internal dispute between Bourguiba’s pro-French faction and Salah Ben Youssef’s pro-Egyptian faction was increasingly conspicuous, as it was in Morocco. From this time on, the two factions were to hold their own gatherings in order to present their cases to the people.

Bourguiba was quick to react. The Neo-Destour Political Bureau decided on 8 October to exclude Salah Ben Youssef, who was replaced by Ladgham as the Secretary-General.²² This measure aroused resentment in Muslim areas of major cities, where

¹⁵ Constantine was one of the three departments of Algeria, bordering on Tunisia. From 1947 to 1956, Algeria was also composed of the other four departments, Alger and Oran, Oasis and Saoura. <http://membres.lycos.fr/aamafn/page35.html>, accessed on 2 August 2005.

¹⁶ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.378, Seydoux to Paris, no.3128/3132, 4.10.1955.

¹⁷ Ibid., Seydoux to Paris, no.3301/3306, 14.10.1955.

¹⁸ Ibid., Seydoux to Paris, no.3146/3149, 6.10.1955.

¹⁹ El-Fassi had announced the formation of the Maghreb Liberation Army only three days before this. Chapter 6, p.172.

²⁰ *Le Monde*, 9/10.10.1955. The Vieux-Destour was influential among students at the *Grande Mosquée*.

²¹ DDF, 1955 II, Doc.281, Seydoux to Paris, no.3171/3173, 7.10.1955.

²² *L'Année Politique*, 1955, p.293.

some shops closed as a protest.²³ This meant that Salah Ben Youssef enjoyed great popularity in urban areas. Seydoux pointed out that the possibility could not be excluded that the Neo-Destour's ex-Secretary-General had stirred up these troubles. Seydoux believed that he had returned from Cairo under orders from the Arab League to cause as much disruption as possible.²⁴ In a session chaired by el-Fassi, the North African Liberation Committee in Cairo decided on 15 October to exclude Bourguiba and the members of his party's Political Bureau, and instead to regard Salah Ben Youssef as the Neo-Destour's legitimate leader. One week later, the ex-Secretary-General sent a telegram to Nasser in which he tried to show strong solidarity with Egypt, expressing his gratitude for the latter's support of the 'cause tunisienne sacrée' and admiring Nasser's neutralist orientation.²⁵

Both terrorist activities and the domestic conflict made the French less optimistic about Tunisian political institutions being successfully created or modified in accordance with the Franco-Tunisian Conventions. Ben Ammar announced on 14 October 1955 that the constitution would be promulgated, but did not specify whether it would be issued by the Bey or by an elected assembly.²⁶ The Ministry for Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs argued that Bourguiba enjoyed support from the majority of the party's members, while Salah Ben Youssef retained its radical members' support. It was also noted that the latter's statements could appeal to the ex-Fellagha members and that he also benefited from a high reputation among Arab-Asian countries and the North African Liberation Committee. The Vieux-Destour's opposition to the Conventions remained strong. Finally, it concluded that the forthcoming Neo-Destour National Congress, due to be held in mid-November 1955, would certainly clarify the situation.²⁷ Seydoux was more pessimistic: he estimated that while the result would probably favour Bourguiba, external forces like Egypt would certainly try to give advantages to his rival. He even wrote to the Quai d'Orsay²⁸: 'Un congrès du 15 novembre qui ne prendrait pas clairement position constituerait... un événement de portée internationale susceptible de fournir à l'état-major du Caire'.²⁹

²³ DDF, 1955 II, Doc.295, Seydoux to Paris, no.3270/3279, 13.10.1955.

²⁴ PRO, FO371/113792, JF1016/93, Williams to Bromley, no.1446/601/102, 17.10.1955.

²⁵ *L'Année Politique*, 1955, pp.293-294. He wrote: 'le peuple tunisien partage la fierté de tous les peuples arabes pour l'indépendance réelle affirmée par l'Egypte et son gouvernement dans les relations avec les pays étrangers et notamment dans la politique vitale d'achat d'armes nécessaires pour assurer la sécurité du monde arabe.' *Le Monde*, 23.10.1955.

²⁶ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.378, Seydoux to Paris, no.3281/3294, 14.10.1955.

²⁷ Ibid., La Situation en Tunisie, 18.10.1955.

²⁸ The Ministry of Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs was abolished on 20 October 1955.

²⁹ DDF, 1955 II, Doc.336, Seydoux to Paris, no.3529/3549, 27.10.1955.

At this point, a completely new element was introduced into Tunisian affairs by the events in Morocco. The ex-Sultan's restoration had been made virtually inevitable by recent events since late October 1955 and, consequently, the prospect of Morocco's independence was suddenly emerging.³⁰ Alarmed by this development, Seydoux sent a warning to Paris on 3 November 1955:

Elle [l'opinion tunisienne] est habituée à penser que la Tunisie, plus évoluée et plus en contact avec le monde extérieur que le Maroc, doit devancer celui-ci dans l'émancipation politique... Toute concession qui serait faite par le Gouvernement français au Maroc et qui excèderait ce qui a été consenti dans les Conventions franco-tunisiennes, serait immédiatement exploitée par les adversaires de ces Conventions...

Therefore he stressed the necessity 'dans la définition de notre future politique marocaine, de ne rien promettre et de ne rien faire qui puisse amoindrir dans l'esprit des Tunisiens les résultats obtenus par leur pays grâce aux Conventions franco-tunisiennes.'³¹ However, from this time onwards, Paris was increasingly inclined to give independence to Morocco in order to secure unity, which would put the French in a position where they could hardly refuse independence if requested by the Tunisians.

8.2 The Neo-Destour National Congress

The Neo-Destour party held its National Congress in Sfax, a mid-eastern coastal city, from 15 to 19 November 1955. To French satisfaction, this Congress turned out to be a success for Bourguiba, adopting several motions, four of which were of particular importance. The first motion stated that the Franco-Tunisian Conventions constituted a step on the way to independence. The party thus demanded that Tunisia's independence be achieved in the foreseeable future, while rejecting Salah Ben Youssef's position. The second motion urged the Tunisian government to 'appliquer rapidement toutes les Conventions sans aucune tolérance ni concession'. This motion demanded immediate elections for all the municipalities and that a constituent assembly should be in charge of procedures establishing a constitution defining the country's political structure, based around a constitutional monarch, with the people as the source of sovereignty. The third motion called for the creation of an auxiliary force which was to constitute the nucleus of a national army.³² Finally, the fourth motion related to Algeria, advocating

³⁰ Chapter 7, Section 1.

³¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.379, Seydoux to Paris, no.3658/3662, 3.11.1955.

³² Ibid., Situation Politique en Tunisie (Novembre 1955).

‘l’engagement solennel de poursuivre la lutte jusqu’à la libération complète et l’indépendance totale.’ The Congress reasoned that there would never be peace in Tunisia as long as the plight of the Algerian people was unresolved.³³

Importantly, some Asian and Middle Eastern countries³⁴ sent their delegations to this Congress. With the growing prospect of Tunisia’s independence, Egypt and Iraq were struggling to expand their influence. The rivalry for Middle Eastern hegemony³⁵ engulfed Tunisian territory as well. In fact, Egypt and Iraq’s activities were not limited to the official level. The French authorities had already found that the Iraqi Royal Military College was training North African activists. This news seriously embarrassed the British, who had a defence treaty with Iraq.³⁶

The French saw the adoption of Bourguiba’s line by the Neo-Destour as only a partial success. Salah Ben Youssef still enjoyed support from a significant part of the population. The economic reform plan adopted by the Congress had alienated large landowners, who rallied around him.³⁷ He also received support from those who felt threatened by ‘un travailisme tunisien’ and people of the *Grand Mosque*. On 23 November 1955, Seydoux noted that he was uncertain whether this Congress would have a lasting effect on stability. Moreover, referring to ‘l’attentisme’ of the Tunisian government, he was also suspicious whether it could put into practice the Neo-Destour’s programme. He perceived that several ministers, including the prime minister, were pro-Youssef, as they believed that Bourguiba could not last long and they were strongly affected by Prince Chedly’s pro-Youssef position.³⁸ Not only Prince Chedly but also the Royal family as a whole sympathised with Salah Ben Youssef because he was committed to maintaining Tunisia as a religious country, whereas Bourguiba, who was rumoured to be aiming to establish a republican regime,³⁹ advocated Tunisia’s secularisation.

The Neo-Destour’s requests to the Tunisian government required the French to rectify the security problem in accordance with the 1955 Conventions, while they could not deal with the constitutional problem because it solely concerned the Tunisians. At a

³³ DDF, 1955 II, Doc.383, Seydoux to Paris, no.4054/4076, 23.11.1955.

³⁴ They were Egypt, Iraq, Libya, Saudi Arabia, India and Pakistan.

³⁵ Regarding this rivalry, see Elie Podeh, *The Quest for Hegemony in the Arab World: the struggle over the Bagdad Pact*, (New York: Leiden, 1995).

³⁶ PRO, FO371/113801, JF1022/26G, Beith to Bromley, no.1073/264/55, 3.11.1955.

³⁷ *Le Monde*, 22.11.1955.

³⁸ DDF, 1955 II, Doc.383, Seydoux to Paris, no.4054/4076, 23.11.1955. Seydoux complained to the British that Bourguiba was a sick and tired man, and that he would carry out his promise but doubted if he now had enough energy to put through unpopular decisions. PRO, FO371/113792, JF1016/100, Williams to Bromley, no.1634/601/111, 22.11.1955.

³⁹ For example, NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/2-2956, Dillon to Dulles, no.3940, 29.2.1956.

meeting with French officials held in Paris on 25 November, Seydoux⁴⁰ picked up two demands from the Tunisians: firstly, they wanted to augment the number of police staff at the Tunisian government's disposal by creating auxiliary forces and, secondly, create Tunisian forces designed to fight the Fellaghas. Seydoux recommended the rejection of both demands, but insisted that the increase in police numbers in certain areas should be allowed. Regarding the second demand, he argued: 'il faut s'attendre que les Tunisiens insisteront... pour reprendre les bataillons de tirailleurs tunisiens servant dans l'Armée française.' He added that the government should secretly start examining the creation of an embryo of the Tunisian army as soon as possible.⁴¹ Then, on 26 November, the French government's Coordination Committee for North Africa published a communiqué, which instructed the High Commissioner to pursue the implementation of the Franco-Tunisian Conventions.

Cette politique devra notamment mettre le Gouvernement tunisien en mesure de faire face... aux nécessités de l'ordre public... Le comité a demandé au Haut-Commissaire de continuer à veiller au respect des droits que les Français, qu'ils appartiennent ou non à la fonction publique, tirent des conventions.⁴²

The Tunisian situation remained tense. Both Bourguiba and Salah Ben Youssef held gatherings in various parts of the country, and continued their disputes.⁴³ The first three days of December 1955 witnessed several attacks against individuals in which two were killed and seven injured. Both sides condemned the other as responsible. Seydoux noted the desire of 'bourguibistes... d'utiliser la situation qu'ils ont plus ou moins directement créée pour précipiter la formation de la force supplétive'.⁴⁴ To deal with the insecurity, Seydoux announced on 8 December that there was a Franco-Tunisian agreement regarding an increase of forces at the Tunisian authorities' discretion.⁴⁵ Then on 24 December, the French and Tunisian governments reached an accord on the issue of the Southern territory, unresolved in the 1955 Conventions, agreeing that the transfer of the special police force⁴⁶ in that region to the Tunisian authorities would commence the following week.

⁴⁰ He stayed in Paris from 23 November to 2 December 1955.

⁴¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.379, Réunion chez M Massigli le 25 novembre 1955.

⁴² Ibid., Comité de Coordination pour l'Afrique du Nord (26 novembre 1955).

⁴³ PRO, FO371/113792, JF1016/102, Williams to Bromley, no.1697/601/115, 2.12.1955.

⁴⁴ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.379, Gillet to Paris, no.4159/4168, 3.12.1955.

⁴⁵ PRO, FO371/113792, JF1016/103, Williams to Bromley, no.1731/601/118, 9.12.1955. He also stated that continued irresponsible and destructive criticism of the Conventions would alienate French sympathy and that the French government was concerned to safeguard the French community.

⁴⁶ This was called 'les forces du makhzen', referring to 'une force auxiliaire de la police particulière aux anciens territoires militaires du Sud.' *Le Monde*, 25.12.1955.

Apart from these security problems, the Neo-Destour's motions had raised constitutional issues. As opposed to the nationalist party, the Bey was not keen on constitutional reforms. The Bey told Seydoux on 23 November 1955: 'se produisait actuellement une évolution trop rapide... qu'il s'agisse d'ailleurs du Maroc aussi bien que de la Tunisie', and Seydoux noted that Ben Ammar had expressed almost the same opinion the day before.⁴⁷ The Bey's position was clear: 'il ne pouvait reconnaître aucun post-scriptum aux Conventions signées par lui.'⁴⁸ He, in particular, did not want an increase in the Tunisian government's police force, but rather emphasised that responsibility for the maintenance of order belonged exclusively to the French High Commissioner according to the Franco-Tunisian Conventions.⁴⁹ Aware that the advance of Bourguiba's position denoted the decline of his own position, the Bey did not want the government to have more authority than had been provided in the Conventions. This was contrary to the Moroccan case, where the Sultan himself took the initiative in calling for independence.

When Seydoux met Bourguiba on 25 December 1955, the former found him irritated by the attitudes of the Bey and the Tunisian government. Bourguiba resented the fact that the Bey and the Palace did not conceal their sympathy for Salah Ben Youssef, who was more committed to preserving the monarchy, whereas the Bey disliked Bourguiba's republicanism. Bourguiba told Seydoux that he did not oppose the constitutional monarchy itself, but added that he wanted the Bey to play the same role as the British King. Likewise, he criticised the government, whose prime minister was incompetent and which was suffering from 'immobilisme', although he did not wish for a reorganisation of the government that would accompany Ben Ammar's removal. Finally, he did not specifically refer to diplomacy and the army, but replied in the affirmative when asked whether his policy was to lead Tunisia to independence with French agreement, contrary to that of Salah Ben Youssef. Bourguiba said that he wanted to avoid making the ex-Secretary-General a martyr, and therefore wished to isolate him progressively among those groups hostile to the Neo-Destour, instead of oppressing him through violent means.⁵⁰

On 28 December 1955, the Tunisian government announced its decision to organise the elections for a constituent assembly, which would be convened on 8 April 1956, a decision that had been strongly pressed for by newspapers which supported Bourguiba

⁴⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.379, Seydoux to Paris, no.4037/4040, 23.11.1955.

⁴⁸ Ibid., Seydoux to Paris, no.4518/4523, 27.12.1955.

⁴⁹ Ibid., Gillet to Paris, no.4159/4168, 3.12.1955.

⁵⁰ DDF, 1955 II, doc.443, Seydoux to Paris, no.4498/4513, 27.12.1955.

and the UGTT.⁵¹ Although the Bey had at first refused to sign the decree to authorise them, Bourguiba succeeded in persuading him to do so.⁵² The decree provided that the assembly would be elected by universal suffrage, and the date for the elections was set on 25 March 1956. This decision had much significance. Firstly, as Seydoux commented, this was the first moment that the Bey, who had nominally been the absolute sovereign, had accepted that sovereignty lay not with him but with the people. In this sense, the decree totally differed from his own speech of 15 May 1951,⁵³ which called for the Tunisian constitution but never implied or stated explicitly the transfer of sovereignty. Secondly, this decree was a serious menace to both the Vieux-Destour and Salah Ben Youssef. For the former, 'Notre Constitution c'est le Coran', and for the latter, this decree was nothing but the institutionalisation of what Bourguiba had gained as the result of the Conventions.⁵⁴ Finally, setting the date for convening the constituent assembly necessarily tightened the schedules of Tunisia's domestic politics and Franco-Tunisian negotiations, as will be shown below.

8.3 The Franco-Tunisian Protocol of March 1956

In January 1956, to a certain extent due to the decree of December 1955, troubles were continuing throughout Tunisia. It was reported to Paris that supporters of Salah Ben Youssef were campaigning violently against the 1955 Conventions. Making use of high unemployment, he succeeded in rallying around him other anti-French forces such as the Vieux-Destour, ex-Fellagha members, traditionalists and bourgeois who were worried about the socialist tendencies of the Neo-Destour and the UGTT. This coalition group was formed in liaison with the Algerian rebels.⁵⁵ *Le Monde* reported on 20 January the development of 'néo-fellagisme', exemplified by infiltrations by Algerian 'hors-de-loi' and 'des actes de bandisme'.⁵⁶ Later in January 1956, *Le Monde* further mentioned: 'Les groupes rebelles s'étendent maintenant à l'intérieur du territoire tunisien'.⁵⁷

In Paris, preparations were started for dialogues with Tunisia. In fact, the French anticipated that the Tunisians would soon demand independence. On 20 January 1956, the Quai d'Orsay argued that the French government should immediately make

⁵¹ MAE, Tunisie 1944-1955, vol.379, Seydoux to Paris, no.4541/4542, 28.12.1955.

⁵² Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, pp.467-469.

⁵³ Chapter 1, p.34.

⁵⁴ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.75, Seydoux to Paris, no.29/43, 4.1.1956.

⁵⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Note pour le Ministre, 14.2.1956.

⁵⁶ *Le Monde*, 20.1.1956.

⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 29.1.1956.

important decisions about Tunisia, as Salah Ben Youssef was increasing his influence due to violent incidents in Algeria, the promise of Morocco's independence, Tunisia's economic and social difficulties, and support from certain Arab countries. The Tunisian government should further reinforce police power, as this was not incompatible with France's special position concerning defence. It was noted:

les avantages qui seront consentis au Maroc, en particulier sur le plan de la diplomatie et de l'armée devront être étendus à la Tunisie... [N]ous devrions nous résoudre à donner de telles assurances, dès le moment où cela apparaîtrait absolument nécessaire pour sauvegarder le prestige et la position du Gouvernement tunisien devant les attaques de l'opposition yousséfiste.⁵⁸

Thus, Tunisia must be given independence, but the problem was to what extent the Conventions and the Treaty of Bardo should be amended. The Quai pointed out that Tunisia's independence could be achieved without terminating the Conventions, because they were flexible enough to allow important amendments to the realm of Tunisia's right to defence. Concerning the Treaty, the Quai considered it preferable not to abrogate it. This position was considered possible because, importantly, the Treaty did not have provisions that deprived Tunisia of a right to foreign policy and defence. Nevertheless, it was also indicated: '[Le Traité de Bardo] serait difficile à maintenir au cas où le Traité de Fès serait lui-même profondément modifié et la révision du Traité du Bardo entraînement nécessairement une révision de la Convention Générale franco-tunisienne.'⁵⁹

The Neo-Destour held a session of the National Council from 21 to 23 January 1956, which unanimously decided to ask the Political Bureau to work for the constitution of a national army, and the termination of the troubles in Algeria so that the Algerian people could settle conflicts with France through negotiation.⁶⁰ Against the background of this decision, when he met Seydoux on 26 January, Bourguiba called for French agreement on the organisation of Tunisia's national army, responsibility for diplomacy and the reinforcement of police power. He justified his demands by stating that he was in a difficult position because of developments in Morocco and that it was unthinkable that Tunisia would have a less favourable regime than Morocco. He therefore insisted that he be given guarantees regarding these problems within a few weeks, adding that he wanted French support in his electoral campaign for the constituent assembly. He further mentioned his plan to visit Paris at the beginning of February 1956 with the aim

⁵⁸ Note that this 'yousséfiste' refers to the people who supported Salah Ben Youssef, not Mohammed V.

⁵⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Note pour le Secrétaire Général, 20.1.1956.

⁶⁰ Ibid., Situation Politique en Tunisie (Janvier 1956).

of having talks with leading political figures. However, as opposed to Paris's position, Seydoux's reply was negative. He mentioned that French opinion must not be disappointed 'en remettant en cause des traités dont l'encre était à peine sèche.'⁶¹

On 27 January 1956, perhaps initiated by Slim, the Tunisian government launched a large-scale police operation against Salah Ben Youssef and his supporters, arresting about 100 people and confiscating a number of weapons. This operation forced Salah Ben Youssef to flee Tunisia. He arrived in Libya via Tangier on the following day.⁶² Consequently, Bourguiba greatly reinforced his position inside Tunisia. Furthermore, the Tunisian police simultaneously started encircling the palace of the Bey and the domiciles of members of the royal families. In fact, the Tunisian government suspected that the Bey had given refuge to Salah Ben Youssef.⁶³

On 31 January 1956, before being elected as a prime minister, Mollet declared that the June 1955 Conventions did not constitute an obstacle to 'l'indépendance dans le cadre d'une interdépendance organisée', thereby revealing his intention to negotiate with the Tunisians.⁶⁴ However, the meanings of indépendance and 'interdépendance' were yet to be defined.

Bourguiba arrived in Paris on 2 February 1956 and met a number of French leaders such as Mollet, Massigli, Savary and Seydoux during his stay until 6 February. He officially requested that certain provisions of the Conventions be amended so that Tunisia could enjoy 'l'indépendance dans l'interdépendance' soon and exercise its responsibilities in the domains of defence and foreign policy.⁶⁵ The French accepted Bourguiba's demand for a right to defence and foreign policy, but rejected the transfer of police power at that moment because there remained internal tension and a menace posed by the Algerian Fellaghas.⁶⁶

Faced with these demands, the French government had to take into account the following points. Firstly, it was axiomatic that France would have to be highly influential in Tunisia's foreign policy and defence. The French concern was not the formation of the Tunisian army itself but the assurance of French troops' right to the surveillance of Tunisia's borders especially with Algeria. Secondly, Bourguiba's position should be strengthened, so that he could win the forthcoming elections. The

⁶¹ DDF, 1956, I, doc.44, Seydoux to MAE, no.406/414, 26.1.1956.

⁶² *Ibid.*, doc.78, p.163, footnote 2; *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.185.

⁶³ DDF, 1956, I, doc.78, Seydoux to Savary, no.597/610, 6.2.1956.

⁶⁴ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Note pour le Ministre, 14.2.1956. The general election in France took place on 2 January 1956.

⁶⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Situation Politique en Tunisie (Février 1956); DDF, 1956, I, doc.78, p.162, footnote 1.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, doc.68, Seydoux to Basdevant, 2.2.1956.

French must, therefore, give him a reward by successfully concluding the approaching Franco-Tunisian dialogue by the time of the elections due on 25 March 1956. In consequence, Seydoux proposed that the negotiations be taken in two stages; the government should firstly declare Tunisia's independence to reinforce Bourguiba's position, and then negotiate with the Tunisians after the constituent assembly was convened in April 1956.⁶⁷ Thirdly, the enhancement of Bourguiba's position should not weaken the Bey's position, which France had committed itself to guarantee through the Treaty of Bardo. Consequently, Bourguiba should be told that France could give him full support only if he assented to the constitutional monarchy.⁶⁸ Fourthly, the French were not unwilling to modify certain provisions of the 1955 Conventions if necessary. It would be dangerous, they speculated, if extensive reinterpretation of the Conventions was allowed, because it would mean unilateral concessions on the French part. They insisted, nonetheless, that future negotiations must be conducted within the framework of the Conventions, as this would give support to Bourguiba as against Salah Ben Youssef. Fifthly, they had not yet decided whether to abrogate the Treaty of Bardo. As has been argued above, it was assumed that France would be pressurised to abrogate it if it agreed to the abrogation of the Treaty of Fez with the Moroccans, but some French officials strongly argued for its maintenance.⁶⁹ They put more emphasis on legal continuity between Tunisia's current and future status.

In the meantime, the palace was kept under siege. Perhaps this encirclement was meant by the Tunisian government to pressurise the Bey to authorise the opening of Franco-Tunisian negotiations, which might pave the way to the republicanism that Bourguiba covertly wanted. On 6 February 1956, the Bey strongly articulated his anger and irritation to Seydoux, who answered that he could intervene only where public order was threatened since Tunisia enjoyed internal autonomy. Seydoux confirmed that the Bey 'considère le départ de Salah ben Youssef... comme une menace envers sa dynastie.' Knowing the Tunisian government's intention, Seydoux advised that since the Bey himself had ratified the 1955 Conventions, no discussions about their amendment were possible unless it was explicitly demanded by him and the government that he would appoint. Thus Seydoux urged the Bey to accept the revision of the

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, doc.68, Seydoux to Basdevant, 2.2.1956. As in the Moroccan case, the French considered that they should firstly announce their intention to recognise Tunisia's independence and then negotiate on the form and content of the independence which Tunisia would obtain. The concept 'independence' contained several elements, like diplomatic relations with other countries, a right to defence and a right to control internal security, but this note argued that France should recognise Tunisia's independence without defining the details.

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, doc.78, Seydoux to Savary, no.597/610, 6.2.1956.

⁶⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Note, 2.2.1956.

Conventions promptly. In exchange, he proposed that the French government promise the Bey that it would guarantee the maintenance of the dynasty and his status.⁷⁰

As a result of talks with Bourguiba, on 7 February 1956, Savary declared the French willingness to modify Franco-Tunisian relations: ‘si Son Altesse le Bey en exprimait le désir, ils étaient d'accord pour discuter avec les représentants du Gouvernement tunisien qu'Elle désignerait, les problèmes soulevés par M. Bourguiba qui seraient examinés dans l'esprit de la déclaration d'investiture du Président du Conseil.’ The Bey issued a communiqué on 10 February, stating that he would appoint a government to start negotiations with France on Tunisia's independence. Paris did not forget to ease French settlers' anxiety. Seydoux announced the following day that the French government would never accept that French settlers' interests and rights, guaranteed by the 1955 Conventions, would be put into question.⁷¹

Despite the diminishing of Salah Ben Youssef's influence, troubles in Tunisia and in North Africa as a whole, did not come to an end. The ‘renaissance du terrorisme urbain’ near Tunis and many terrorist attacks were reported in February 1956.⁷² Tahar Lassoued, a ‘fellaga yousséfiste’ distributed pamphlets in Tunis, proclaiming the formation of the Tunisian National Liberation Army. The infiltration of the Algerian Fellaghas continued particularly in Tunisia's mid-western Gafsa area, often killing French people. The reformation of the Tunisian Fellaghas was reportedly under way.⁷³ It was considered that the North African Liberation Committee was instigating these troubles under the patronage of neutralist pan-Arabist Egypt. The French emphasised the importance of satisfying pro-Western nationalists to counter a threat in North Africa.

Nous devons accorder à ces nationalismes toutes les satisfactions de prestige, sans lesquelles leurs leaders pro-occidentaux ne pourraient se maintenir devant... les attaques de la “résistance” nord-africaine... [L']indépendance promise au Maroc ne pourra être refusée à la Tunisie sans amener à très brève échéance le remplacement de Bourguiba par Salah Ben Youssef.

Thus the granting of independence to Tunisia was again accentuated, although the two protectorates' independence should not be perceived as a sign of allowing ‘separatism’

⁷⁰ *DDF*, 1956, I, doc.78, Seydoux to Savary, no.597/610, 6.2.1956.

⁷¹ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Note pour le Ministre, 14.2.1956; Situation Politique en Tunisie (Février 1956). ‘French settlers' interests and rights’ referred to the protection of individual properties, a right to be subject to the jurisdiction of French courts and a right to continue to work as public officials in the Tunisian administration, and so on. *DDF*, 1955 I, vol.232, Pinay to French diplomatic representatives, 28.4.1955. Note that the French government was no longer requesting the Tunisians to accept French settlers' right to vote for municipal or national assemblies while retaining French nationality.

⁷² *Le Monde*, 9.2.1956, 15.2.1956.

⁷³ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Situation Politique en Tunisie (Février 1956); *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.190.

in Algeria. It was pointed out that independence was incompatible with the spirit of the French Union, and the French abandoned these countries' membership of it in the way provided in the Constitution of the Fourth Republic:

L'adhésion de ces deux pays à l'Union Française dans les conditions prévues par le Titre VIII de la constitution est exclue...

La France doit être la plaque tournante entre l'ensemble français (la structure de la République pouvant être éventuellement aménagée) et le Maroc et la Tunisie, états "associés" à la République dans les conditions prévues par des traités négociés entre ces pays et la France.⁷⁴

Now that the two countries' independence was inevitable, the French finally abandoned both countries' participation in the French Union. They understood that they had to accept a big deviation from their decolonisation policy which had been based on the Union.

On 25 February 1956, the Bey appointed the Tunisian delegation for the Franco-Tunisian negotiations. It consisted of Ben Ammar, Ladgham, Slim and Masmoudi. From 29 February, they had several sessions in Paris with their French counterparts consisting of Mollet, Pineau, Savary and Seydoux. When the negotiations started, both parties had already agreed on 'l'indépendance dans l'interdépendance' of Tunisia. In the first session, Ben Ammar demanded the termination of the Treaty of Bardo and the modification of the 1955 Conventions in order to render the provisions compatible with Tunisia's exercise of full sovereignty. However, Pineau responded that the French government had not decided on the Treaty's abrogation.⁷⁵ In the third session held on 5 March 1956, the Tunisians rejected the French draft of an expected communiqué, insisting that it would 'limite les abrogation totale du traité du Bardo, comme le demande la délégation tunisienne'.⁷⁶

The gap between both parties' positions did not decrease. Despite their recognition of Morocco's independence on 2 March, the French refused to agree on the Treaty's abrogation.⁷⁷ On 17 March, the negotiations almost collapsed, as the French were trying to persuade the Tunisians to agree to a newly-disguised form of French control in matters of diplomacy. Both sides' positions can be summarised:

La pierre d'achoppement demeure la question de savoir si, l'indépendance tunisienne étant acquise, les adaptations de textes antérieures admises, le droit à disposer d'une diplomatie et d'une armée reconnue, la Tunisie verrait consacrer sa

⁷⁴ MAE, Cabinet du Ministre, Pineau, vol.28, J.S. Direction Générale, 2.1956.

⁷⁵ *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.191.

⁷⁶ DDF, 1956, I, doc.167, Comptes rendus des négociations franco-tunisiennes.

⁷⁷ NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.72/3-1356, Dillon to Dulles, no.4190, 13.3.1956.

propre « responsabilité en matière de sécurité, d'affaires extérieures et de défense », ou bien si ne serait mentionné qu'un certain « droit à l'exercice » de cette même responsabilité – ce qui eût, en droit, établi une responsabilité commune.⁷⁸

The former was the Tunisian position and the latter the French. That is, the French were aiming to establish an arrangement whereby both countries would exercise a right to foreign policy, and therefore allow France an equal say on it. As Massigli put it to the Americans, the French believed that in comparison with the Moroccan case, Tunisia's 'independence' must be a watered-down version because it 'was much more subject to Egyptian influence due to its proximity to the Middle East.'⁷⁹ Naturally, the talks reached a deadlock at the following sessions.

According to Bourguiba, it was he who broke the stalemate. He had talks with Pineau and reached agreement on 18 March 1956 concerning the text of the protocol. Pineau and Savary basically accepted the Tunisian position and persuaded Mollet, who was taking the most hard-line attitude, to agree to it.⁸⁰ Consequently, the French government finally decided to announce the termination of Tunisia's protectorate status. Nevertheless, there was another decisive element in enabling the French to make concessions, namely, US support for French policy in Tunisia. Pineau told Ambassador Dillon on 19 March that the knowledge that the latter 'was to make a speech tomorrow generally supporting the French position in North Africa had been one of major considerations which led the French Government to reach agreement with Tunisia.'⁸¹ On the following day, Dillon gave a speech in which he assured France 'dans sa lutte pour trouver des solutions libérales qui assureront la continuité de sa présence en Afrique du Nord, de l'appui total des Etats-Unis... [et la] « coexistence » des populations française et musulmane'.⁸² Following Dulles's speech in August 1955 which had referred to Morocco alone,⁸³ this was the first case in which the US government had openly committed itself to supporting French policy in Tunisia. In fact, Dillon's discourse was welcomed favourably by almost all the press in Paris.⁸⁴ This US

⁷⁸ *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.195.

⁷⁹ NARA, RG59, CDF 651.72/3-356, Dillon to Dulles, no.4006, 3.3.1956. However, US officials in Tunis commented that Massigli's point was counter-productive in assuring Western influence in the country. 651.72/3-656, Hughes to Dulles, no.102, 6.3.1956.

⁸⁰ Bourguiba, *Ma Vie, 1952-1956*, p.503.

⁸¹ NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.72/3-1956, Dillon to Dulles, no.4312, 19.3.1956.

⁸² *Le Monde*, 21.3.1956. Originally, this speech had been intended to ease growing suspicion of the USA amongst French opinion. On 3 March 1956, Robert Murphy, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, had reported to Washington that anti-American sentiment was growing in French opinion, 'which seeks to place the onus for the French predicament in Algeria and Morocco on the US.' DDEL, Papers as President of the US, 1952-1961 (Ann Whitman File), International Series Box 12, France 1956-1960 (6) March 3, 1956 Memorandum for the President; The White House.

⁸³ Chapter 6, p.162.

⁸⁴ *Le Monde*, 22.3.1956.

support was very effective in convincing French opinion that Washington did not want France out of North Africa, and that a Franco-Tunisian agreement would not terminate French influence in Tunisia.

On 20 March 1956, just five days before the elections in Tunisia, the two countries issued a protocol agreeing that firstly, France recognised Tunisia's independence; secondly, the Treaty of Bardo could no longer govern Franco-Tunisian relations; thirdly, certain dispositions of the 1955 Conventions incompatible with Tunisia's new status would be modified or abrogated; and fourthly, Tunisia would be able to exercise its responsibilities regarding foreign affairs, security and defence, and form a national army. Both parties also agreed to enter into negotiations on 16 April 1956 with the purpose of defining the modalities of cooperation, particularly in the field of defence and foreign policy.⁸⁵ On 22 March, the US conveyed their congratulations to Tunisia on the recognition of its independence.⁸⁶

8.4 Tunisia's Independence

The March 1956 protocol brought a favourable result for the Neo-Destour in the elections for the constituent assembly held on 25 March 1956. The National Front, formed on 14 March around the Neo-Destour and the UGTT, occupied all 98 seats. The 'Youssefists' and the communist party failed to win a single seat. The voting turnout was over 84% overall but only 50% in Tunis where, as the French suspected, the traditional bourgeoisie was hostile to the democratic system. The turnout was also low in Djerba, an island in the south-east of Tunisia on the Gulf of Gabès, where there were many supporters of Salah Ben Youssef, and also in the Southern territory.⁸⁷ Bourguiba was starting to institutionalise what he had gained as a result of the Franco-Tunisian protocol, which had already granted independence from the Tunisian viewpoint. As early as 23 March 1956, he had announced: 'Nous ne pourrons être vraiment heureux... que le jour où notre sœur l'Algérie aura retrouvé sa souveraineté.'⁸⁸ This was a clear indication of his intention to exert a right to foreign policy. On 31 March, Bourguiba announced in Sfax his intention to form a new government immediately after the first session of the Constituent Assembly, which would include a Minister of Defence and a

⁸⁵ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Situation Politique en Tunisie (mars 1956); *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.196.

⁸⁶ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.02/5-1456, Dulles to Tunis, no.123, 14.5.1956

⁸⁷ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Situation Politique en Tunisie (mars 1956). The other groups which joined the National Front were, *l'Union Tunisienne des Artisans et Commerçants*, and *l'Union nationale des Agriculteurs et tunisiens*, and independent candidates including Ben Ammar.

⁸⁸ *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.196.

Minister of Foreign Affairs. This was contrary to Ben Ammar's assurance given to the French on 20 March 1956 that the Tunisians would not nominate those ministers for the time being.⁸⁹

Franco-Tunisian talks over the transfer of responsibility for public order, which were held from 4 to 7 April 1956, ran smoothly. Both sides in principle agreed on Tunisia's greater responsibility for this issue: firstly, normal internal security forces would retain a French director but belong to the Tunisian Ministry of Interior; secondly, a Tunisian gendarmerie would be created; and thirdly, the High Commissioner would, with a separate director, control a territorial and frontier gendarmerie to protect French settlers and assist Tunisian security forces on request. In essence, the new arrangements eliminated the waiting period before a Tunisian take-over of normal internal security and also defined and limited French responsibility especially in border areas.⁹⁰

In parallel with the increase of Bourguiba's prestige because of the March protocol and the developments thereafter, the prime minister's prestige was on the decline. Ben Ammar was being criticised due to his failure to condemn Salah Ben Youssef,⁹¹ whose supporters were engaged in terrorist activities as a protest against the protocol.⁹² On 8 April, the Political Committee of the Arab League authorised its member states to recognise Tunisia's independence immediately. The French welcomed this decision, reasoning that this would decisively strengthen Bourguiba's prestige as against Salah Ben Youssef's.⁹³ The developments following the protocol finally determined the Arab countries' support for him. The Constituent Assembly was convened on 9 April. Ben Ammar offered his resignation, and the following day, the Bey announced his decision to appoint Bourguiba as the next prime minister. The Bourguiba Government was formed on 14 April, with twelve Neo-Destour members out of seventeen ministers and with full support from the UGTT.⁹⁴ Bourguiba named himself both as Minister of Defence and Minister of Foreign Affairs, although the French had tried in vain to persuade him not to do so.⁹⁵

⁸⁹ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Gillet to Paris, no.1512/1516, 7.4.1956.

⁹⁰ Ibid., Situation Politique en Tunisie (Avril 1956); DDF, 1956, I, doc.226, Comptes rendus des négociations franco-tunisiennes relatives to l'ordre public; NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/4-1056, Hughes to Dulles, 10.4.1956.

⁹¹ MAE Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Seydoux to Paris, no.1400/1413, 28.3.1956.

⁹² *Le Monde*, 29.3.1956.

⁹³ Egypt recognised Tunisia's independence on 18 April. MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Situation Politique en Tunisie (Avril 1956).

⁹⁴ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Situation Politique en Tunisie (Avril 1956). The other principal members were, Ladgham (vice-Prime Minister), Masmoudi and Slim (Minister of State for negotiations), Nouira (Minister of Finance), Materi (Minister of Health), and Mohamed Chakroun (Minister of Labour).

⁹⁵ Ibid., Seydoux to Paris, no.1569/1574, 11.4.1956.

Franco-Tunisian negotiations on the form and content of independence had seen no progress. The Tunisians repeatedly asked the French to adjourn the opening of new negotiations scheduled on 16 April.⁹⁶ This stemmed from disagreements over the interpretation of the March protocol. According to French insistence, the protocol's second point concerning the Treaty of Bardo suggested that the Treaty had never been abrogated and that 'until [the] French Assembly ratifies [the] independence protocol it is not legal.'⁹⁷ In fact, the French wanted to get the new accord ratified by the National Assembly scheduled to start debates on North Africa at the end of May 1956, so as to show French opinion that Tunisia's protectorate status had not been terminated in March 1956.

Bourguiba had to tackle the persistent, although weakening, influence of Salah Ben Youssef, combined with the deteriorating situation in Algeria, so that he could consolidate his internal position. He met with Seydoux on 12 April 1956, and insisted that the March protocol had immediately granted Tunisia independence, and that 'la proclamation de l'Indépendance avait porté un coup très dur à Salah Ben Youssef dont la popularité serait en baisse sensible'.⁹⁸ In fact, on 15 April, Salah Ben Youssef made a statement in Cairo accusing the Tunisian government of collaboration with 'les impérialistes français'. Two days later, Bourguiba declared that Tunisia must organise its national defence, send its diplomatic representatives to foreign countries and be admitted to the UN, adding: 'le gouvernement tunisien ne ménagera aucun effort pour aider à trouver des solutions pacifiques en Algérie'.⁹⁹ On 23 April, in an interview with *Le Figaro*, Bourguiba once again made a statement on Algeria, which angered the French: 'son gouvernement aiderait "les frères algériens", qu'il ne s'opposerait pas à ce que des volontiers tunisiens combattent en Algérie, et qu'il n'apporterait pas son aide aux troupes françaises luttant contre les trafics d'armes'.¹⁰⁰ He asserted to Seydoux two days later that he had to take into consideration anti-Bourguiba campaigns conducted in Tunisia and the Middle East, and emphasised: 'Il ne peut réagir contre cette campagne et affirmer l'autorité de l'Etat Tunisien qu'en dissociant le Yousséfisme de la résistance Algérienne'.¹⁰¹

On 24 April 1956, he summoned the consul generals in Tunis and declared that he wished 'la transformation du corps consulaire en corps diplomatie'. Paris immediately

⁹⁶ DDF, 1956, I, doc.280, Pineau to London, no.4134/4139, 28.4.1956.

⁹⁷ NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.72/4-1956, Hughes to Dulles, no.132, 19.4.1956.

⁹⁸ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Seydoux to Paris, no.1590/1594, 12.4.1956.

⁹⁹ *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.200.

¹⁰⁰ MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Savary to Seydoux, no.692/698, 25.4.1956.

¹⁰¹ Ibid., Seydoux to Paris, no.1911/1920, 28.4.1956.

protested, emphasising that the 1955 Conventions would remain valid until the conclusion of further agreements.¹⁰² From the French viewpoint, the Franco-Tunisian protocol of March 1956 stipulated that the General Convention of 1955 could be modified if necessary but did not specify how it could be modified. Logically, Tunisia was not allowed to exchange ambassadors with other countries before agreeing with France on its modifications. Nevertheless, the Anglo-Saxons started examining the establishment of diplomatic relations in an effort to 'press for [a] prompt solution' of the problem, but the French asked them not to appoint diplomatic representatives until their negotiations with the Tunisians and the Moroccans were complete.¹⁰³ However, Bourguiba could not wait while Franco-Moroccan negotiations progressed, so he confirmed on 1 May 1956 that Tunisia would enter into negotiations only after France recognised Tunisia's full independence: 'Seule une Tunisie réellement souveraine et indépendante pourra reprendre les négociations avec la France.'¹⁰⁴ On 4 May, Morris Hughes, the US Consul General in Tunis, noted that Bourguiba looked anxiously to the US 'to offer him some practical encouragement, specifically through a readiness to open normal diplomatic contact with this government, so that he can show his people... that his pro-Western convictions are recognized... by the West.'¹⁰⁵ These developments forced Mollet to decide, by 5 May, to have a summit meeting with Bourguiba to resolve the crisis without delay.¹⁰⁶

On 8 May, the British notified Bourguiba of their intentions to recognise Tunisia's independence, which he rejected because of the qualification 'as soon as Franco-Tunisian agreement on external affairs has been reached.' On the same day, the Americans orally informed the Tunisians that their message to the Bey of 22 March 1956 had constituted their recognition of Tunisia's new independent status as defined in the March protocol and that they wished to exchange diplomats.¹⁰⁷ Moreover, the following day, the Americans told the Quai d'Orsay that they wished to establish their embassy in Tunis promptly.¹⁰⁸ On 10 May, Britain publicly announced its decision to recognise the independence of Tunisia and Morocco after agreement between France and both countries.¹⁰⁹ Bourguiba then urged the Americans to submit a note stating their

¹⁰² DDF, 1956, I, doc.280, Pineau to London et al., no.4134/4139, 28.4.1956.

¹⁰³ PRO, FO371/119368, JF1023/22, Tunis to FO, no.40, 24.4.1956; JF1023/22(A), FO Minute, 27.4.1956. FRUS 1955-1957, XVIII, Doc.243, Dulles to Paris, no.4167, 8.5.1956.

¹⁰⁴ *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.205.

¹⁰⁵ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/5-456, Hughes to Washington, 4.5.1956.

¹⁰⁶ *Le Monde*, 8.5.1956.

¹⁰⁷ FRUS, 1955-1957, XVIII, Doc.243, Dulles to Paris, no.4167, 8.5.1956

¹⁰⁸ NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.02/5-1056, Dillon to Dulles, no.5286, 10.5.1956.

¹⁰⁹ *Le Monde*, 11.5.1956; Chapter 7, pp.200-201.

intentions to establish a diplomatic mission, adding that any countries which expressed intentions to establish diplomatic missions in Tunis before 31 May 1956 would be in an equally favourable position regarding precedence.¹¹⁰

Invited by Mollet, Bourguiba stayed in Paris from 9 to 12 May¹¹¹ and had talks with the French, who tabled a draft of a Franco-Tunisian diplomatic accord on 10 May. Bourguiba refused to sign it, but both parties agreed that negotiations should take place in Tunis with the purpose of reaching a diplomatic agreement.¹¹² This draft was aimed at granting Tunisia as favourable a diplomatic status as Morocco; this was a French concession because in late March 1956 they had wished Tunisian independence to be 'watered-down'. According to what he said to Dillon, however, Bourguiba flatly rejected the draft, because 'the French tried to insist on his signing [a] draft convention... which... unified Franco-Tunisian foreign policy.' Nevertheless, Bourguiba also made minor concessions. He told the French that he would 'postpone the establishment of any foreign mission... after French parliamentary debate presumably leading to [the] abrogation [of the] Bardo Treaty on May 31 or June 1.'¹¹³

The French were desperate to prevent the Anglo-Saxons from opening diplomatic relations with Tunisia before they did themselves. On 12 May 1956, Latour, the ex-Resident-General in Tunis and Rabat, presented the French case to the Americans. The Quai wished, he argued, that Parliament would ratify an agreement and abrogate the Treaty, but that it would probably refuse to consider the abrogation due to Bourguiba's refusal to discuss the content of Tunisia's independence. Therefore, he warned the Americans that 'if other countries established missions [in] Tunis after June 1 in [the] absence of [a] new convention... such action would clearly be in contravention [of the] March 22 [sic] common agreement.' The US, as mentioned, had already begun discussing with the Tunisians the establishment of its embassy, but Bourguiba notified the US of his promise about the postponement of the deadline.¹¹⁴ On the other hand, the British FO was divided on whether to establish diplomatic relations if the French parliamentary debate closed without a Franco-Tunisian accord. Some officials argued for opening diplomatic relations, lest Tunisia should 'turn towards Egypt and neutralism or worse', but the FO finally adopted Jebb's suggestion: 'the creation of an impression

¹¹⁰ NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.72/5-1156, Dillon to Dulles, no.5324, 11.5.1956.

¹¹¹ Note that the Moroccan delegation stayed in Paris from 6 to 8 May.

¹¹² MAE, Tunisie 1956-1969, vol.108, Situation en Tunisie, 30.5.1956; DDF, 1956, I, doc.319, Seydoux to Savary, no.2158/2167, 16.5.1956.

¹¹³ NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.72/5-1156, Dillon to Dulles, no.5324, 11.5.1956.

¹¹⁴ NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.72/5-1256, Dillon to Dulles, no.5336, 12.5.1956.

with the French... that their allies had let them down would be even worse.¹¹⁵ Therefore, the British delayed establishing diplomatic relations until after a Franco-Tunisian agreement.

Bourguiba did not want negotiations with France to break down. On 16 May, he proposed a deal to Seydoux: firstly, Tunisia would not exchange ambassadors with other countries before the parliamentary debate. Secondly, both countries should resume a dialogue for a diplomatic accord after the debate closed.¹¹⁶ Nevertheless, thirdly, he wanted to upgrade the representatives of France and Tunisia to ambassadors before the Parliament opened the debate.¹¹⁷ By contrast, the French were keen to conclude a diplomatic accord before its opening. On 23 May, Savary instructed Seydoux to urge Bourguiba to agree to the opening of negotiations as soon as possible, because the signature of a Franco-Moroccan diplomatic accord was imminent: ‘Si les Tunisiens persistent dans leur attitude actuelle... [l]’opinion française s’étonnera du retard pris par le gouvernement tunisien par rapport au gouvernement marocain...’ Bourguiba should be told, added Savary, that if the Tunisians desired to distinguish themselves from the Moroccans in the form of the accord, Paris was prepared to accept that.¹¹⁸ This was once again a significant concession; Paris decided to grant a more favourable diplomatic status to Tunisia than Morocco. This softened Bourguiba’s attitude. The following day, Bourguiba informed Seydoux that he had decided not to exchange ambassadors with France before the opening of the parliamentary debates. Instead, he insisted that it be done on 2 June, with the exchange of ambassadors with other countries in the course of the following days.¹¹⁹ He added: ‘once foreign diplomatic missions have been established [in] Tunis, he would conclude [a] diplomatic convention with France even more restrictive than that already concluded with Morocco.’¹²⁰

However, on 28 May, the day the Franco-Moroccan agreement was signed, Bourguiba made a critical speech, confirming the ‘désignation des représentants diplomatiques de la Tunisie à l’étranger avant toute reprise des négociations avec la France.’¹²¹ This forced the French to accept the necessity of reaching an agreement with the Tunisians. In fact, Bourguiba’s speech urged the Americans to establish their diplomatic mission in

¹¹⁵ PRO, FO371/119373, JF1052/17, FO to Washington, no.2250, 17.5.1956; FO371/119369, JF1023/31, Jebb to FO, no.136, 16.5.1956.

¹¹⁶ DDF, 1956, I, doc.319, Seydoux to Savary, no.2158/2167, 16.5.1956.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, doc.320, Seydoux to Savary, no.2168/2172, 16.5.1956.

¹¹⁸ *Ibid.*, doc.335, Savary to Seydoux, no.1070/1081, 23.5.1956. Bourguiba had proposed on 16 May 1956 that France and Tunisia should conclude an alliance treaty.

¹¹⁹ *Ibid.*, doc.340, Seydoux to Savary, no.2302/2312, 24.5.1956.

¹²⁰ NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.72/5-2556, Paris to Dulles, no.5587, 25.5.1956.

¹²¹ *L’Année Politique*, 1956, p.205.

Tunis, if they did not want other countries like the USSR or Egypt to do so before them. On 31 May, the State Department warned the French that Bourguiba might receive ambassadors from foreign countries immediately after the closure of the parliamentary debate scheduled on 5 June 1956. Washington maintained that if unfriendly countries opened embassies in Tunis before the Americans, this would be an embarrassing situation for ‘les pays amis de la France’, and the US would not want to wait.¹²²

In fact, on 5 June, the French National Assembly closed without any decision on Tunisia, although it ratified the Franco-Moroccan diplomatic agreement. That day, agreeing with the Americans, Seydoux warned Paris: ‘les pays comme les États-Unis et l’Angleterre admettront sans doute difficilement d’avoir simplement à Tunis des consuls alors que d’autres états comme la Russie ou l’Égypte y seraient représentés par des ambassadeurs.’ Even Tunisia’s exchange of ambassadors with countries friendly to France without similar exchanges taking place between Tunis and Paris would weaken the French position. Therefore, he suggested that France and Tunisia, after exchanging letters announcing the appointment of ambassadors, should exchange ambassadors and, thereafter, Tunisia should be allowed to open diplomatic relations with other countries.¹²³ In fact, Hughes declared on 5 June that the US government had decided to raise the Consulate General to Embassy status and appoint a chargé d’affaire or an ambassador.¹²⁴ Importantly, the Americans decided to establish an Embassy without asking for *agrément* for an ambassador.¹²⁵ This measure was meant to impress Tunisian opinion that Tunisia and the US had already established diplomatic relations, whereas *de jure* they still did not start such relations, a position which satisfied the French. In other words, the US urged France to exchange diplomatic missions with Tunisia while saving France’s face.

On 6 June, the French cabinet reached a decision: the Treaty of Bardo and the 1955 General Convention were still valid until the conclusion of a new accord and that France was prepared to conclude an accord with Tunisia to replace them. This was because ‘il est important... que la parole et la signature de nos partenaires musulmans ne puissent être mises en doute par les Français.’¹²⁶ On the following day, Seydoux informed Bourguiba of this decision, which made him furious. The latter warned that ‘craignez

¹²² DDF, 1956, I, doc.365, Seydoux to Savary, no.2455/2463, 5.6.1956.

¹²³ Ibid.

¹²⁴ FRUS, 1955-1957, XVIII, doc.243 footnote 5. Hughes had insisted that he announce this before the parliamentary debate closed. NARA, RG59, CDF, 772.00/6-456, Memorandum for the file, 4.6.1956.

¹²⁵ DDF, 1956, I, doc.365, p.889, footnote 1. Naturally, the French protested at the US move. NARA, RG59, CDF, 651.72/6-856, Joyce to Dulles, no.5864, 8.6.1956.

¹²⁶ DDF, 1956, I, doc.373, Savary to Tunis, no.1207/1217, 7.6.1956.

que je ne sois un jour emporté par les courants que j'ai... bien du mal à contrôler' and insisted on avoiding any weakening of his own authority, 'menacée... par les agents du Caire'.¹²⁷ However, this decision indicated that the French were now keener to reach agreement, as the American move obliged them to avoid a situation in which their opening relations with Tunisia would come after foreign countries had established relations.

On 9 June 1956, Seydoux and Ladgham agreed that negotiations be concluded in two stages: firstly, an immediate agreement on Tunisia's right to an independent external policy, accompanied by the exchange of ambassadors between France and Tunisia; and then, secondly, negotiations for the treaty of friendship and alliance. However, what was essential for Bourguiba was that Tunisia's right to diplomacy must not be obtained as a result of its agreeing to a diplomatic accord with France. He declared that he was prepared to negotiate with France a treaty of friendship and alliance but emphasised that what he did not want was 'dans l'accord, prendre d'engagement en matière d'action concertée'.¹²⁸ On 12 June, the French cabinet's limited session chaired by Mollet agreed in principle on the draft of the agreement prepared by Seydoux.¹²⁹

On 15 June 1956, France and Tunisia signed 'l'accord sur les questions de représentation diplomatique' which planned the exchange of ambassadors. In spite of the similarities with the Franco-Moroccan diplomatic agreement, they differed significantly. Firstly, the Franco-Tunisian accord stipulated: 'dans les pays où la Tunisie n'aura pas décidé d'envoyer une mission diplomatique permanente, la République française est disposée, si le gouvernement tunisien le lui demande, à assurer la représentation et la protection des ressortissants et des intérêts tunisiens. Dans ce cas, les agents diplomatiques et consulaires français agiront conformément aux directives du gouvernement tunisien.'¹³⁰ The Franco-Moroccan equivalence did not refer to Moroccan requirements. Secondly, the two governments 'en attendant la conclusion du Traité qui réglera les modalités de leur coopération en matière d'affaires extérieures, agissant dans l'esprit d'amitié et de solidarité qui caractérise leurs relations, s'informeron sur toutes les questions d'intérêts commun qui se poseront à eux dans ce domaine.' As the French admitted, '[c]ontrairement à l'accord de Rabat, l'accord franco-tunisien ne fixe pas dès maintenant les modalités de l'action concertée entre les

¹²⁷ *Ibid.*, doc.372, Seydoux to Savary, no.2483/2500, 7.6.1956.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, doc.378, Seydoux to Savary, no.2563/2578, 9.6.1956; Doc.384, Note de la Direction des Affaires marocaines et tunisiennes, Négociations avec les Tunisiens sur les questions diplomatiques, 11.6.1956.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*, Doc. 389, Savary to Seydoux, no.1333/1340, 12.6.1956.

¹³⁰ *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.208.

deux pays sur le plan diplomatie.' The joint communiqué stated on 26 June that both parties would resume negotiations anticipated in the March protocol with a view to concluding a treaty of friendship and alliance,¹³¹ about which, however, both parties would not in the end commence talks.

Now Tunisia was allowed to exchange diplomatic representatives with other countries, although 'Youssefists' still continued anti-French activities especially in Southern Tunisia. Reflecting the stronger position that Bourguiba was enjoying compared to Mohammed V, Tunisia was given a more favourable status by France than Morocco was. On 16 June, the British government, who had repeatedly put off facing French objections, expressed their desire to open diplomatic relations with Tunisia, who at once accepted it. On 23 June, the *Loi-Cadre*, which authorised local people in overseas territories to enjoy greater autonomy, i.e. was designed to decentralise the French Union, was promulgated.¹³² The UNSC, on the motion of the French delegation, approved Tunisia's application for UN membership on 26 July 1956.¹³³ As was the case in Morocco, the GA decided on 12 November 1956 to admit Tunisia to membership. In July 1957, unlike Morocco, the monarchy was abolished and a republic was declared with Bourguiba as president.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, p.208; *DDF*, 1956, I, Doc.407, Pineau to London et al., no.5877/5881, 15.6.1956.

¹³² *L'Année Politique*, 1956, p.209.

¹³³ PRO, FO371/119552, JN1031/1, Malcolm to FO, no.75, 5.8.1956; *DDF*, 1956, I, Doc.419, p.1030, footnote 1.

Conclusion

This thesis has examined French motivations behind their decolonisation policy towards Tunisia and Morocco. The existing research assumes that France agreed to these countries' independence because it could not resist nationalist pressures and international opinion calling for self-government or independence. There was no doubt that nationalist and international pressures played a very significant role in French decision-making. However, the thesis argues that these two factors alone do not explain the motivations and timings of the French decisions on important concessions: Tunisia's internal autonomy in July 1954 and Morocco's independence in December 1955. Indeed, for the French, the most important concern was whether to secure viable collaborators in Tunisia and Morocco and it was only when this concern came to the fore because of nationalist and/or international pressure that the French government made the aforementioned concessions. Finding viable collaborators was a difficult task, because they had to satisfy multifarious and sometimes conflicting needs: on the one hand, they had to be able to secure French influence and convince the people of its importance, and on the other hand, they had to be able to achieve the political unity of their country, which meant, as the French government understood it in July 1954, that viable collaborators had to enjoy popular support.

The problem of how to secure local collaborators was particularly acute in French decolonisation policy because of the hypocrisy embedded in the policy. In the post-World War II era, the French had to commit themselves publicly to the idea of internal autonomy but in reality, until 1954, they were never intending to grant any kind of autonomy or to transfer significant powers to the local people, and aimed to incorporate the two countries into the French Union as associate states. The French initially believed that they could impose their false reform plans on both countries, and only gradually did they come to realise that those in the colonised areas and international opinion wanted the colonial powers to grant self-government and independence to the colonial territories. The French needed collaborators in order to sell their plans to the Tunisians and Moroccans, but naively believed that the sovereigns, i.e. the Bey and the Sultan, who retained a right to seal the decrees tabled by the French Resident-Generals, would be persuaded to be collaborators. Since Tunisia and Morocco remained protectorate states, the French considered it possible to make use of their state apparatuses in order to realise the integration of the two countries into the French Union.

However, here was a paradox, as once the sovereigns accepted the French plans, they would be at high risk of being criticised for betraying the nationalist cause. Then when they lost popularity, their authority would be irreversibly lost.

The initial hypocrisy of the French policy was clearly shown by their decision in January 1950 to lead Tunisia to internal autonomy. This decision was mostly motivated by the UNGA resolution of the previous year to promise Libya's independence in two years. In order to dodge nationalist and international criticism, the French government accepted the granting of Tunisia's internal autonomy, but actually the plan which the Quai d'Orsay formulated was not aimed at transferring any significant powers to the Tunisian people but at incorporating Tunisia into the French Union in the future. The problem for the nationalists was not the fact the French were slow to transfer power to them, but that they were trying to establish the institutions with which to block the people from having a right to self-determination. This intention was clearly indicated in the so-called *la Note sur la Co-souveraineté*, which demanded French settler participation in the Tunisian governmental organisations. Particularly important for the Tunisian nationalists was French settlers' right to participate in the future municipal and national assemblies with an equal number of representatives to the Tunisians, while still retaining French nationality. This clearly had the effect of denying to the Tunisian people a right to express and formulate their political views and legislate on them according to those views. Moreover, the French did not aim to establish a legislative national assembly, except for the plan of June 1952, but merely to establish a consultative national assembly. It was for this reason that the Tunisian nationalists rejected the French plans. It should be emphasised that the nationalists did so not because the timetable for change was too gradual but because they realised that the plan was blocking the Tunisian people's right to self-determination.

The French had the same goal in Morocco, so their plans were also rejected by the Moroccan nationalists for the same reason. Nevertheless, the Moroccan nationalist requests were much more straightforward than the Tunisians: the former demanded full and immediate independence whereas the latter demanded that France grant sovereignty at first and then independence at a later stage. This difference derived from the fact that the Istiqlal party held a far weaker position in domestic terms than the Neo-Destour party and therefore had to rely on international support from the Arab League and the North Africa Liberation Committee, who called for the full and immediate independence of all North African territories. Besides, fearing that the extension of autonomy in the French zone alone might make its unity with the Spanish zone more

difficult, the Moroccan nationalists wished to abrogate the protectorate treaty and achieve independence and unity at one stroke. The Moroccan nationalists' reliance on international support explains why the Moroccan problem was brought to the UN earlier than the Tunisian problem. This also explains why the French refused to talk with the Istiqlal while they continued negotiations with the Neo-Destour until the latter wrote to the UN in January 1952.

The nationalist movements were greatly encouraged by international developments and international opinion. Previous research tends to emphasise that international pressures significantly affected French policy and forced the French to recognise the independence of Tunisia and Morocco. This is true, but closer analysis shows that international pressures were never monolithic and did not necessarily force France to make concessions. The UN provided international players with an arena where the North African problems could be discussed. Therefore, the timing of the UN sessions often determined that of the French formulating their pseudo-reform plans in both countries. Among the international players, the most sympathetic to the North African nationalists were the Arab countries, especially Egypt. They repeatedly tried to introduce and pass in the UNSC and UNGA sessions anti-French resolutions which criticised French policy for not giving self-government to Tunisia or Morocco. In addition to activities in the UN, the Arab League countries provided the North African nationalists with the means of broadcasting their cause and, also, engaged in broadcasting the Arab countries' support for nationalism in a strongly anti-imperialistic tone. Nonetheless, the Arabs were very reluctant to submit anti-French draft resolutions to the UN when it was clear that US support was not forthcoming.

The fact that the Arab countries' attitude depended on the US showed how influential the US was upon other countries' attitudes towards the Tunisian and Moroccan problems. Therefore the US played a very important role in affecting French decisions, but its position was always midway between that of the Arabs and the French. The Americans were adamant on this point, although some research has argued that their position was ambivalent. This was because the US considered France a very important ally of the Western Alliance whereas it also did not want to alienate Third-World nationalism, otherwise such nationalists might turn to the Soviet Union. In fact, the US goal was to persuade the French to accept self-government in the North African protectorate states, thereby establishing stable relations between France and the nationalists. Thus, the US sometimes tried to protect France from international pressure from the Arabs, a point which previous works on North African decolonisation process

has failed to underline. This US attitude was conspicuous in the UN in 1952. With the purpose of mediating between France, who rejected UN jurisdiction over North African affairs, and the Arab countries, who wanted UN intervention, the US accepted the UN discussing the Tunisian and Moroccan problems but rejected its passing anti-French resolutions. The UNGA resolutions in the winter of 1952 on the whole reflected the US position. It was certain that the US repeatedly pressurised France to introduce internal autonomy in Tunisia and Morocco, but this did not mean that the Americans wanted France to be driven out of North Africa. US policy towards North Africa was hardly affected by concerns about US military bases in Morocco, because the US adopted very similar policies in Tunisia where they did not have military bases. In addition, persuaded by the British, the US publicly gave support to France for agreeing to Arafa's departure and the formation of a Moroccan government in the summer of 1955, although at the time of Tunisia's internal autonomy, the US had not publicised its support when the British had not urged the US to do so. This noticeably demonstrated that US policy towards North Africa was affected by Britain in a significant manner.

Hence the importance of the British role in North African affairs should be emphasised although almost no existing research has referred to this point. By the end of World War II, the British had already committed themselves to the principle of self-government in their colonial areas, so their decolonisation policy constituted constant pressure on France by encouraging Tunisian and Moroccan nationalist movements to demand self-government. This explained why the French were suspicious that the British, together with the Americans, secretly wished for their withdrawal from the overseas territories. However, in reality, the British did not want France to be driven out of North Africa but, like the US, wanted it to remain influential by the granting of self-government. However, the British adopted a much more favourable attitude towards France than the US did. Indeed, the British publicly supported the French position in North Africa, even though they did not agree with oppressive French policies. In the UN, Britain concurred with the French insistence that Tunisia and Morocco were under French jurisdiction, and therefore voted against UN debates or abstained on these issues. Similarly, the British were so discreet that they did not directly pressurise the French to adopt a liberal policy unwelcome to them, but eventually persuaded the US to take a similar approach towards France. Here a question arises: why did the British support the French position? It appears at first glance that Britain, as a fellow colonial power, tried to help France to maintain its influence in its colonies, by blocking international intervention. However, colonial concerns do not fully explain British policy. In fact, the

British government did not oppose the French when they were inclined to accept UNGA debates in the autumn of 1952, even though the British knew that French acceptance would set a very unwelcome precedent in the UN and be damaging to British overseas territories. In fact, by supporting the French position in North Africa, the British aimed to prevent the growth of opinion which did not want French membership of NATO. As mentioned above, there was a strong tendency in the French government and French opinion to be suspicious that the Anglo-Saxons secretly wished the French to retreat from North Africa, and the Soviet Union was also criticising French policy towards Tunisia and Morocco partly because of France belonging to the Western Alliance. The British were certain that French opinion would not blame the US and the UK even if France failed to solve its problems, as long as the Anglo-Saxons did not intervene in North African affairs.

One exception to this policy was the British decision of October 1952 to vote against the UNGA discussing the Tunisian problem, a decision very significant in determining French attitudes to UN debates from 1952 onwards. The British decided to try and persuade the French to reject UN debates, after the latter had reluctantly announced that they welcomed other countries' advice on whether to accept them or not. The Anglo-French common front regarding colonial matters enabled France to reject UN debates in 1952, 1953 and 1954. Furthermore, this common front was followed by the US decision to drop the issue of the invitation of North African representatives to the 1952 UNGA session. If there had not been the Anglo-French common front, France would have accepted UN debates on Tunisia and its policy towards North Africa may have been altered as a result.

The British intervention made the UNGA resolutions of December 1952 ambivalent in character. On the one hand, the resolutions did not recommend that the UN send a commission to supervise talks or specify the representatives with whom the French should negotiate. Rather, the resolutions allowed the French to justify their policy by insisting that they were negotiating with the Tunisians and Moroccans in order to achieve internal autonomy, since the French were free to select their interlocutors. Hence the French wished the Bey and the Sultan to be their collaborators more than ever. However, on the other hand, the UNGA resolutions, which requested France and Tunisia to continue bilateral negotiations for self-government, or France and Morocco to create 'free political institutions',¹ set a basic framework defining what international opinion wanted France to grant to its North African protectorates. Undoubtedly, the

¹ *Yearbook of the United Nations*, 1952, p.285.

UNGA resolutions of 1952 pressurised France to realise greater autonomy or self-government in both countries from this time onwards. Thus, the UNGA resolutions were a double-edged sword for the French. Interestingly, the reactions of the sovereigns of both countries differed as to which aspect of these resolutions they focussed on. The Bey of Tunisia, who judged that the nationalist cause did not receive full support from international opinion, accepted the French municipal project in December 1952. In contrast, the Sultan of Morocco refused it because the UN regarded Morocco as an international actor who was entitled to negotiate with France. Simply put, the Bey chose to be a collaborator but the Sultan refused.

In any case, the French, for their part, did not change their goals in the two countries although the UN debates of 1952 made the French fully understand that international opinion wanted France to give self-government in Tunisia and, to a lesser extent, in Morocco. However, the French moderated their tactics in Morocco. They tried to persuade Mohammed V to accept their municipal project in the spring and summer of 1953, but unlike the case in the winter of 1951-1952, they did not threaten him with deposition, fearing international intervention. Even so, it was also certain that the French made use of traditionalist pressure to push him to accept the project. Mohammed V's refusal to condemn the Istiqlal had angered the traditionalist dignitaries led by el-Glaoui. This conflict was extremely serious because el-Glaoui was a very important supporter for the French presence, but the problem for the French was that the Pasha of Marrakech could not be a legitimate collaborator, since he did not represent the whole country. The French decided on the Sultan's deposition in August 1953 in order to avoid a civil war or a deposition by el-Glaoui, and succeeded in doing so. The French were afraid that their authority in Morocco would have been seriously damaged if either event had occurred. However, the deposition also illustrated the French optimism that they could implement their meaningless reform under the new Sultan Arafa, whom they hoped would be able to obtain acquiescence, if not support, from the people. This incident not only outraged Arab countries but was also to affect later developments in Morocco significantly. Mohammed V became so popular as a political martyr for the nationalist cause among the Moroccan people that from August 1953 onwards, no Moroccan nationalist movements would be able to develop independent of him. Arafa was certainly a French collaborator but was never regarded as a legitimate Sultan by the Moroccan people and therefore could not be a viable collaborator.

Indeed, the problem of how to secure collaborators who accepted French control or influence was becoming an even bigger concern for French policy towards North Africa,

and it was this concern which finally obliged the French government to approve of the nationalist requests in Tunisia. Existing research tends to assume that nationalist pressures or terrorist activities forced the French government to accept internal autonomy or argues that Mendès-France's coming to office changed French policy in the summer of 1954. Some research also points out that the fall of Dien-Bien-Phu made French leaders and opinion understand the strength of Third-World nationalism. This thesis agrees that nationalist pressure worked significantly, but argues that an important point was that Bourguiba's attack was primarily against the Bey's authority, not against French authority *per se*. It was Bourguiba's campaign against the Bey, which was the first case of the former openly attacking the latter, that played a crucial role in changing French policy. The Bey had so far legitimised French policy by appointing those whom France had favoured as Tunisian prime ministers. However, his acceptance of the French plan in March 1954 to set up a Tunisian national assembly angered the nationalists, Bourguiba in particular, because this act was considered a betrayal of the nationalist cause. It soon turned out that Bourguiba's campaign was having a remarkable effect. Once the Bey had lost his popularity and authority, Tunisia witnessed an extraordinary situation in which no Tunisians were willing to succeed Mzali as prime minister, following his resignation in mid-June 1954. Since the French publicly committed themselves to the idea of internal autonomy, it was politically impossible for a French national to be appointed as a Tunisian prime minister. Simply put, at this moment France lost its collaborator and found itself obliged to discover new collaborators. Needless to say, it was the Neo-Destour party and the Tunisian people in general terms, who were chosen as new collaborators. Bourguiba's anti-Bey campaign that '*la légitimité n'est pas l'apanage du Bey, mais plutôt du peuple « source de tout pouvoir »*' was especially effective in destroying the Bey's authority, and the French government accepted the outline of this idea when Mendès-France made the Carthage declaration in July 1954. France had kept ignoring the nationalist requests until the summer of 1954 and it was not until it lost its collaborators that France made substantive concessions to them. The Fellagha's activities also greatly contributed to the collapse of the Bey's authority, but this militant group could not be a collaborator to whom France transferred power or an actor to win the people's political support. The psychological shock caused by the fall of Dien-Bien-Phu could have played a role in the French decision, but merely added momentum to the above process.

There is no doubt that Mendès-France played a key role in this dramatic change of course, as previous research has argued. However, it is important to note that French

archives suggest that the Quai d'Orsay had already begun examining the desirability of negotiating with the Neo-Destour on 17 June 1954. This was one day after Mzali's resignation and one day before Mendès-France was elected as a prime minister by the French National Assembly. There had been no room for negotiation with the nationalist party as long as the French refused to abandon the *principe de co-souveraineté*, so the French inclination to talk with the nationalist party represented a drastic change of policy. Mendès-France's decision to grant internal autonomy to Tunisia and to terminate the Convention of Marsa was certainly a bold decision but a logical extension of this change of policy.

As argued in Chapter 5, the French decision on Tunisia's internal autonomy did not mean that French influence would be terminated in Tunisia but was intended to allow its continuation in another way. What the French now recognised was the people's responsibility for domestic affairs. Yet this decision was remarkable in the context of North Africa and the French Union as a whole. The French now became determined to grant internal autonomy to Morocco as well, once Franco-Tunisian negotiations on the content of the internal autonomy that Tunisia would enjoy had been concluded. Even the Bey, who had enjoyed popular support to a certain extent, lost popularity due to the nationalist attack. It was obvious that the French could no longer implement their false reform under the authority of Arafa, whose legitimacy was in question. Yet, internal autonomy was incompatible with the spirit of the French Union, although Tunisia was still regarded as a possible future member of the Union. The French considered that they would be able to gloss over this gap between the French Union and the real meaning of internal autonomy if Tunisia was not given a right to foreign relations and defence in a reorganised Union. This was why the French government refused to give these rights and conceded the Tunisian demand for Bourguiba's return to Tunisia when they concluded the Franco-Tunisian Conventions in June 1955. Importantly, international opinion did not require France to give full independence to its overseas territories, so the French position did not arouse serious opposition in the UN.

As noted in Chapter 6, the French government decided in June 1955 to grant Morocco internal autonomy equivalent to that which Tunisia had obtained through the Conventions. However, unlike Tunisia, the French were faced with a problem: there was no single dominant group or individual to whom France could transfer power, and this was the reason why they decided to form the Throne Council. The nationalist parties including the Istiqlal held a much weaker position than the Neo-Destour, so it was impossible to form a Moroccan government which exclusively consisted of the

nationalists, even though the French government fully understood the importance of collaborating with them. Furthermore, a far more serious problem for the French was that the nationalists refused to concede any reform plan as long as Arafa stayed on the throne, so Paris was confronted with a choice as to whether to abandon Arafa, and ultimately el-Glaoui, as supporters of the French presence. Realising that el-Glaoui's influence was already on the decline because of nationalist activities, Paris finally decided to abandon el-Glaoui in early August 1955. It was the US warning that it would vote for Moroccan debates in the UNGA session, due to be held in late September 1955, that forced the French to take the decision. The Faure plan of August 1955 clearly showed that Paris preferred collaboration with the nationalists, especially the Istiqlal. Paris therefore tried to impress on the Moroccan people that France relied on the nationalists in establishing a new regime by holding the Aix-les-Bains meeting. The French considered it essential to secure Mohammed V's involvement in establishing a government, but did not want to rely on his personal authority and popularity because collaboration with the nationalists was considered more dependable and long-lasting than that with Mohammed V. Then the French decided to set up the Throne Council composed of three people, representing three major shades of Moroccan opinion: the radical nationalists like the Istiqlal, the moderate nationalists like Bekkaï and the traditionalists like el-Glaoui. At the Aix-les-Bains meeting in late August 1955, these groups agreed with the French to establish a regime which would enjoy internal autonomy, and the French assumed that these groups would constitute suitable collaborators.

However, the arms deal between Egypt and Czechoslovakia at the end of September 1955 immensely radicalised some Istiqlal members like el-Fassi, who now started opposing the Aix-les-Bains agreements and advocating their abrogation. Moreover, he publicly supported the Rif rebellion, which broke out at the beginning of October 1955. This not only put the prospect of setting up a new regime in question but also undermined the traditionalists' authority. Moroccan opinion was becoming seriously polarised.

This situation led el-Glaoui to accept Mohammed V's restoration and the country's independence in late October 1955. Realising the traditionalist dignitaries' strength was declining because of the rise of nationalism and feeling abandoned by France, el-Glaoui decided to accept the return of the ex-Sultan, who himself was at the top of the traditional Muslim hierarchy, aiming to limit any further reduction of traditionalist force. However, as a result of el-Glaoui's acceptance, the Istiqlal party as a whole, not only its

pro-Egyptian faction under el-Fassi's initiative, raised its demands later in October 1955, requesting the abrogation of the Aix-les-Bains agreements and the Treaty of Fez.

At the end of October 1955, Paris decided to accept not only the ex-Sultan's restoration but also Morocco's independent status, but without accepting the abrogation of the Treaty of Fez. Without his restoration, the French considered, Morocco's unity could have been in danger and the country would have been on the verge of civil war. They saw Mohammed V as capable of securing unity both because he himself was at the top of traditional Muslim hierarchy and because he was a symbol of moderate Moroccan nationalism. It was el-Glaoui's change of heart which led the French to see advantages in greater collaboration with the moderate nationalists now unified through traditional authority. However, the ex-Sultan's restoration alone was not considered sufficient to stop the country's collapse. The French judged it essential to promise publicly that France would give Morocco an independent status, because otherwise he would not be equipped with authority enough to obtain support from the nationalists. Nevertheless, this did not mean that France agreed to abrogate the Treaty and grant the Moroccans the rights to foreign affairs and defence. The French believed that they could tide over the emergency without terminating the Treaty. Importantly, it was Mohammed V that the French chose as a collaborator in November 1955, and the Istiqlal was not regarded as a collaborator. This was because el-Fassi remained a political dissident and the Istiqlal did not expel him. Unlike the Neo-Destour which was a moderate but dominant force in Tunisia, the Istiqlal leaders considered the party in Morocco too weak to split by expelling its more radical members. Consequently, the Istiqlal as a whole remained a dissident and diverse group. This is the reason why, through a vague promise of independence,² the French endeavoured to strengthen Mohammed V's authority and co-opt the party into the Moroccan regime established under his authority.

However, at the end of November 1955 the French government finally accepted the abrogation of the Treaty of Fez, i.e. the termination of Morocco's protectorate status. This was because the Istiqlal kept refusing to join a new government unless France agreed to the abrogation of the Treaty. Since the formation of a government was impossible without the party's participation, the Sultan agreed to endorse its position, and the French had no alternative but to accept this, because otherwise Mohammed V's authority would be seriously damaged. In the light of the persistent Rif rebellion, the French judged it of paramount importance to reinforce the Sultan's authority. Thus

² Despite the French announcement at La Celle-Saint-Cloud, probably they anticipated at this time that Morocco's right to external relations would be very limited. Chapter 7, pp.178-179.

granting Morocco independence with the right to foreign policy and defence was aimed at securing its political unity under the Sultan's authority with some retention of French influence.

This analysis differs from the arguments in existing research, which have a tendency to assume that the rise of Moroccan nationalism, already with a cohesive power calling for independence, forced France to retreat. Actually, on the eve of the French decision on the country's independence, there had been various shades of opinion and, therefore, no dominant nationalist force in Morocco. What the French were concerned with was the polarisation of Moroccan opinion which was dragging the country into a revolution or a civil war. The French government decided on Moroccan independence in order to rally support around Mohammed V, who was now regarded as the best French collaborator, who would cultivate a sense of community within the Moroccan people. In other words, by promising independence, the French aimed to retain influence through moderate nationalism acting as a unifying force under Mohammed V. France recognised Morocco's independence, not simply because it was requested to do so by a united Moroccan nationalist movement which existing research claims had existed prior to the French decisions between August and November 1955. Rather, the French recognition of independence was aimed at creating such a moderate force of nationalism by collaborating with Mohammed V. This was the reason for France's rather hasty recognition of Moroccan independence, and this process was assisted by the fact that France and Spain competed to win the nationalists' favour. In fact, the French hit the nail right on the head, for when the Franco-Moroccan communiqué was announced in March 1956, el-Fassi stopped his support for the Rif rebellion and pledged his loyalty to the Sultan. This fact proved that Mohammed V had become France's best and most viable collaborator.

French recognition of Morocco's independence was soon followed by that of Tunisia. However, the French were unenthusiastic about recognising it because they did not believe they needed to strengthen Bourguiba's authority as Tunisian opinion was much less divided. They finally did so because of the US decision to establish an Embassy in Tunis, as Chapter 8 made clear. Otherwise, the French were afraid, they would lose political influence in Tunisia to the Americans. The independence of both countries led to different consequences for each sovereign: the Bey completely lost popularity among the people because he was totally discredited by his acceptance of the March 1954 plan whereas the Sultan, who had played a leading role in calling for independence since October 1950, became a champion of national emancipation. This explains why Tunisia

became a republic soon after its independence whilst Morocco remained a monarchy as it is today. However, to compensate for a pro-French Tunisia and Morocco, the French had to pay a price in the context of the French Union: now the future membership of the two countries became unrealistic. The two countries' independence was a major deviation from the goal of post-war French policy towards its overseas territories. In addition, having understood the importance of creating a sense of community in each of their overseas territories, the French now also decided to transfer a certain degree of power to their territories in Africa by introducing the *loi-cadre*. Thus, France started to restructure the French Union into a less centralised type of organisation, but its attempt was to collapse as a result of the fall of the French Fourth Republic in 1958. Meanwhile, France remained unable to find a solution to the Algerian problem. Nevertheless, France's recognition of the independence of Tunisia and Morocco in early 1956 was significant in the sense it spearheaded Britain's granting of independence to its colonial areas in Africa. By changing colonial policy drastically, France was aiming to recover from a setback which had been caused by its reluctance to introduce self-government in colonial areas and, ultimately, was paving the way for an Africa of independent countries.

Appendix 1: List of Key Players

Acheson, Dean: US Secretary of State, January 1949 - January 1953

Aldrich, Winthrop: US Ambassador to the UK, 1953- February 1957

Artajo, Alberto: Spanish Foreign Minister, 1945 - 1957

Auriol, Vincent: President of the French Republic, January 1947- January 1954

Azzam Pasha, Abdel al-Rahman: Secretary-General of the Arab League, 1945 - 1952

Baccouche, Salaheddine: Tunisian Prime Minister, March 1952 - March 1954

Balafrej, Ahmed: Secretary-General of the Istiqlal, Moroccan Foreign Minister, May 1956-

Basdevant, Jean: Chief of Protectorates Department, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, August 1952 -

Bekkaï, Si Ould Embarek: pasha of Sefrou, - August 1953; Moroccan Prime Minister, November 1955 -

Ben Ammar, Tahar: Tunisian Section of the Grand Council; Tunisian Prime Minister, August 1954 - April 1956

Ben Moulay Arafa, Sidi Mohammed: Moroccan Sultan, August 1953 - September 1955

Ben Slimane, Si Fatmi: Pasha of Fez, - August 1955

Ben Youssef, Salah: Secretary-General of the Neo-Destour, - November 1955

Ben Youssef, Sidi Mohammed (Mohammed V): Moroccan Sultan, 1927 - August 1953, November 1955-1961

Bidault, Georges: French Prime Minister, October 1949 - June 1950; Foreign Minister, January 1947- July 1948, January 1953 - June 1954

Bonnet, Henri: French Ambassador to US, January 1945 - January 1955

Bourgès-Maunoury, Maurice: French Minister of Interior, February 1955 - January 1956

Bourguiba, Habib: President of the Neo-Destour; Tunisian Prime Minister, April 1956 -

Boyer de Latour du Moulin, General Pierre: French Resident-General in Tunisia, September 1954 - September 1955; French Resident-General in Morocco, August 1955 - November 1955

Byroade, Henry: US Assistant Secretary of State for Near East, South Asian, and African Affairs, April 1952 -

Bruce, David: US Ambassador to France, - March 1952; US Under Secretary of State, January 1953 - February 1953

de Casa Rojas y Moreno, José: Spanish Ambassador to France

Prince Chedly: Tunisian Prince, the son of Sidi Lamine

Chenik, Mohammed: Tunisian Prime Minister, July 1950 - April 1952

Churchill, Winston: UK Prime Minister, December 1950 - April 1955

Colonna, Antoine: French Senator from Tunisia, President of *le Rassemblement Français*

Coty, René: President of the French Republic, January 1954 -

Couve de Murville, Maurice: French Ambassador to the US, January 1955 - July 1956

Daridan, Jean: Minister of the French Embassy in the United States, - July 1954

Dillon, Douglas: US Ambassador to France, March 1953 - January 1957

Dorman, John: US Consul at Rabat, - October 1953

Dubois, André-Louis: French Resident-General in Morocco, November 1955 -

Dulles, John Foster: US Secretary of State, January 1953 -

Dunn, James C.: US Ambassador to France, March 1952 - March 1953

Eden, Anthony: UK Foreign Minister, October 1951- April 1955, UK Prime Minister, April 1955 - January 1957

Eisenhower, Dwight D.: US President, January 1953 -

el-Fassi, Allal: President of the Istiqlal

El-Glaoui, Si T'hami: Pasha of Marrakech, 1907 - 1911, 1912 - January 1956

El-Kittani, Abedelhaï: Grand Master of *Kittanies*

Faure, Edgar: French Prime Minister, February 1955 - December 1955

Franco, Francisco: Spain's Head of State, 1936-1975

Franks, Oliver: UK Ambassador to the US, - October 1952

Fouchet, Christian: French Minister for Moroccan and Tunisian affairs, June 1954 - February 1955

Grandval, Gilbert: French Resident-General in Morocco, June 1955 - August 1955

Gross, Ernest A.: US Deputy Representative at the UN, - January 1953

Guillaume, Augustin: French Resident-General in Morocco, August 1951 - May 1954

Hammarskjöld, Dag: UN Secretary-General, April 1953 -

Harvey, Oliver: UK Ambassador to France, 1948 - April 1954

Hauteclercque, Jean: French Resident-General in Tunisia, January 1952 - September 1953

Holmes, Julius: US Consul General in Tangier, May 1955 - July 1956

Hoover, Herbert: US Under Secretary of State, October 1954 - February 1957

Hoppenot, Henri: French Representative in the UN, 1952, 1953, 1954

Hughes, Morris N.: US Consul General in Tunis, June 1953 -

Jebb, Gladwyn: UK Representative in the UN, June 1950 - April 1954, UK Ambassador to France, April 1954 -

Jernegan, John: US Consul General in Tunis, - May 1952, Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs, June 1952 -

Juin, General Alphonse: French Resident-General in Morocco, May 1947 - August 1951

July, Pierre: French Minister for Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs, February 1955 - January 1956

Kaâk, Mustapha: Tunisian Prime Minister, July 1947 - July 1950

Kirkpatrick, Ivone: UK Permanent Under Secretary, November 1953 - February 1957

Lacoste, Robert: French Governor-General of Algeria, February 1956-

Lacoste, Francis: French Resident-General in Morocco, May 1954 -June 1955

Ladgham, Bahi: A member of Neo-Destour, Tunisian-vice prime minister, April 1956 -

Lamine, Sidi: Tunisian Bey, July 1943 - 1957

Laniel, Joseph: French Prime Minister, June 1953 - June 1954

La Tournelle, Guy Le Roy de: French Ambassador to Spain

Lie, Trygve: UN Secretary-General, February 1946 - November 1952

Lloyd, Selwyn: UK Foreign Secretary, December 1955 -

Lodge Jr., Henry Cabot: US Representative to the UN, January 1953-

Macmillan, Harold: UK Foreign Secretary, April 1955 - December 1955, UK Chancellor for the Exchequer, December 1955 - January 1957

de Margerie, Ronald Jacquin: Deputy Director General for Political and Economic Affairs, French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, - June 1955

Massigli, René: French Ambassador to the UK, - February 1955

Materi, Mohammed: A leader of the Neo-Destour, Tunisian Minister of Interior, July 1950 - March 1952

Mayer, René: French Prime Minister, January 1953 - May 1953

McBride, Robert: US Consul in Rabat, - September 1951; an official in the Office of Western European Affairs, Bureau of European Affairs, the State Department

McGhee, George: US Assistant Secretary of State for Near Eastern, South Asian, and African Affairs, - December 1951

Mendès-France, Pierre: French Prime Minister, July 1954 - February 1955

el-Mokri, Si Thami Hadj Mohammed: Moroccan Grand Vizier, - October 1955

Mollet, Guy: The leader of SFIO, French Prime Minister, January 1956 -

Mons, Jean: French Resident-General in Morocco, January 1947 - June 1950

Morrison, Herbert: British Foreign Minister, March 1951 - November 1951

Moulay Hassan: Prince of Morocco

Muniz, João Carlos: Brazilian Representative in the UN, - 1953

Murphy, Robert: Deputy Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs, December 1953-

Mzali, Mohammed Salah: Tunisian Prime Minister, March 1954 - June 1954

Nasser, Abdel Gamal: Egyptian Prime Minister, February 1954 - ; Egyptian President, June 1956 -

Nouira, Hedi: A member of the Neo-Destour. The Tunisian Minister of Commerce, August 1954 - September 1955, The Tunisian Minister of Finance, September 1955 - April 1956

Périllier, Louis: French Resident-General in Tunis, June 1950 - January 1952

Pinay, Antoine: French Foreign Minister, February 1955 - January 1956

Pineau, Christian: French Foreign Minister, January 1956 - May 1957

Roosevelt, Eleanor: US Representative at the Seventh Regular Session of the UNGA, 1952

Savary, Alain: French Minister for Moroccan and Tunisian Affairs, January 1956 - November 1956

Schuman, Robert: French Foreign Minister, July 1948 - December 1952

Schumann, Maurice: French Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1951 -June 1954

Seydoux, Roger: French High-Commissioner to Tunisia, June 1955 -

Slim, Mongi: Director of the Neo-Destour Political Bureau, Tunisian Minister of State, August 1954 - September 1955, Tunisian Minister of Interior, September 1955-

Strang, William: UK Permanent Under Secretary, February 1949 - November 1953

Teitgen, Paul-Henri: The Minister of Overseas France, February 1955 - November 1955

Garcia-Valiño y Marcen, Rafael: Spanish High-Commissioner at Tetuán

Voizard, Pierre: French Resident-General in Tunisia, September 1953 - September 1954

Zafrullah Khan, Chaudhri Sir Muhammad: Pakistani Minister of Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Relations, 1947-1954

Appendix 2: The Key Texts

Le Traité de Bardo

Le gouvernement de la République française et celui de Son Altesse le Bey de Tunis, voulant empêcher à jamais le renouvellement des désordres qui se sont produits récemment sur les frontières des deux États et sur le littoral de la Tunisie, et désireux de resserrer leurs anciennes relations d'amitié et de bon voisinage, ont résolus de conclure une Convention à cette fin, dans l'intérêt des deux Hautes Parties contractantes.

En conséquence, le Président de la République française a nommé pour son Plénipotentiaire M. le général Bréart, qui est tombé d'accord avec Son Altesse le Bey sur les stipulations suivantes :

ART. 1^{er}. Les traités de paix, d'amitié et de commerce, et toutes autres conventions existant actuellement entre la République française et son Altesse le Bey de Tunis, sont expressément confirmés et renouvelés.

ART. 2. En vue de faciliter au Gouvernement de la République française l'accomplissement des mesures qu'il doit prendre pour atteindre le but que se proposent les Hautes Parties contractantes, Son Altesse le Bey de Tunis consent à ce que l'autorité militaire française fasse occuper les points qu'elle jugera nécessaire pour assurer le rétablissement de l'ordre et la sécurité de la frontière et du littoral. Cette occupation cessera lorsque les autorités militaires française et tunisiennes auront reconnue, d'un commun accord, que l'administration locale est en état de garantir le maintien de l'ordre.

ART. 3. Le Gouvernement de la République française prend l'engagement de prêter un constant appui à son Altesse le Bey de Tunis contre tout danger qui menacerait la personne ou la dynastie de Son Altesse ou qui compromettrait la tranquillité de ses États.

ART. 4. Le Gouvernement de la République française se porte garant de l'exécution des traités actuellement existants entre le Gouvernement de la Régence et les diverses Puissances européennes.

ART. 5. Le Gouvernement de la République française sera représenté auprès de Son Altesse le Bey de Tunis par un ministre résident qui veillera à l'exécution du présent Acte et qui sera l'intermédiaire des rapports du Gouvernement français avec les autorités tunisiennes pour toutes les affaires communes aux deux Pays.

ART. 6. Les Agents diplomatiques et consulaires de la France en pays étrangers seront chargés de la protection des intérêts tunisiens et des nationaux de la Régence.

En retour, Son Altesse le Bey s'engage à ne conclure aucun acte ayant un caractère international sans en avoir donné connaissance au Gouvernement de la République française et sans s'être entendu préalablement avec lui.

ART. 7. Le Gouvernement de la République française et le Gouvernement de Son Altesse le Bey de Tunis se réservent de fixer, d'un commun accord, les bases d'une organisation financière de la Régence, qui soit de nature à assurer le service de la dette publique et à garantir les droits des créanciers de la Tunisie.

ART. 8. Une contribution de guerre sera imposée aux tribus insoumises de la frontière et du littoral.

Une convention ultérieure en déterminera le chiffre et le mode de recouvrement, dont le Gouvernement de Son altesse le Bey se porte responsable.

ART. 9. Afin de protéger contre la contrebande des armes et des munitions de guerre les possessions algériennes de la République française, le Gouvernement de Son Altesse le Bey de Tunis s'engage à prohiber toute introduction d'armes ou de munitions de guerre par l'île de Derjba, le port de Gabès ou les autres ports du Sud de la Tunisie.

ART. 10. Le présent traité sera soumis à la ratification du Gouvernement de la République française et l'instrument de ratification sera soumis à Son Altesse le Bey de Tunis dans le plus bref délai possible.

Casr Saïd, le 12 mai 1881.

Mohammedes Sadoq Bey.

G^{al} BRÉART.

(Cachet du Bey)

Source: Clive Parry, ed., *The Consolidated Treaty Series*, vol.158, 1881, (New York: Oceana Publications, 1977)

La Convention de Marsa

S.A. le Bey de Tunis, prenant en considération la nécessité d'améliorer la situation intérieure de la Tunisie, dans les conditions prévues par le traité du 12 mai 1881 et le Gouvernement de la République ayant à cœur de répondre à ce désir et de consolider ainsi les relations d'amitié heureusement existantes entre les deux pays, sont convenus de conclure une convention spéciale à cet effet : en conséquence, le Président de la République française a nommé pour son Plénipotentiaire, M. Pierre Paul Cambon, son Ministre Résident à Tunis, officier de la Légion d'Honneur, décoré de l'Haïd et grand-croix du Nichan Iftikar, etc. etc., lequel, après avoir communiqué ses pleins-pouvoir,

trouvés en bonne et due forme, a arrêté, avec S. A. le Bey de Tunis, les dispositions suivante :

ART. 1^{er}. Afin de faciliter au Gouvernement français l'accomplissement de son Protectorat, S. A. le Bey de Tunis s'engage à procéder aux réformes administratives, judiciaires et financières que le Gouvernement français jugera utiles.

ART. 2. Le Gouvernement français garantira, à l'époque et sous les conditions que lui paraîtront les meilleures, un emprunt à émettre par S. A. le Bey, pour la convention ou le remboursement de la dette consolidée s'élevant à la somme de 125 millions de francs et de la dette flottante jusqu'à concurrence d'un maximum de 17.550.000.

S. A. le Bey s'interdit de contracter, à l'avenir, aucun emprunt pour le compte de la Régence sans l'autorisation du Gouvernement français.

ART. 3. Sur les revenus de la Régence, S. A. le Bey prélèvera : 1^o les sommes nécessaires pour assurer le service de l'emprunt garanti par la France ; 2^o la somme de deux millions de piastres (1.200. mille fr.), montant de sa liste civile, le surplus des revenus devant être affecté aux dépenses d'administration de la Régence et au remboursement des charges du Protectorat.

ART. 4. Le présent arrangement confirme et complète, en tant que de besoin, le traité du 12 mai 1881. il ne modifiera pas les dispositions précédemment intervenues pour le règlement des contributions de guerre.

ART. 5. La présent convention sera soumise à la ratification du Gouvernement de la République français et l'instrument de ladite ratification sera remis à S. A. le Bey de Tunis dans le plus bref délai possible.

En foi de quoi, les Soussignés ont dressé le présent acte et l'ont revêtu de leurs cachet.

Fait à la Marsa, le 8 juin 1883.

Mohammedes Sadog Bey.

(L. S.) Cambon.

(Cachat du Bey)

Source: Clive Parry, ed., *The Consolidated Treaty Series*, vol.162, 1883, (New York: Oceana Publications, 1978)

Le Traité de Fès

Le Gouvernement de la République française et le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté chérifienne, soucieux d'établir au Maroc un régime régulier, fondé sur l'ordre intérieur

et la sécurité générale, qui permette l'introduction des réformes et assure le développement économique du pays, sont convenus des dispositions suivantes :

ART. I. Le Gouvernement de la République française et Sa Majesté le Sultan sont d'accord pour instituer au Maroc un nouveau régime comportant les réformes administratives, judiciaires, scolaires, économiques, financières, et militaires que le Gouvernement français jugera utile d'introduire sur le territoire marocain.

Ce régime sauvegardera la situation religieuse, le respect et le prestige traditionnel du Sultan, l'exercice de la religion musulmane et des institutions religieuses, notamment de celles des Habous. Il comportera l'organisation d'un Makhzen chérifien réformé.

Le Gouvernement de la République se concertera avec le Gouvernement espagnol au sujet des intérêts que ce Gouvernement tient de sa position géographique et de ses possessions territoriales sur la côte marocaine.

De même, la ville de Tanger gardera le caractère spécial qui lui a été reconnu et qui déterminera son organisation municipale.

ART. II. Sa Majesté le Sultan admet dès maintenant que le Gouvernement français procède, après avoir prévenu le Makhzen, aux occupations militaires du territoire marocain qu'il jugerait nécessaires au maintien de l'ordre et de la sécurité des transactions commerciales et à ce qu'il exerce tout action de police sur terre et dans les eaux marocaines.

ART. III. Le Gouvernement de la République prend l'engagement de prêter un constant appui à Sa Majesté chérifienne contre tout danger qui menacerait sa personne ou son trône ou qui compromettrait la tranquillité de ses États. Le même appui sera prêté à l'héritier du trône et à ses successeurs.

ART. IV. les mesures que nécessitera le nouveau régime de protectorat seront édictées, sur la proposition du Gouvernement français, par Sa Majesté chérifienne ou par les autorités auxquelles elle en aura délégué le pouvoir. Il en sera de même des règlements nouveaux et des modifications aux règlements existants.

ART. V. Le Gouvernement français sera représenté auprès de Sa Majesté chérifienne par un Commissaire Résident général, dépositaire de tous les pouvoirs de la République au Maroc, qui veillera à l'exécution du présent accord.

Le Commissaire Résident général sera le seul intermédiaire du Sultan auprès des représentants étrangers et dans les rapports que ces représentants entretiennent avec le Gouvernement marocain. Il sera, notamment, chargé de toutes les questions intéressant les étrangers dans l'Empire chérifien.

Il aura le pouvoir d'approuver et de promulguer, au nom du Gouvernement français,

tous les décrets rendus par Sa Majesté chérifienne.

ART. VI. Les agents diplomatiques et consulaires de la France seront chargés de la représentation et de la protection des sujets et des intérêts marocains à l'étranger.

Sa Majesté le Sultan s'engage à ne conclure aucun acte ayant un caractère international sans l'assentiment préalable du Gouvernement de la République française.

ART. VIII. Sa Majesté chérifienne s'interdit de contracter à l'avenir, directement ou indirectement, aucun emprunt public ou privé et d'accorder, sous une forme quelconque, aucune concession sans l'autorisation du Le Gouvernement français.

ART. IX. La présente Convention sera soumise à la ratification du Gouvernement de la République française et l'instrument de ladite ratification sera remis à Sa Majesté le Sultan dans le plus bref délai possible.

En foi de quoi les soussignés ont dressé le présent acte et l'ont revêtu de leurs cachets.

Fait à Fez, le 30 mars, 1912.

(L.S.) REGNAULT.

(L.S.) MOULAYABD-EL-HAFID.

Source: Clive Parry, ed., *The Consolidated Treaty Series*, vol.216, 1912, (New York: Oceana Publications, 1980)

Constitution de la IVème République, Texte complet adopté le du 27 octobre 1946

Préambule

Au lendemain de la victoire remportée par les peuples libres sur les régimes qui ont tenté d'asservir et de dégrader la personne humaine, le peuple français proclame à nouveau que tout être humain, sans distinction de race, de religion ni de croyance, possède des droits inaliénables et sacrés.

Il réaffirme solennellement les droits et les libertés de l'homme et du citoyen consacrés par la Déclaration des droits de 1789 et les principes fondamentaux reconnus par les lois de la République.

Il proclame, en outre, comme particulièrement nécessaires à notre temps, les principes politiques, économiques et sociaux ci-après :

La loi garantit à la femme, dans tous les domaines des droits égaux à ceux de l'homme.

Tout homme persécuté en raison de son action en faveur de la liberté a droit d'asile sur les territoires de la République.

Chacun a le devoir de travailler et le droit d'obtenir un emploi. Nul ne peut être lésé, dans son travail ou son emploi, en raison de ses origines, de ses opinions ou de ses croyances.

Tout homme peut défendre ses droits et ses intérêts par l'action syndicale et adhérer au syndicat de son choix.

Le droit de grève s'exerce dans le cadre des lois qui le réglementent. Tout travailleur participe, par l'intermédiaire de ses délégués, à la détermination collective des conditions de travail ainsi qu'à la gestion des entreprises. Tout bien, toute entreprise, dont l'exploitation a ou acquiert les caractères d'un service public national ou d'un monopole de fait doit devenir la propriété de la collectivité. La nation assure à l'individu et à la famille les conditions nécessaires à leur développement.

Elle garantit à tous, notamment à l'enfant, à la mère et aux vieux travailleurs, la protection de la santé, la sécurité matérielle, le repos et les loisirs. Tout être humain qui, en raison de son âge, de son état physique ou mental, de la situation économique, se trouve dans l'incapacité de travailler a le droit d'obtenir de la collectivité des moyens convenables d'existence.

La nation proclame la solidarité et l'égalité de tous les Français devant les charges qui résultent des calamités nationales.

La nation garantit l'égal accès de l'enfant et de l'adulte à l'instruction, à la formation professionnelle et à la culture. L'organisation de l'enseignement public gratuit et laïque à tous les degrés est un devoir de l'État.

La République française, fidèle à ses traditions, se conforme aux règles du droit public international. Elle n'entreprendra aucune guerre dans des vues de conquête et n'emploiera jamais ses forces contre la liberté d'aucun peuple.

Sous réserve de réciprocité, la France consent aux limitations de souveraineté nécessaires à l'organisation et à la défense de la paix.

La France forme avec les peuples d'outre-mer une Union fondée sur l'égalité des droits et des devoirs, sans distinction de race ni de religion.

L'Union française est composée de nations et de peuples qui mettent en commun ou coordonnent leurs ressources et leurs efforts pour développer leurs civilisations respectives, accroître leur bien-être et assurer leur sécurité.

Fidèle à sa mission traditionnelle, la France entend conduire les peuples dont elle a pris la charge à la liberté de s'administrer eux-mêmes et de gérer démocratiquement leurs propres affaires ; écartant tout système de colonisation fondé sur l'arbitraire, elle

garantit à tous l'égal accès aux fonctions publiques et l'exercice individuel ou collectif des droits et libertés proclamés ou confirmés ci-dessus.

Source : <http://www.insecula.com/article/F0010328.html>, accessed on 11 October 2005

Titre VIII : de l'Union Française

Section I : Principes

Article 60

L'Union française est formée, d'une part, de la République française qui comprend la France métropolitaine, les départements et territoires d'outre-mer, d'autre part, des territoires et États associés.

Article 61

La situation des États associés dans l'Union française résulte pour chacun d'eux de l'acte qui définit ses rapports avec la France.

Article 62

Les membres de l'Union française mettent en commun la totalité de leurs moyens pour garantir la défense de l'ensemble de l'Union. Le gouvernement de la République assume la coordination de ces moyens et la direction de la politique propre à préparer et à assurer cette défense.

Section II : Organisation

Article 63

Les organes centraux de l'Union française sont la présidence, le haut Conseil et l'Assemblée.

Article 64

Le président de la République française est président de l'Union française, dont il représente les intérêts permanents.

Article 65

Le haut Conseil de l'Union française est composé, sous la présidence du président de l'Union, d'une délégation du gouvernement français et de la représentation que chacun des États associés a la faculté de désigner auprès du président de l'Union. Il a pour fonction d'assister le gouvernement dans la conduite générale de l'Union.

Article 66

L'Assemblée de l'Union française est composée, par moitié, de membres représentant la France métropolitaine et, par moitié, de membres représentant les départements et

territoires d'outre-mer et les États associés. Une loi organique déterminera dans quelles conditions pourront être représentées les diverses parties de la population.

Article 67

Les membres de l'Assemblée de l'Union sont élus par les Assemblées territoriales en ce qui concerne les départements et les territoires d'outre-mer, ils sont élus, en ce qui concerne la France métropolitaine, à raison des deux tiers par les membres de l'Assemblée nationale représentant la métropole et d'un tiers par les membres du Conseil de la République représentant la métropole.

Article 68

Les États associés peuvent désigner les délégués à l'Assemblée de l'Union dans les limites et les conditions fixées par une loi et un acte intérieur de chaque État.

Article 69

Le président de l'Union française convoque l'Assemblée de l'Union française et en clôture les sessions. Il doit la convoquer à la demande de la moitié de ses membres. L'Assemblée de l'Union française ne peut siéger pendant les interruptions de session du Parlement.

Article 70

Les règles des articles 8, 10, 21, 22 et 23 sont applicables à l'Assemblée de l'Union française dans les mêmes conditions qu'au Conseil de la République.

Article 71

L'Assemblée de l'Union française connaît des projets ou propositions qui lui sont soumis pour avis par l'Assemblée nationale ou le gouvernement de la République française ou les gouvernements des États associés. L'Assemblée a qualité pour se prononcer sur les propositions de résolution qui lui sont présentées par l'un de ses membres et, si elle les prend en considération, pour charger son bureau de les transmettre à l'Assemblée nationale. Elle peut faire des propositions au gouvernement français et au haut Conseil de l'Union française. Pour être recevables, les propositions de résolution visées à l'alinéa précédent doivent avoir trait à la législation relative aux territoires d'outre-mer.

Article 72

Dans les territoires d'outre-mer, le pouvoir législatif appartient au Parlement en ce qui concerne la législation criminelle, le régime des libertés publiques et l'organisation politique et administrative.

En toutes autres matières, la loi française n'est applicable dans les territoires d'outre-mer que par disposition expresse ou si elle a été étendue par décret aux territoires d'outre-

mer après avis de l'Assemblée de l'Union. En outre, par dérogation à l'article 13, des dispositions particulières à chaque territoire pourront être édictées par le président de la République en Conseil des ministres sur avis préalable de l'Assemblée de l'Union.

Section III : Des départements et des territoires d'outre-mer

Article 73

Le régime législatif des départements d'outre-mer est le même que celui des départements métropolitains, sauf exceptions déterminées par la loi.

Article 74

Les territoires d'outre-mer sont dotés d'un statut particulier tenant compte de leurs intérêts propres dans l'ensemble des intérêts de la République. Ce statut et l'organisation intérieure de chaque territoire d'outre-mer ou de chaque groupe de territoires sont fixés par la loi, après avis de l'Assemblée de l'Union française et consultation des Assemblées territoriales.

Article 75

Les statuts respectifs des membres de la République et de l'Union française sont susceptibles d'évolution. Les modifications de statut et les passages d'une catégorie à l'autre, dans le cadre fixé par l'article 60, ne peuvent résulter que d'une loi votée par le Parlement, après consultation des Assemblées territoriales et de l'Assemblée de l'Union.

Article 76

Le représentant du gouvernement dans chaque territoire ou groupe de territoires est le dépositaire des pouvoirs de la République. Il est chef de l'administration du territoire. Il est responsable de ses actes devant le gouvernement.

Article 77

Dans chaque territoire est instituée une Assemblée élue. Le régime électoral, la composition et la compétence de cette Assemblée sont déterminés par la loi.

Article 78

Dans les groupes de territoires, la gestion des intérêts communs est confiée à une Assemblée composée de membres élus par les Assemblées territoriales. Sa composition et ses pouvoirs sont fixés par la loi.

Article 79

Les territoires d'outre-mer élisent des représentants à l'Assemblée nationale et au Conseil de la République dans les conditions prévues par la loi.

Article 80

Tous les ressortissants des territoires d'outre-mer ont la qualité de citoyen, au même titre

que les nationaux français de la métropole ou des territoires d'outre-mer. Des lois particulières établiront les conditions dans lesquelles ils exercent leurs droits de citoyen.

Article 81

Tous les nationaux français et les ressortissants de l'Union française ont la qualité de citoyen de l'Union française qui leur assure la jouissance des droits et libertés garantis par le préambule de la présente Constitution.

Article 82

Les citoyens qui n'ont pas le statut civil français conservent leur statut personnel tant qu'ils n'y ont pas renoncé. Ce statut ne peut en aucun cas constituer un motif pour refuser ou limiter les droits et libertés attachés à la qualité de citoyen français.

Source: http://www.insecula.com/article/F0010328_page9.html, accessed on 11 October 2005

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