

## Tunisia and Morocco

As elsewhere in Africa and Asia, the desire for self-government has become increasingly evident in Tunisia and Morocco since the conclusion of the Second World War. In Tunisia, nationalist aspirations are associated largely with the Neo Destour, or New Constitution Party, as well as with the Bey of Tunis, the sovereign. Although in 1950 representatives of the Neo Destour agreed to collaborate with the French authorities in working out the stages of Tunisian self-government, this collaboration broke down in February 1951. Serious rioting took place early in 1952, involving losses of life, and the situation has since remained disturbed. Two unsuccessful attempts were made by a group of African and Asian states in the first six months of 1952 to have the Tunisian question considered by the United Nations.

Developments in Morocco have followed a broadly similar pattern to those in Tunisia. The Sultan of Morocco has, on a number of occasions since 1945, requested the French Government to negotiate a revision of the Treaty of Fez, with the object of making this instrument a treaty of collaboration and friendship between two equal and sovereign nations, rather than, as at present, an agreement which confers specific and important powers upon France, the protecting state. At the sixth session of the United Nations General Assembly African and Asian states tried unsuccessfully to include the Moroccan question on the agenda.<sup>1</sup>

At its seventh session, the Assembly, upon the request of thirteen African and Asian states, decided without vote to include both the Tunisian and Moroccan questions on its agenda.

When the Chairman of the French Delegation addressed the Assembly in the opening general debate, he dealt at length with the relations between his country and the two protectorates. With French guidance, M. Schuman said, Tunisia and Morocco had made remarkable progress in agricultural and industrial development, public health, education, and labour relations. France intended fully to honour its obligations under the Charter, which were similar to provisions in the Preamble of the French Constitution, for the guiding of dependent peoples towards self-government. France was willing, he said, to renounce gradually the powers it held under the protectorate treaties. France alone, however, was in a position to decide the stages and timing of the political evolution of Tunisia and Morocco, in consultation with duly qualified representatives of these territories. The United Nations was not capable of assuming this responsibility and, in any case, was legally debarred from interfering both by Article 2 (7) of the Charter and by the provisions of the protectorate treaties. Any attempt by the United Nations to interfere would encourage disorder and would harm the United Nations. At any rate, M. Schuman concluded, France would under no condition tolerate United Nations intervention. The French Delegation then gave notice that it would be unable to participate in the further discussion of this problem.

<sup>1</sup>For a fuller account of these developments, see *Canada and the United Nations 1951-52*, pp. 26-30.