Chapter 4. Government and Politics

Tunisia's state coat of arms

WITH THE APPROACH in 1986 of the thirtieth anniversary of their national independence, Tunisians could look back with satisfaction over their success in keeping peace with their neighbors and attaining a notable record of economic growth and social reform. Much credit for these achievements was due to President Habib Bourguiba, often called the Supreme Combatant, the country's incorruptible and inspirational leader who had remained at the forefront of Tunisian politics for more than half a century.

The goals and ideals imparted by Bourguiba in his messages to the Tunisian people and in his policies had for long set the country apart in the Arab world. Through his programs for health, higher education, cultural advancement, women's rights, and secularization of the state, the president labored to recast Tunisia as a modern nation. Impatient at first with the pace of development, he experimented for a time with socialism but swung back to a mixed economy when it became obvious that the socialist initiatives were producing resistance and disorder.

Staying clear of international conflicts, Bourguiba had for long felt secure enough to forgo a large military establishment, saving resources and averting military involvement in politics. His own political movement, the Destourian Socialist Party, with its monopoly over political activity, served as an instrument for mobilizing Tunisians on behalf of his policies.

By 1986, as the Bourguiba era drew nearer to its close, it seemed uncertain whether the solid political edifice identified with him would endure after he was no longer in command. Many of the doctrines of Bourguiba's program that had brought major advances during the first decades were being challenged. The program's secularist features and its emphasis on the Western aspects of Tunisia's cultural heritage were under attack from many Tunisians demanding a reassertion of traditional Islamic religious values. The inability of the economy to create jobs for the young—particularly the increasing numbers turned out by the universities—and the failure of wages to keep up with price increases had led to violent outbursts in 1978 and 1984 that the government was barely able to bring under control. Economic development had largely bypassed the poorer southern and western regions of the country.

Previously close to the government and the party, the labor movement in early 1986 was locked in a struggle with the regime. Bourguiba had decreed in 1981 that opposition parties should be

recognized and allowed to compete against the Destourian socialists. Although given legal status and allowed their own publications, the other parties were obstructed in their efforts to contest both national and local elections. Only the government party and affiliated groups were represented in the submissive parliament. The government's reluctance to accept nonconformity and criticism contributed to public cynicism over Destourianism and the existing institutions of government.

Prime minister since 1980, Mohamed Mzali was a liberally inclined appointee and Bourguiba's prospective successor under the Constitution. Mzali had gradually consolidated his position under Bourguiba's patronage, although his own political strength remained untested. In early 1986 Bourguiba's fragile health had sapped him of the vigor of his earlier days, but he still wielded sufficient power to decree the downfall of any underling deemed to be presumptuous or imprudent in exercising authority. The fear of disapproval and disgrace discouraged ministerial initiative and left a sense of immobility in the face of pressing national problems.

The political personalities at the top of the Destourian movement were positioning themselves for the protracted struggle for power that might follow Bourguiba's departure from the scene. Even if the transition could be accomplished smoothly, preserving the institutions of government created by the 1959 Constitution, the new leadership would soon be called upon to defend itself in elections against other parties and interests. Above all, account would have to be taken of the growing appeal of the Islamic renewal and the power of the army, hitherto unpoliticized but unlikely to remain indifferent if the established political structure began to crumble.

Tunisia's traditional international posture—nonaligned but friendly to the West and moderate on Middle East issues—also seemed to be in jeopardy as it was being drawn closer to the vortex of Arab politics. The headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization near Tunis had been the target of an Israeli air raid in 1985. Libya, its well-armed neighbor, persisted in acting in a capricious and threatening manner. The Islamists attacked Tunisia's ties with the West, demanding that the country identify itself with the Arab world.

Bourguiba had endowed the Tunisian people with broad social and educational reforms, a compassionate and humanistic conception of the government's role, many years of stable growth, and a responsible course in its foreign affairs. But it was feared that, in perpetuating his paternalistic and authoritarian style of rule, Bourguiba had failed to establish a firm base for future progress, leav-

ing his country ill equipped to deal with domestic discontent and the rising danger from abroad.

Constitutional Development

In 1857 the bey (ruler) of Tunisia, influenced by reform-minded European countries, promulgated the Fundamental Pact. The pact contained guarantees of basic human rights, property ownership, and freedom of religion. Four years later, after consultations with Napoleon III, a new bey promulgated the constitution of 1861, the first such document in the Islamic world. The constitution placed some limits on the bey's political prerogatives, divided legislative power between him and an appointed council, and provided for an independent judiciary. A revolt three years later caused the suspension of the constitution, but the symbolic importance of the document had been established and would later serve as the basis for the nationalist movement that developed in the early twentieth century.

The country's first political party, the Destour (Constitution) Party, emerged from the nationalist movement in 1920. Reacting against the elitism of much of the party's French-educated, middle-class membership and against its goal of limited legal reforms within the French protectorate, a group of young Destour members, led by Bourguiba, founded the Neo-Destour Party in 1934. Neo-Destourians led the independence movement that resulted in self-governing autonomy in 1955 and in complete Tunisian independence on March 20, 1956 (see Toward Independence, ch. 1).

Elections for the Constituent Assembly of 98 members followed, in accordance with a decree issued by the bey, who was to have no role in the drafting process and who was pledged to promulgate the constitution as written by the assembly. An electoral front, known as the National Union and controlled by the Neo-Destourians, won an overwhelming affirmative vote in the elections. Bourguiba became presiding officer of the Constituent Assembly but was forced to relinquish his position upon becoming the country's prime minister. Preparation of the draft constitution was an undertaking that stretched over three years, owing in part to Bourguiba's preoccupation with establishing an effective government and party apparatus and in part to the need to rework portions of the document when the decision was made to replace the monarchy with a republican form of government. The final text did not necessitate new institutions and procedures but rather legitimized those that Bourguiba had already introduced. On July 25, 1957, the as-

sembly unanimously passed a resolution ending the beylicate and establishing Tunisia as a republic. It further provided for Bourguiba, as president of the republic, to assume the duties of head of state in addition to those of head of government, which he had held as prime minister. On June 1, 1959, the Constituent Assembly approved the draft constitution, which was promulgated by Bourguiba later the same day.

Rather than copy the constitution of the French Fourth Republic, with its strong parliament, the Tunisian Constitution imposed a presidential system inspired in part by that of the United States. It entrusts significantly greater powers to the office of the president, however, than does the American document, and the separation of powers is not as rigid. Like the constitutions of other North African states, it also establishes Islam as the official religion and Arabic as the official language, and it proclaims Tunisia's identification with the Maghrib (see Glossary) and the ideal of Maghribi unity.

The Constitution guarantees to the citizens of Tunisia several basic liberties, including equality before the law and presumption of innocence in legal proceedings; freedom of expression, the press, association, and assembly; inviolability of the home; the right of public worship; and the right to travel within and outside the country. Many of these liberties have been circumscribed in practice, however, based on the constitutional caveat that they may be limited by laws intended to protect the rights of others or to further law and order, national defense, and economic and social progress. The small Jewish and Christian communities in Tunisia worship freely, although proselytizing is discouraged and government employment is confined to Muslims.

All three branches of government—the executive, the legislature, and the judiciary—are dominated by the president. Although judicial independence is prescribed, the status of the judiciary is clearly regarded as inferior to that of the other two branches. The courts have no jurisdiction over disputes between the president and the legislature, nor may they interpret the Constitution. The Chamber of Deputies (formerly the National Assembly), a unicameral body, is given sole legislative authority and exercises formal powers to approve the budgets and development plans and to ratify treaties. These factors notwithstanding, the judiciary's lack of power to rule on the constitutionality of legislation and on the president's exercise of his powers and the chamber's subordination to the leadership of Bourguiba have precluded an effective system of checks and balances.

Either the president or a minimum of one-third of the members of the Chamber of Deputies may initiate amendment or revision of the Constitution. (The provision calling for a republican form of government is, however, exempt from amendment.) Adoption of an amendment requires two separate votes at least three months apart, each by a minimum of two-thirds of the assembly membership. To become effective, a constitutional amendment so adopted must be promulgated by the president.

The Constitution has been amended on several occasions since 1959. Legislative sessions have been reduced from two to one per year, and the provisions pertaining to presidential succession have been modified, as have the requirements for eligibility for presidential candidates. In 1969 the office of prime minister was instituted. The proclamation of Bourguiba as president for life was embodied in the Constitution in 1975. Broad revisions reducing the age requirement for service in the legislature and altering the composition of the Council of State were adopted in 1976. A national referendum procedure was added along with a procedure for the legislature to force the resignation of the government and ultimately the president through adoption of censure motions. The 1976 revision also introduced a differentiation between ordinary laws and organic laws (those involving constitutional articles, civil liberties, judicial powers, electoral affairs, and budgetary matters).

Structure of Government

In early 1986 all real governmental authority in the Tunisian presidential republic was concentrated in its executive branch headed by the nation's architect of independence, Bourguiba, and under him Prime Minister Mzali and a cabinet composed of about 30 ministers and secretaries of state known as the Council of Ministers. Regional and local organs of government were entrusted with a limited degree of autonomy by the central authorities; regional governors exercised considerable authority under ultimate supervision of the national leadership. The popularly elected Chamber of Deputies generally gave pro forma approval to legislative initiatives emanating from the president and his cabinet (see fig. 10).

The strength of the formal institutions of government had not been exposed to a major test since they were put into place nearly 30 years earlier. The chief determinant of the system's stability was Bourguiba's prestige and personal authority, secured by a single party whose functions overlapped those of the government.

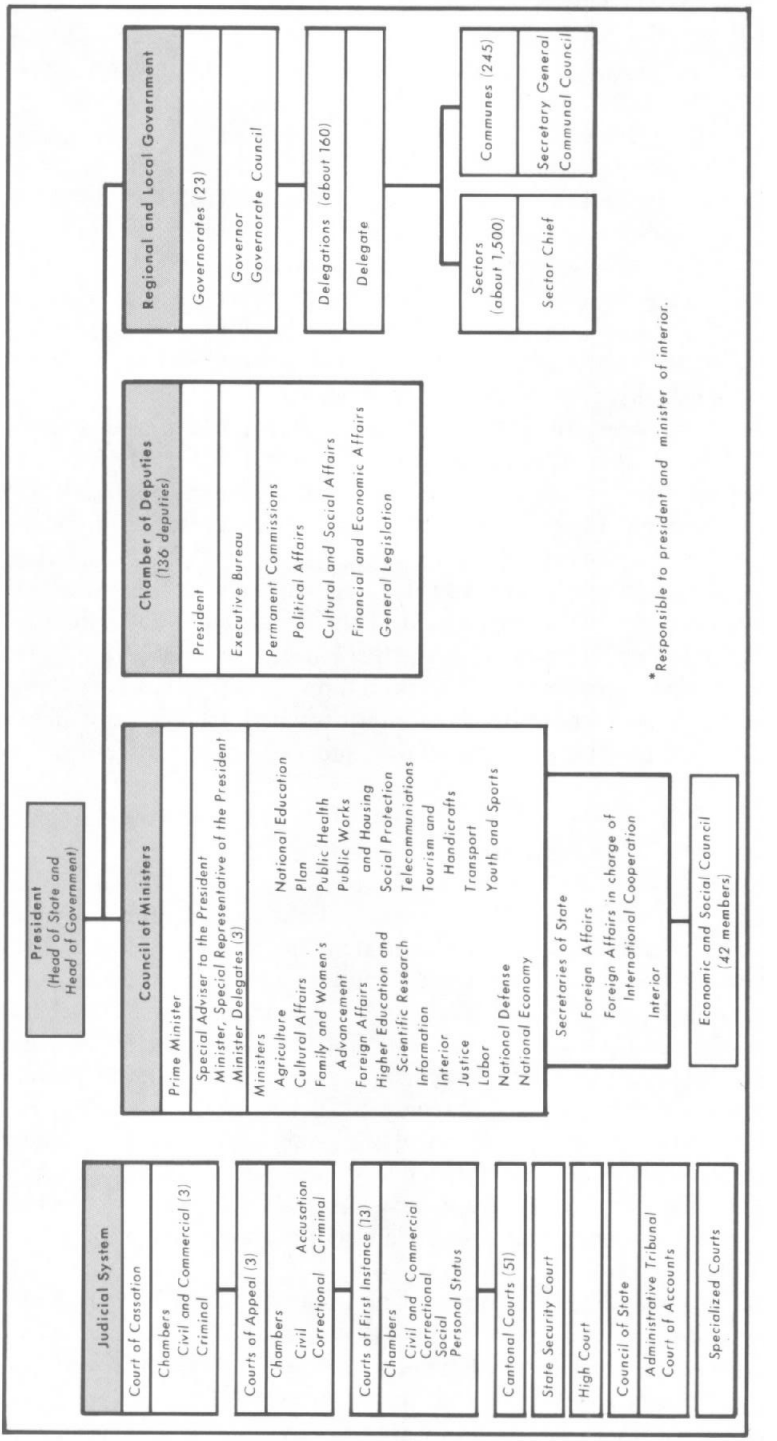


Figure 10. Government Structure, 1985

One of the few real modifications in the system was its opening in 1981 to permit opposition parties. Although acceptance of the multiparty model was far from an accomplished fact in 1986, its introduction could bring needed vitality to the system at all levels.

Executive

The Constitution vests decisive political power in the president of the republic, who is both head of state and head of government (the executive branch). The Constitution stipulates that the president is elected for a five-year term (concurrent with the term of the Chamber of Deputies) by direct universal suffrage. Bourguiba was Tunisia's first and, as of early 1986, the country's only president, having been elected unopposed on four occasions—after the Constitution was introduced in 1959 and subsequently in 1964, 1969, and 1974—and proclaimed president for life in 1975.

The president determines basic national policies and directs their implementation. He appoints high civil and military officers upon the recommendation of the cabinet, accredits Tunisian diplomats, receives foreign diplomatic representatives, ratifies treaties, is the supreme commander of the armed forces, exercises the right of pardon, and declares war and concludes peace with the consent of the Chamber of Deputies. The president shares the power to initiate legislation with the chamber, although his measures take precedence.

Unless he sends a bill back to the assembly, the president is called upon to promulgate laws within 15 days after having received them; he is responsible for their implementation and exercises general regulatory powers. If a bill is returned by the president for a second reading and is then readopted by a majority of two-thirds, he is obliged to promulgate the law. As of 1985 the legislature had never overruled a presidential veto. The president may submit to a national referendum any bill pertaining to the organization of public powers or the ratification of a treaty. The Chamber of Deputies may delegate to the president the right to issue decree-laws for a limited period and for a specific purpose. The president may also issue decree-laws when the chamber is not in session, with the permission of the permanent legislative committee concerned. In either case, the decree-law must later be submitted for ratification by the full chamber.

The Constitution extends sweeping emergency powers to the president in case of impending danger threatening the existence of the republic. In these circumstances, after consultation with the

prime minister and the president of the Chamber of Deputies, the president may take whatever exceptional measures he deems necessary. During such an emergency period, the Chamber may not be dissolved, nor may censure motions be introduced against the government.

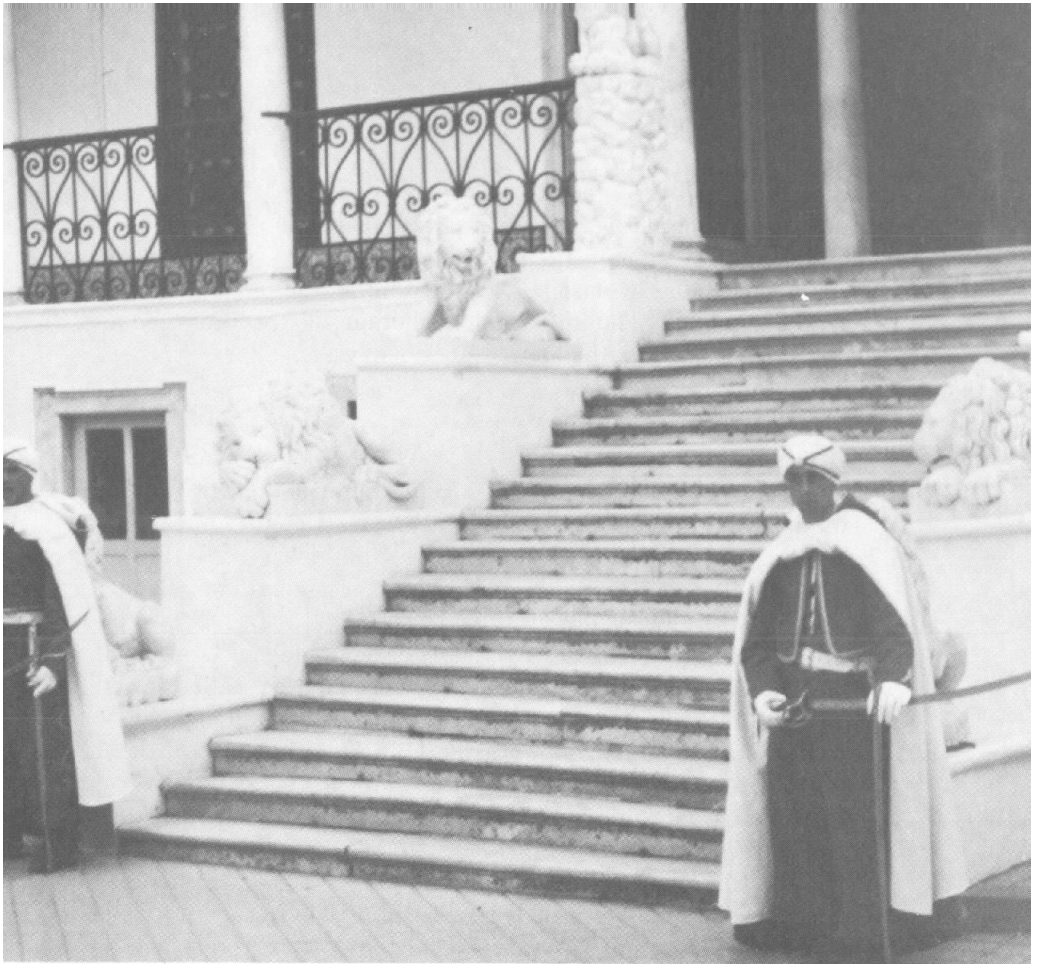
In cases of temporary disability the president may delegate his powers (except the power to dissolve the legislature) to the prime minister. The cabinet continues in existence during such period even if a censure motion should be voted against it. If the presidency were to be vacated because of permanent disability, death, or resignation, the prime minister would assume the office and all presidential functions for the remainder of the unexpired term.

The president appoints the prime minister and, upon the prime minister's recommendation, the other ministers. The president retains the right to terminate the tenure of the entire government or any member of it. He presides over meetings of the Council of Ministers and may delegate most of his powers to the prime minister. Members of the government may attend and address meetings of the Chamber of Deputies and its committees. Members of the chamber, in turn, have the right to put written and oral questions to the cabinet. The distinction between the two bodies is not, however, strictly observed. More than half of the cabinet members, including the prime minister, were elected to the chamber in 1981.

For several years after independence the highest government positions were those of the secretaries of state. There were no ministers, nor was there a prime minister, and members of the government were considered merely advisers to the president rather than executive department heads in their own right. Ministers were first designated in 1969, although some secretary of state positions were retained for certain ministries on a level junior to the ministers (see table 9, Appendix).

The prime minister has become increasingly important through the exercise of his responsibility for overseeing the execution of policies and for day-to-day governmental administration. The importance of the position is further accentuated by the constitutional amendment providing that the prime minister be first in line of presidential succession and complete the term of the president in case of his death or incapacity.

A censure procedure adopted by constitutional amendment in 1976 introduced the principle that the government should be responsible to the Chamber of Deputies as well as to the president. Three months after notifying the president of its intent, the cham-



Entrance to the Chamber of Deputies in Bardo Palace, former residence of the beys, in Tunis; Berber guards wear uniforms of the historical French Zouaves
Courtesy Jean B. Tartter

ber may adopt a censure motion by a two-thirds majority. The president must respond, either by replacing the cabinet or by calling for new elections. If during its first session the new chamber passes another censure motion criticizing the same conditions as did the original, the president must resign along with the government. The prospect of the legislature's invoking these new powers seemed implausible under the existing executive-dominated system.

The Economic and Social Council, established in 1961, is composed of 42 members appointed by the government, representing salaried workers and wage earners in agriculture, industry, the trades, and services as well as consumers and youth. Six economists and social scientists are included. Mohamed Ennaceur, head of the governmental body then known as the Ministry of Social Af-

fairs, was named the council's chairperson in late 1985. The council's primary function is to examine draft economic and social legislation and to advise both the government and the Chamber of Deputies on such bills. It must be consulted on legislation that involves general economic planning, implementation of specific economic plans, and the national budget.

Legislature

The Chamber of Deputies is a unicameral body; the sixth legislature (1981–86) comprised 136 members. Deputies must be at least 28 years of age and must have been born of a Tunisian father. The five-year legislative term is under normal circumstances concurrent with that of the president.

The chamber sits in a single session beginning in October and lasting until July. Extraordinary sessions may be called by the president or by a majority of the deputies. The chamber passes ordinary laws by majority vote; organic laws require a two-thirds majority approval. Should the chamber fail to pass the national budget by December 31, financial measures may be put into effect by presidential decree.

Under the Constitution, subjects requiring legislative action by the chamber include rules of legal procedure; definitions of crimes and misdemeanors and penalties to be imposed; tax rates, except where such authority had been delegated to the president; loans and financial commitments of the state; procedures for implementing the Constitution; establishment of boards, public offices, and national companies; nationality; and general principles concerning ownership and title, education, public health, labor, and social security. The development plan must be approved, as must government revenues and expenditures, in accordance with the budget organic law.

The Chamber of Deputies elects from its membership an executive bureau headed by the president of the chamber and four permanent commissions, or committees, covering political affairs, cultural and social affairs, financial and economic affairs, and general legislation. The commissions study and report to the whole chamber on proposed legislation that falls within their areas of competence. The commissions continue to meet when the chamber is not in session.

Under the system prevailing before the election of the Chamber of Deputies in 1981, a deputy had to be a member of the Destourian Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Destourien—PSD). As an

important feature of the reforms introduced in 1981, other parties were permitted to run, but they did not gain a single seat (see Elections, this ch.). The PSD formed the National Front with the General Union of Tunisian Workers (Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens—UGTT) to offer a common slate of candidates. Of the 136 seats at stake, 27 were secured by candidates affiliated with the UGTT.

In the nine-month legislative season ending in July 1985, the chamber assembled for 43 plenary sessions. A total of 103 laws proposed by the government were examined before being approved. Mzali's efforts to introduce a more liberalized climate since he took office in 1980 have encouraged the legislature to bestir itself to engage in sometimes lively debates. As a result of objections mounted in the chamber, the government has occasionally changed or withdrawn individual clauses of bills placed before the body. The UGTT deputies in the National Front abstained from voting on the 1982–86 development plan, an action seen as a significant departure from the previous practice of virtually unanimous assent for the government's major programs. Criticism of the government's harsh suppression of dissidents was also implied in private bills dealing with amnesty and abolition of the State Security Court—moves that were met by delaying tactics on the part of the government.

Elections

Before the 1979 election, Tunisian voters had no real choice among candidates for the national legislature because only one nominee was presented for each seat. Lists of candidates were compiled by the PSD, which had been the only legal party since the Tunisian Communist Party (Parti Communiste Tunisien—PCT) was banned in 1963.

After amendment of the election code earlier in the same year, two candidates were nominated for each seat in the November 1979 election, but the names submitted to the electorate were again drawn up by the PSD from PSD membership roles and others sympathetic to the party. Opposition groups abandoned the possibility of contesting the election after concluding that they would not be permitted to campaign in a normal manner.

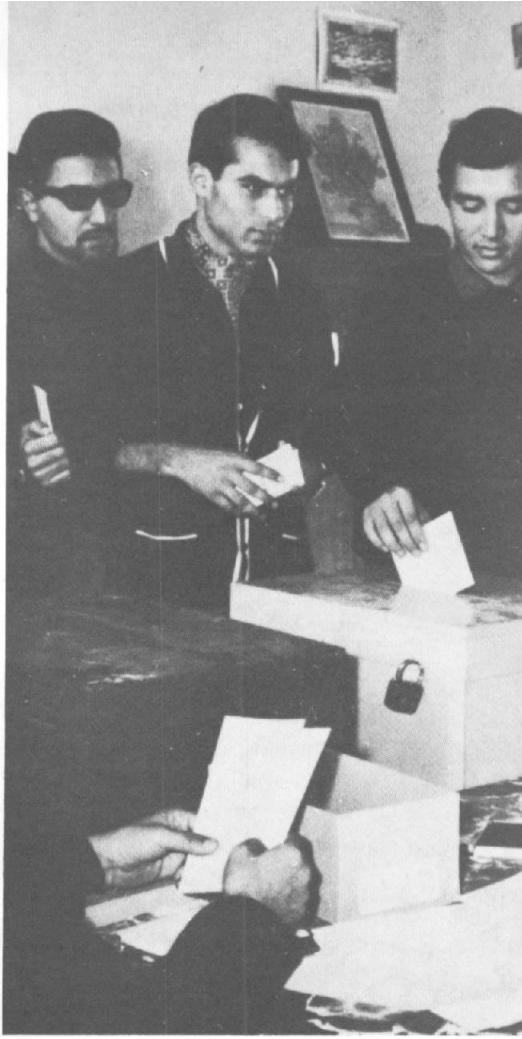
At an extraordinary congress of the PSD in April 1981, Bourguiba announced his plan to allow "differing currents of opinion" to be represented in the Chamber of Deputies. A constitutional amendment was adopted providing for an election to be held before

the end of the year—instead of the normally scheduled time in 1984—to give immediate effect to the party's decision. In spite of the government's commitment to political pluralism, it was decided that legal recognition of other parties would be withheld until after the election. As a condition of subsequent recognition, a party would be required to obtain at least 5 percent of the valid vote. An exception was made for the PCT, based on the premise that the party had been officially recognized until it was suspended in 1963.

When the election was held in November 1981, only the National Front of the PSD and affiliated groups offered slates of candidates for all 136 seats in the 23 electoral districts. Three opposition formations also entered lists of candidates. The Movement of Socialist Democrats (Mouvement des Démocrates Socialistes—MDS) submitted slates in 19 districts with a combined total of 116 names. The internal faction of the Movement of Popular Unity (Mouvement d'Unité Populaire—MUP) contested eight districts with 55 candidates, and the PCT entered lists in six districts totaling 37 names. Each group was given access to the government-operated television and radio services to explain its platform. Airtime was accorded on the basis of two minutes of television time and three minutes of radio time for each list filed.

According to the official returns of the 1981 election, the National Front achieved an overwhelming victory, gaining 94.6 percent of the valid votes cast and winning every seat in the chamber; it was claimed that 85 percent of all eligible citizens had gone to the polls. The MDS attracted only 3.3 percent of the vote, and the MUP gained 0.8 percent. The PCT could muster only 0.8 percent, and independents who had submitted lists in three districts won 0.5 percent. Bitter charges of irregularities in the conduct of the election were made by the losers. It was claimed that the opposition had been prevented from having observers present at the polling places and during the ballot counts. In addition, the voting was not entirely secret because individuals were required to select lists identified by color in a public area.

The government later rescinded its condition that parties must attract at least 5 percent of the total vote to qualify for recognition. Accordingly, the MDS and the MUP were recognized in November 1983. Nevertheless, when local elections were held in May 1985, the various opposition forces declared a boycott on the grounds that the minimal conditions were not present for a credible election process. They cited the persistent dominance of the single-party mentality among officials, the continued political trials and suspension of newspapers, the harassment of opposition politicians, the



Tunisian voters at the polls
Courtesy Embassy
of Tunisia, Washington

destruction of party offices, and the use of state agencies to serve the ruling party.

The Legal System

Traditional Tunisian law was based on sharia. Sharia (the revealed law of God, according to Muslims) is derived not only from the Quran but also from the teachings of the Prophet Muhammad, the interpretations of Islamic jurists, and analogical reasoning. Both the Hanafi and the Malikite schools of Islamic law were well-established in Tunisia before the advent of the French protectorate.

Temporal power was in the hands of the bey, who could issue regulations in conformance with Islamic principles but could not make laws. According to Muslim belief, laws could originate only from God. A secular court system existed to adjudicate cases outside the jurisdiction of sharia courts. The *qaid* (see Glossary), as

personal representative of the bey, exercised a judicial function for civil, criminal, and commercial cases in the governorates; in Tunis, officials of the beylicate heard these cases as well as appeals involving *qaids'* decisions. Cases involving personal status and family law and succession within Tunisia's sizable Jewish community were heard in rabbinical courts.

During the protectorate period the French left to the jurisdiction of the sharia courts, headed by Islamic judges *(qadis),* cases of personal status, such as marriage, divorce, inheritance, and landownership. A new secular court system, staffed by French judges, was created to apply French legal principles in cases involving non-Tunisians or for commercial matters and crimes. Traditional elements were often incorporated in the new laws. The beylicate courts were modified to become part of the protectorate administrative system.

After attaining independence Tunisia immediately began to modernize and unify its legal system. In 1956 sharia courts were abolished, and the Code of Personal Status, far more liberal than corresponding codes in other Arab states, was adopted. A year later, application of the code to all Tunisians, regardless of religion, ended Judaic law as a separate legal source. At the same time an agreement was concluded with France providing that the French court system would cease to function by July 1, 1957. (An earlier agreement would have permitted the French courts to continue hearing cases involving French citizens until at least 1970.) Among the seven codes that completed the reform of the Tunisian legal system were the Code of Civil and Commercial Procedure adopted in 1959 and the General Revision of the Code of Criminal Procedure in 1968.

The Judiciary

The common law courts comprise, in ascending order of authority, cantonal courts, courts of first instance, courts of appeal, and the Court of Cassation (supreme court of appeal). At the base of the court hierarchy are the cantonal courts *(justices cantonales),* whose criminal jurisdiction includes cases involving *contraventions* (petty offenses) and *délits* (misdemeanors). Heard by single magistrates, rulings involving *contraventions* cannot be appealed. Only those *délits* punishable by fines and imprisonment of not more than one year can be heard in the cantonal courts, and these cases may be appealed.

Above the cantonal courts are the courts of first instance *(tribunaux de première instance),* found in the principal administrative

centers. Each court comprises a civil and commercial chamber, a personal status chamber, a correctional chamber, and a social chamber. Decisions are rendered by a panel of three judges. The court of first instance is the last court to which decisions made in the cantonal courts can be appealed. Original jurisdiction applies to civil and commercial cases where more than minimal amounts are being litigated and to all cases involving *délits* that are outside the jurisdiction of the cantonal courts.

The three courts of appeal *(cours d' appel)* sit in Tunis, Sousse, and Sfax. Each court comprises one or more civil chambers, a correctional chamber, a chamber of accusation, and a criminal chamber. The civil and correctional chambers hear appeals from the courts of first instance on civil and criminal cases, respectively. The accusation chamber functions much like a grand jury in the United States legal system. It investigates cases involving a *crime,* the most serious category of criminal offense, which is punishable by a prison sentence of more than five years' duration. If the charge is substantiated, the case is turned over to the criminal chamber for trial. Decisions of the criminal chamber may not be appealed, but they are subject to the Court of Cassation's *pouvoir en cassation* (power of abrogation or annulment).

At the apex of the common court system is the Court of Cassation, which sits in Tunis. It is composed of three civil and commercial chambers and one criminal chamber. A panel of three judges considers decisions from lower courts through the court's *pouvoir en cassation.* In exercising its power to annul inferior court decisions, the Court of Cassation does not render a final verdict but rather returns the case to the lower court for a new ruling.

A number of specialized courts have jurisdiction over such matters as land, juvenile offenses, family allowances, and employer-employee relations. Their judgments are not ordinarily subject to appeal. The High Court hears cases of high treason against members of the government, a charge that is construed to include such offenses as acts against state security, systematic abuse of public authority, purposely misleading the head of state so as to damage the national interest, and commission of a *délit* or *crime* while in office. The court has been convened twice, once to sentence the disgraced economic tsar, Ahmed Ben Salah, in 1970 and again in 1984 for the case of former minister of interior Driss Guiga, who was tried in absentia for dereliction in his handling of antigovernment demonstrators (see The Riots of 1984 and Their Aftermath, this ch.). The court was constituted by the Chamber of Deputies, which selected four official members and three members from its own ranks.

The State Security Court, established in 1968, sits on an ad hoc basis with a career magistrate, who acts as president, and four assessors (two magistrates and two legislative deputies). The court was convened in 1978 to try a number of leading trade unionists for inciting strikes and demonstrations and again in 1980 to try 60 persons accused of participation in the attack on Gafsa (see Opposition and Unrest, ch. 1). Generally, cases with political overtones have been heard in the regular judicial framework, where normal safeguards have applied. Nineteen members of the armed forces were sentenced to imprisonment by a military court in 1984 for affiliation with an underground organization of a political character (the Islamic Liberation Party), and 11 civilians were found guilty by the same court of having incited the soldiers to join.

The Council of State, provided for under the Constitution, consists of the Administrative Tribunal and the Court of Accounts. The Administrative Tribunal hears cases by private individuals alleging abuse of powers by the state or public agencies. It has not been accorded an active place in the judicial system. The Court of Accounts functions as an audit agency for the accounts of the state, local and national public organizations, and public industrial and commercial enterprises, including private enterprises in which the state holds a share.

The Constitution also provides for the Higher Council of the Judiciary, which is charged with administering discipline as well as appointing, promoting, and transferring magistrates. The council's purpose is to safeguard the independence of the judiciary from interference in the judicial process by the executive branch.

Civil and Human Rights

The Constitution provides that "every accused person shall be presumed innocent until his guilt has been proven, following proceedings offering him the necessary conditions for his defense." Defendants are guaranteed counsel, and the courts appoint attorneys for anyone who does not have one for whatever reason. The whereabouts of a detained person must be made known to counsel and family. Access to prisoners has generally not been withheld for more than a few days. Under Tunisian law, anyone suspected of an offense punishable for no longer than one year and who has no previous record may be held in preventive detention for up to five days. Persons suspected of more serious offenses may be detained without trial for an unlimited investigative period before being charged or released. Rights of appeal are respected in civil courts

and are frequently exercised, except for the High Court, where the judgment is final.

The appointment of Mzali as prime minister ushered in a more liberal legal climate and gave rise to a number of reforms intended to bolster the independence of the judiciary. All persons serving terms on politically related charges were released. But as a result of new prosecutions in subsequent years, mostly of Islamists (see Glossary), the number of political prisoners rose again to 102 in 1983 and then dropped back to 50 in 1984, according to the Tunisian League of Human Rights. The London-based human rights organization, Amnesty International, has appealed for the release of prisoners jailed for nonviolently exercising their freedom of expression and association. In a number of cases, persons serving long sentences for illegal political activities have been amnestied by the government.

The trial of 91 Islamic activists in 1981 was conducted publicly in a criminal court, although statements by officials and a campaign in the official media tended to prejudice the outcome. The accused were not permitted outside contact for a month, and their lawyers were given little time to prepare their defenses. According to the United States Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1984,* "political pressures are sometimes brought to bear on magistrates in cases involving political charges, and sentences in such cases often reflect these pressures."

Both Amnesty International and the Department of State have mentioned reliable evidence indicating that political detainees and common-law offenders had been subjected to torture and ill-treatment while in pretrial detention. The Department of State was critical of the behavior of the police in making arrests connected with the January 1984 bread riots, of the lengthy and incommunicado detention of some defendants, and of the irregularities by some judges during their trials.

Regional and Local Government

Under Tunisia's unitary system of government, all authority exercised by lower governmental units is delegated by the central government; they have no inherent or residual powers of their own. The single constitutional provision covering subnational government states simply that "the municipal and regional councils shall deal with matters of local interest as prescribed by law." Subsequent legislation has introduced a well-developed system of region-

al and local administration that stresses the interdependence of government and party.

The highest regional authority is the governorate. The number of governorates, totaling 13 when they were first created soon after independence, was increased several times and by 1984 numbered 23 (see fig. 1). The chief executive of the governorate is the governor, who is appointed by the president upon the recommendation of the minister of interior. The governor also serves as the regional director of the PSD and is a member of the party's Central Committee. He is assisted by the Governorate Council, which is composed of representatives from the national organizations, members of the party's regional coordination committee, and communal council presidents (see The Destourian Socialist Party, this ch.). The council's primary duties include examination of the governorate's finances and budget and consultation regarding social and economic requirements and regional planning. The governor's personal powers are extensive; he represents the president at the regional level and is concurrently the senior party official. He supervises and coordinates the activities of smaller administrative divisions, exercises control over the police, is responsible for the execution of court decisions, and controls local public bodies.

Beneath the governorate, the second level in the hierarchy is the delegation *(délégation),* each of which is headed by a delegate *(délégué).* The delegate, a civil servant appointed by the central government, is responsible to the governor. Each delegation is divided into several sectors (*secteurs* or *oumadaat;* sing., *oumada).* Sectors were created in 1969, replacing the traditional tribal-oriented subregional administrative unit known as the *shaykhat.* At the head of each sector is the *omda* (sector chief). The new system shifted the focus of the lowest rung of local power from that of the shaykh, who most often came from a traditionally prominent local family, to that of a militant of the PSD; the *omda* is appointed from members of the local party cell. The *omda* acts as a conduit between the citizens and the other tiers of government. He publicizes decisions and regulations promulgated by the governor and advises his superiors of local developments of political interest. The *omda* registers births, marriages, and deaths, and he issues various official certificates and permits. He concerns himself with matters such as the organization of basic food supplies, application of traffic rules, distribution of seed grains, and army recruitment. He is in charge of local police activities and ensures the execution of civil judgments.

The entire territory of the country is divided into sectors, which numbered more than 1,500 in 1985. About two-thirds of the

sectors had within their boundaries only small villages of less than 4,000 population or, in some cases, simply hamlets consisting of extended rural families. In more populous areas, a degree of local self-government was accorded within the framework of another local unit, the commune. In larger communities, a single commune might be composed of several sectors. Created by decree of the central government, their number had risen from 69 after independence to 245 in 1985. The communes are administered by communal councils (often referred to as municipal councils), which are popularly elected at three-year intervals. The councils annually hold four 10-day sessions convened in February, May, July, and November. Under a 1985 revision of the law on municipalities, most council decisions were to be subject to approval only by the governor. The purpose was to consolidate the authority of the governor as the sole reviewing authority in local matters. More important actions, such as borrowings, would continue to be referred to the ministries of finance and interior.

In the communal elections of May 1985, all 3,540 candidates were nominated by the PSD. Their elections were assured by the boycott mounted by the other legal parties in the absence of guarantees that the election would be conducted in an impartial manner. The electoral lists were composed of PSD members—headed in many cases by a member of the PSD Political Bureau or otherwise high in the party hierarchy—as well as members of national organizations representing women, agriculture, commerce, and industry, along with some independents.

The members of the communal councils select presidents from their own ranks. An exception is the municipality of Tunis, whose head (called a mayor) is appointed from the elected council members by the president of the republic. The president of a communal council plays a preeminent role in directing the council's activity and superintending the execution of its decisions. With the exclusion of Tunis, the presidency of the council is intended to be a part-time office. The highest full-time official, the secretary general, is in charge of the administrative apparatus of the commune. Although the *omda* is still present, his role is considerably circumscribed in larger cities, being more a neighborhood representative of state and party. The *omda* is likely to be a loyal party worker in need of employment.

Political Dynamics

In spite of Bourguiba's fragile health and infirmities of advancing age (he was officially reported to be 83 in 1986), he had maintained to a remarkable degree his place at the head of the political order. On several occasions, it seemed that serious medical problems would force him to retire from active politics, and the maneuvering over the succession intensified correspondingly. The official media exploited every opportunity to portray Bourguiba as ceaselessly involved in the affairs of his country. Whether or not this remained true in 1986, his personal approval was still indispensable for any major policy decision or new initiative.

The philosophy guiding Tunisia's political course under Bourguiba has been one of limited democracy guided by mature, educated members of the elite; the nondogmatic acceptance of state economic planning and intervention; and the application of gradualism, pragatism, and rationalism (see Bourguibism and Destourian Socialism, this ch.). The element of pragmatism has been uppermost, making it difficult to trace a consistent approach by Bourguiba to his nation's problems other than a willingness to shift—sometimes abruptly—if a given policy is seen to be ineffective.

At successive stages of Bourguiba's rule, various high appointees have had a prevailing influence, causing him to follow new directions in policy or to adopt fresh concepts. During the 1960s centralized planning and the collectivization of agriculture and retail trade were emphasized during the ascendancy of the trade union leader and planning secretary, Ben Salah. Growing opposition, which gave way to violence among farmers, coupled with Bourguiba's misgivings over Ben Salah's accumulation of power, led to the latter's downfall and curtailment of his policies (see Intraparty Politics in the 1970s, ch. 1). During the decade of the 1970s, the government's economic policies were liberalized under Prime Minister Hedi Nouira, although its political grip was tightened. Several ministers who called for democratization of the PSD and more open political processes were forced out of government, and Bourguiba's control over party and state was reasserted in the PSD congress of 1974. Some of the leading politicians who were discarded by Bourguiba after his rejection of their policies became involved in opposition movements at home and abroad.

Increasing pressure for the relaxation of political life and the legitimation of organized opposition movements continued to be rebuffed by Bourguiba and Nouira. The violence kindled by a general strike in January 1978 dramatized the pent-up grievances that had been suppressed under a system inhospitable to dissenting

Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali
Courtesy Embassy
of Tunisia, Washington

opinions. The power of the unions, which were blamed for the riots, was curbed by arrests and imprisonment. The minor concession of allowing a choice between two candidates for each seat—both carrying the endorsement of the PSD—did little to mollify the public's resentment over the monopoly of political expression by the PSD.

The 1981 Election: Opposition Parties Sanctioned

When Nouira suffered a stroke in early 1980, Bourguiba grasped the opportunity to replace him as prime minister with the more liberally inclined Mzali. Acting with the advice of Mzali, the former minister of education, Bourguiba reconciled himself to the need for greater tolerance of political pluralism. Several ministers whose differences with Nouira's policies had earlier led to their departure from government were restored to the cabinet and the

party. Political prisoners were released, and nearly 1,000 trade union members convicted for their role in the 1978 riots were pardoned. When Bourguiba told an extraordinary congress of the PSD that he saw no objection to the emergence of other political parties, his announcement was greeted with approval by the delegates.

In the special parliamentary election that followed, some opposition forces were allowed to nominate lists of candidates and were permitted to express their views in their own publications. The Islamist group known as the Islamic Tendency Movement (Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique—MTI) was rejected as a religious organization legally precluded from participation in politics.

In spite of having to campaign in an atmosphere that was not free from intimidation, the other parties had believed they might win a substantial minority of the seats, an outcome that could have transformed the Chamber of Deputies from a virtual rubber stamp for Bourguiba's programs into one in which policy alternatives could be introduced and debated. Moreover, although the UGTT had combined with the PSD to form the National Front election coalition, the labor movement represented a separate power base that was soon at odds with the government on many issues. When the official results were announced, however, the opposition parties were crushed by the PSD-led National Front in every district. According to Richard B. Parker, a former senior United States diplomat in the Maghrib, at the last moment Bourguiba changed his mind about allowing a real opposition party to run and ordered his minister of interior to see to it that only Destourian candidates were elected.

In the period following the 1981 election, the momentum for liberalizing the political atmosphere slackened. Mounting economic difficulties contributed to a resurgence of social stress and unrest. In the absence of decisive leadership from the top, there was little incentive for other politicians to risk their futures by proposing the painful correctives that were needed. The uneasiness of the government in dealing with criticism was reflected in its suspension of several newspapers for expressing dissenting opinions. The PSD–UGTT coalition was strained when the labor federation's members in the Chamber of Deputies spoke out against the strategy of the 1982–86 development plan. Nonetheless, two opposition parties (the MDS and the MUP) were belatedly extended recognition in November 1983.

The country's economic fortunes and growth rates, which had been adequate during the 1970s to stay abreast of population pressures and rising consumer expectations, faltered during the early 1980s. More balanced in terms of resources than its Maghribi

neighbors, boasting an industrious and better educated work force, Tunisia's liberal economic policies had helped to attract the foreign capital needed to expand its manufacturing sector. In spite of this, the economy came under mounting pressure from balance of payments deficits owing to lower market prices for its raw material and oil exports and its growing need for imported foodstuffs. With insufficient funds for job creation amid growing signs of poverty, resentment was fueled over the widening gap between the poor and the salaried workers and the wealthy elite. The 1983–86 development plan emphasized increased investment in agriculture to reduce the need for food imports and to stem migration to the cities. As a result of poor harvests and other unforeseen developments, these objectives could not be realized (see Development Planning, ch. 3).

The Riots of 1984 and Their Aftermath

One of the principal measures belatedly adopted by the government to bring an alarming balance of payments drain under control was to restrict imports and reduce subsidies on sales of basic food products, notably cereals. Bread prices were to double, while semolina (used in making couscous) and pasta were to go up by nearly as much. Although the government had made known its intentions three months in advance and had pledged itself to earmark compensatory payment to wage earners, it neglected to take account of the harsh impact on the unemployed and rural poor subsisting on the very foods most affected by the price increases.

Even before the price rises were announced officially on January 1, 1984, protest demonstrations had begun. In the south, the region least advanced economically, mobs attacked shops, vehicles, and public buildings. In similar outbreaks at Gafsa in the west and Gabés, the main industrial center of the south, protestors battled police with stones. Symbols of authority and wealth were targets of arson and looting. A state of emergency was declared on January 3, and army units used automatic weapons against crowds barricaded in the streets of Tunis when it became evident that the demoralized police were incapable of controlling the situation. Order was not restored until January 6, when Bourguiba appeared on radio and television to announce that in the face of the unrest the price rises would be rescinded and that he was directing the cabinet to submit a new budget to him that would avoid excessive price increases for food staples.

It was officially reported that 89 Tunisians had died in the disturbances, 938 others had been injured (including 348 members of the security forces), and over 800 had been arrested. Most of the demonstrators were unemployed youths, joined by students and Islamists. In its analysis of the cause of the riots, the Tunisian League of Human Rights alluded to the serious disparities among classes and regions, generating a gap between two worlds—one the idle and unemployed citizens without prospects and the other a class of entrepreneurs engaged in parasitic and speculative activity. The league's report noted that the promise of tangible reform of the political system had not been kept, producing a political vacuum in which the citizens were not involved in decisions affecting their daily lives. It forthrightly assailed the government's "determination to keep the legal opposition on the sideline of debates and decisions on major national issues and the continuance of political trials, suspensions of newspapers, and the monopoly of audiovisual media."

The restoration of order was followed by the dismissal of Minister of Interior Driss Guiga. A report by an official commission of inquiry later declared that Guiga had neglected his legal and security obligations, had been slow in summoning the forces at his command against the rioters, and had even tried to exploit the disturbances to further his own ambitions. Guiga had left the country after his dismissal, saying that he had been picked as a scapegoat; he called the commission report "unproven slander." He was subsequently tried in absentia in June 1984 and sentenced to a jail term.

Presidential Succession

By 1983 Mzali, Bourguiba's presumptive successor under the terms of the Constitution, had begun to solidify his authority. In that year he succeeded in replacing three key cabinet members—Minister of Planning and Finance Mansour Moalla, Minister of Information Tahar Belkhodja, and Minister of National Economy Abdelaziz Lasram—with officials more congenial to him. The prime minister's differences with Moalla and Lasram over tactics in dealing with the socially sensitive issue of lifting price ceilings that had kept basic foodstuffs at artificially low levels served as the motive for their removal. Although Mzali still had potential rivals in high places, he continued to strengthen his position during 1984–85. He was somehow able to escape censure for the abrupt rise in the price of staple foods that ignited the January 1984 riots and was

even able to profit from the crisis by banishing Guiga, his main adversary. Guiga's portfolio was added to that of the prime minister, whose authority over that important ministry was reinforced by the appointment of Mzali's own cousin, Ameur Ghedira, as its deputy head. Mzali also succeeded in advancing several officers of his own choosing to high posts in the military and security services.

In March 1985 Bourguiba told the PSD Central Committee that "Mr. Mohamed Mzali has acquired experience over many years. . . . When the moment comes, he will not find himself incapable of taking charge." In the confrontation with Libya in August 1985 that sprang from the Libyan expulsion of Tunisian workers, the prime minister appeared to demonstrate his ascendancy over another potential contender, Foreign Minister Beji Caid Essebsi. Mzali also waged a relentless campaign over union wage demands and management of the UGTT against veteran labor leader Habib Achour, whom some thought Mzali might later face as a political opponent.

Among other prominent figures considered to be likely challengers to Mzali for the presidency, Minister of Public Works and Housing Mohamed Sayah was most often mentioned. Sayah was associated with a more authoritarian political style and was believed to be unsympathetic to the democratizing trends inspired by Mzali. He had headed the PSD over a span of 13 years and, while party director, had been responsible for the punishment of labor union members after the 1978 strikes and riots. He was said to have personal access to Bourguiba and was, moreover, considered to be a confidant of Habib Bourguiba, Jr., the president's son by his first wife, a woman of French origin. The younger Bourguiba had long been a member of the cabinet (special adviser to the president) but was removed from this position in early 1986. He was also president of the Tunisian Industrial Development Bank. Said to be in poor health, he was not thought to harbor personal ambitions for the presidency.

The president's second wife, Wassila Bourguiba, was accounted to be a factor in the maneuvering around the presidency, although her influence may have diminished after the disgrace of her ally, Guiga. She was said to be ill-disposed toward Sayah and Bourguiba, Jr., and was identified with the faction that included Essebsi and Minister of National Defense Slaheddine Baly. Hedi Baccouche, who had been called back from the important post of ambassador to Algeria to reinvigorate the decaying PSD apparatus, was yet another potential aspirant to the highest office.

Bourguibism and Destourian Socialism

Tunisia's philosophical and political heritage is a synthesis of the predominant values of earlier historical periods. The virtues of continuity, order, and stability developed during the period of Punic mercantilism. Roman law and custom, administered by a strong central government, reinforced Punic standards and values. Islam—particularly the urban strain of Islam in Tunisia—also attached importance to enterprise and order, and it prized the virtues of moderation, piety, and frugality. The beylical system provided another centralized political structure. The colonial period reaffirmed Tunisia's ties with the West and imparted both liberal humanitarianism and some authoritarian values found in French political philosophy. Most members of the Tunisian political elite, including Bourguiba, are French educated.

Bourguiba's fundamental ideas guiding his political thoughts and actions were propounded in speeches and writings, beginning with his newspaper columns in the early 1930s. His philosophical and ethical outlook—often referred to as Bourguibism—was founded on belief in human dignity, cultural modernism, rational use of resources, and social justice. He set realistic goals that could be attained by the application of reason. He saw people as basically good but needing to have their intellectual level raised to a stage where they would equate the public interest with their own.

Bourguiba concluded that if people were to fulfill their potential, then traditional social and religious constraints, as well as those imposed by material need, had to be eliminated. Thus, Bourguiba embarked on postindependence campaigns that advocated women's emancipation, opposed *habus* (see Glossary) property holdings and other conservative aspects of Islam, and stressed modernization through economic development.

The advance of democracy would have to go hand in hand with the spread of education, culture, and social progress. Bourguiba drew on nationalist feeling by stressing Tunisia's unique historic role. At the same time he insisted on the importance of retaining elements of French culture while seeking to model Tunisia's economic development on Western industrialized societies.

Bourguiba believed that the state had a positive role to play in channeling the energies of the people by providing guidance and technical and financial support in accomplishing national tasks. The unifying role of the state and the existing low level of political sophistication among the mass of the people were regarded as justifying the monolithic party structure and the party-state complex. Training and counsel in citizenship were to be provided by a small

minority of party activists who would contribute to the diffusion of decisions and policies made at the highest levels of state and party. They would, in effect, form an elite group of political tutors to the masses.

Destourian socialism, a combination of Bourguibism in a somewhat formalized form and the concept of systematic planning and intervention, was introduced by Bourguiba in June 1961. An undogmatic, original creation linked to the "objective realities" of the country, Destourian socialism was free from imported ideologies, including Marxism. For Bourguiba, the issue was not the Marxist struggle between classes but how the individual could be educated and evolve from a preoccupation with personal welfare to contributing to the good of the community and to human betterment. In its elitism, gradualism, rejection of class struggle, view of the individual, and emphasis on the state's function in directing rather than taking over economic activity, Destourian socialism resembled British Fabian socialism. It was not a rigid ideology but served the same purpose of clarifying long-term objectives, imparting a sense of continuity, and legitimizing the state's role by mustering a consensus for its goals and methods.

Destourian socialism, when first introduced, was designed to correct the inadequacies of the first years of independence when private investment and economic liberalism had failed to produce expected growth. To increase the pace of economic development and break down social rigidities and immobility, a system of comprehensive planning was adopted. In 1964 the nationalization of foreign-owned land, chiefly French, was followed by a five-year period during which the formation of agricultural cooperatives was stressed, initially on the sequestered French estates but later extending to large domestic landholders. Industrial and commercial life was also brought within the scope of collectivist plans.

In 1969, when these policies were in turn acknowledged as having failed, Bourguiba curtailed the socialist experimentation and reduced state regulation, reverting to encouragement of domestic capitalism and foreign investment. Politically, Bourguiba briefly embraced democratization, but at the 1974 party congress he reasserted the concept of a monolithic structure with an overlapping of the PSD and the state. The PSD was supposed to represent the "assembly point" through which a reconciliation of all interests was to be achieved.

By 1986 economic distress and Bourguiba's weakened physical condition had divested Bourguibism and Destourian socialism of much of their meaning and promise. His acceptance of political pluralism, enabling other parties to contest the election of 1981,

conceded that the PSD no longer need be seen as the unique force for national unity and the sole instrument for social and economic advancement. In reality, the party was an ossified institution, hollow at its base and no longer relevant to the needs and aspirations of the Tunisian public. Analyzing the sources of disenchantment with the Destourian ideal in his article "L'état Tunisien: de la tutelle au désengagement," French political scientist Michel Camau asserted that rather than creating a new model of the socially oriented citizen, development had brought a differentiation of interests marked by consumerism and individualism. Cleavages had sharpened between workers and enterprises and between wage earners and farmers. Regional divisions had intensified between the wealthier coastal cities and the western and southern sections of the country. The social "marginalization" of youth had been a prime determinant in the rising level of antisocial behavior and political radicalism, which had often turned to street violence. Camau warned that the vitality shown by Islamic renewal represented the gestation of a countersociety against the legally constituted state. In *Comparative Politics of North Africa*, John P. Entelis argues that it also implied a reaffirmation by the young of a deeply held sense of their Arabic and Islamic heritage and a decline in popularity of the notion of a French-Tunisian synthesis and of the secularist state.

As viewed by Camau, Destourianism had been overtaken by a new trend—one of relative disengagement by the state, which was reducing its social involvement and turning to the private sector to provide many public services. The state's role would be to intervene only to protect those citizens reduced to poverty as a result of the effects of market mechanisms. Camau interpreted the emergence of an opposition press and the lifting of the ban on opposition parties as part of the same evolution. Submitting to the law of the market in economic matters thus had as its counterpart the recognition of the existence of a plurality of political interests among the public.

The Destourian Socialist Party

In 1920 the Destour (Constitution) Party was created as part of the nationalist movement. Bourguiba and others broke from the Destour Party and in 1934 formed the Neo-Destour Party, which led the successful independence struggle against the French. With the acceptance of Destourian socialism as Tunisia's national ideology, the name of the party was changed in 1964 to the Destourian

Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Destourien—PSD) (see Destourian Socialism: Tunisia in the 1960s, ch. 1).

The party has never had serious rivals. Between 1963 and 1981 it was the only legal political formation. The party's success in building a broad, popular base of support in the struggle against France contributed greatly to its durability as the primary political force of the country. With independence achieved, the party was charged with tutoring the masses and providing a framework within which they could learn to participate in politics. As the government became increasingly involved in economic planning, the party was assigned the role of mobilizing the masses and providing the vehicle through which the people and the republic's leaders could communicate. In 1974 Bourguiba defined the state as "the instrument implementing the party's historical message."

Membership in the PSD is open to anyone who is not a member of another party, who agrees to pay regular dues, and who adheres to the party's principles. Officially, the total membership was 750,000 in 1984, implying the near doubling of its strength within a decade and representing roughly one in three of all citizens eligible to vote. An active party role is considered indispensable for senior officials in government and quasi-government posts. Governors and delegates are invariably the responsible party officials in their local jurisdictions. The highest party body, the Political Bureau, is composed largely of cabinet members. It is possible for especially qualified individuals to rise to high positions without having been party activists, but in such cases correspondingly high party titles may be assigned to them. In spite of the association of the PSD with career success in many fields, the party has not been able to retain its early vigor and has had difficulty attracting better educated younger members. The steady erosion of its vitality at the local levels has been frankly acknowledged.

The party's hierarchical structure has as its base the cells, sometimes referred to as branches, which numbered about 4,000 in 1985 (see fig. 11). Fifty party members were the minimum needed to form a cell, which was originally organized geographically according to place of residence of its members. Beginning in 1964, emphasis shifted to the creation of professional cells that enrolled people working in a particular enterprise. The professional cell was expected to help motivate the work force, to analyze problems and suggest solutions in meetings with management, and to lead the battle against waste and theft. Party cells have also been established among Tunisian migrant workers, particularly in France. The cells do not function with the same secrecy associated with many European communist and socialist party counterparts. Their

meetings are often open to the public. Local direction of the cell is the responsibility of an executive committee of 10 to 20 members elected every two years by and from the entire cell membership.

Above the cell is the circumscription, which is organized at the level of the delegations into which each governorate is divided. The circumscription coordinates the activities of the various cells; the presidents of the cells are included among the members of the circumscription's executive committee. The most important subnational party units are the regional coordinating committees, which numbered 28 in 1985—generally corresponding to one in each governorate, although Tunis had three. The coordinating committee is headed by a secretary general (appointed by the Political Bureau) and usually has 14 elected members. The secretary general is the chief full-time party functionary in the region, although the governor bears formal responsibility for party activities.

The National Congress, comprising up to 1,000 delegates elected by local executive committees, is usually held at five-year intervals. The regular congresses of 1974 and 1979 were, however, followed by an extraordinary congress in 1981. Regarded as the party's highest formal authority, it is in practice more of a consultative and advisory body that lends its endorsement to the policies introduced by the party executive, the government, and the president of the republic. The National Council functions as an interim congress between sessions. The National Congress elects the 80 members of the Central Committee, which meets periodically to develop and enunciate party doctrine.

The Political Bureau constitutes the main executive organ of the party. There are 22 bureau members, who are selected from among the Central Committee membership by the party president. Appointment to the Political Bureau is partly a matter of prestige, reflecting high standing in the party-state hierarchy. More sensitive policy issues and nominations for senior posts are likely to be raised in the Political Bureau, where views are exchanged more frankly than in the cabinet. Demotion from a senior government position or loss of presidential confidence is generally accompanied by removal from the Political Bureau as well. The newly appointed Political Bureau after the 1981 congress included 15 of the 21 government ministers, along with the heads of the leading organizations affiliated with the PSD (see table 10, Appendix). The highest position, that of president of the party, has been held exclusively by Bourguiba. The office of party secretary general is held by the prime minister. The official with day-to-day executive authority is the director; Baccouche replaced Mongi Kooli in this position in March 1984. It was agreed in 1979 to add to the Political Bureau

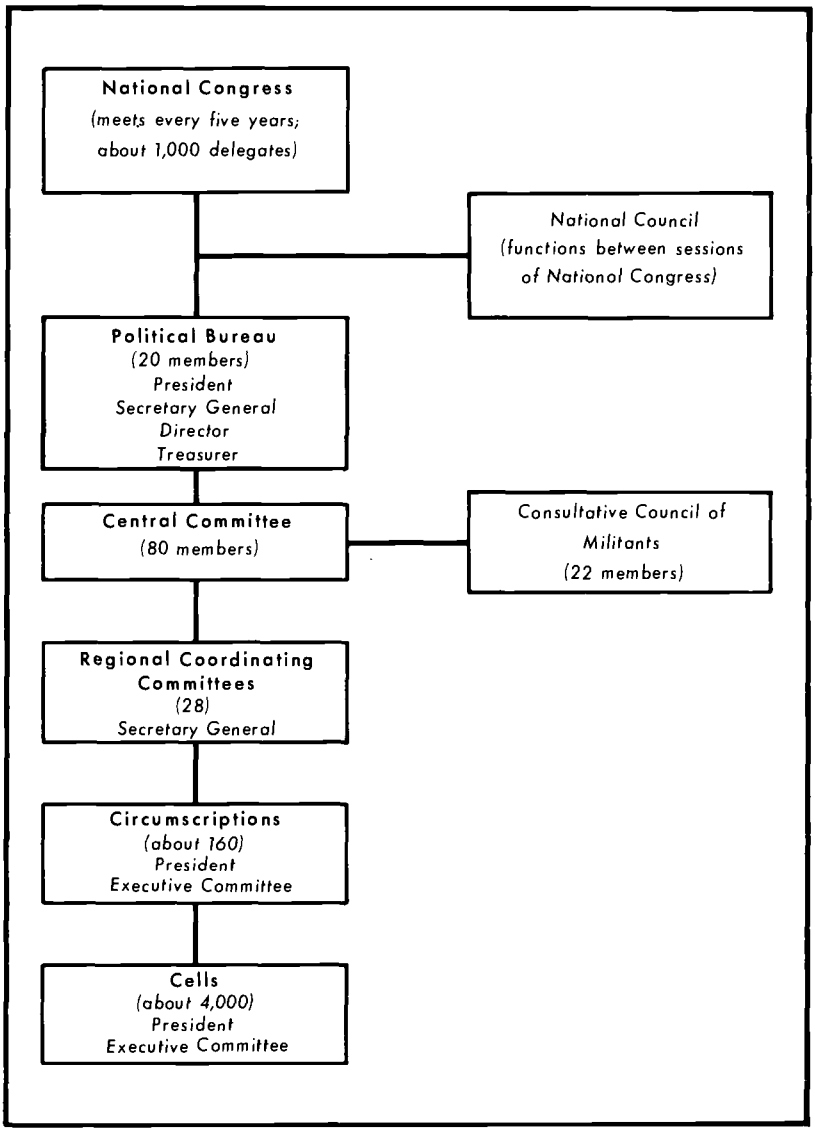


Figure 11. Structure of the Destourian Socialist Party, 1985

the 22-member Consultative Council of Militants comprising many veteran party members who had not been active in political life. Bechir Zarg Layoun, a close associate of the president since the independence era, was placed at its head.

Opposition Groups

By the close of 1985, three opposition parties had been legally recognized by the government. Another significant political force, the MTI, representing the Islamic renewal movement, had been denied legalization by the government in 1981, and its followers were for a time subject to suppression. The government's plan to introduce legislation in 1986 on the organization of political parties was intended to relax the conditions for other opposition bodies to qualify. The MTI in particular was expected to benefit if it could show that it had been fashioned as a party based on "moral authority" rather than religious commitment. Nonetheless, the PSD remained closely identified with the state at every tier of government and was firmly established in official agencies and enterprises. It was far from clear whether responsible party officials would be prepared to adjust their outlook and practices to the extent that unqualified acceptance of a multiparty system would entail.

Movement of Socialist Democrats

Although credited with less than 4 percent of the vote in the 1981 election, the Movement of Socialist Democrats (Mouvement des Démocrates Socialistes—MDS) is considered to be the primary contender among the authorized opposition groups. Its secretary general, Ahmed Mestiri, previously a leading liberal within the ranks of the PSD, was expelled from the government party in 1975, having been accused of disruptive factionalism. In 1977 more than 160 liberals, including Mestiri and other former cabinet ministers, appealed to Bourguiba to end the deterioration of civil liberties and called a national conference—later banned by the authorities—for the same purpose. In June 1978 Mestiri announced his intention to form a separate political party. Many of his liberal associates were unwilling to carry their differences with the Destourian Party this far and in 1980 accepted an invitation to be reintegrated into the PSD. These persons included Essebsi and Sadok Ben Jomaa, both of whom were rewarded with new cabinet portfolios.

The first congress of the MDS was held in December 1983, shortly after its formal recognition. Its elected National Council of 81 members included the heads of the regional federations and the 10 members of the Political Bureau, consisting of Mestiri and nine deputy secretaries general.

The MDS is a reformist group that urges a true multiparty system, relaxation of the PSD grip on the administration of the country, a more open political dialogue, an end to the harassment of opposition parties and their members, and greater press freedom. Its outlook on economic issues is little different from that of the PSD. It advocates an economy blending public and private sector activity and a broader range of legislation aimed at ameliorating social conditions.

Popular Unity Party

Ahmed Ben Salah, the former secretary of state for planning and finance and architect of the country's centralized planning policies during the 1960s, joined other dissidents to form the Movement of Popular Unity in Paris in 1973. The group's manifesto, *Toward a New Tunisia,* published in 1975, advocated a totally planned economy under strict state control, social reform, and a nonaligned foreign policy. It did not hesitate to criticize Bourguiba personally nor to question the legitimacy of the PSD government. A rift developed between the external and the internal wings of the movement, Ben Salah and a majority of the political committee opposing the establishment of local units within Tunisia and efforts to become registered as a legal party. The internal faction also adopted a less intransigent attitude toward Bourguiba. The split became formalized when four internal members applied for authorization to found a party and a newspaper in January 1981. The more moderate internal group, although designating itself the Movement of Popular Unity, was often referred to as MUP-II to distinguish it from the Ben Salah faction. In 1985 it was renamed the Popular Unity Party (Parti d'Unité Populaire—PUP). Its secretary general, Mohamed Ben Hadj Amor, described the party as "socialist nationalist" in its outlook and appealed for a unification of all leftist ranks in a single national front. The MUP attracted little public support in the 1981 election, gaining less than 1 percent of the announced vote.

Tunisian Communist Party

The Tunisian Communist Party (Parti Communiste Tunisien—PCT) was founded in 1920 as an arm of the French Communist Party but became independent in 1934. It adopted orthodox pro-Soviet positions, although in its program for the 1981 election it softened its approach. Its call for a united opposition front was, however, rejected by the MDS. It assailed the government's eco-

nomic policies as aggravating regional and social disparities and favoring the bourgeois classes but refrained from demanding the nationalization of the private sector. The PCT's foreign policy platform included peaceful coexistence and nonalignment, insisting on a firm stance against "imperialism—especially American imperialism." After Israel's invasion of Lebanon in 1982, the PCT called upon the government to freeze its relations with Washington and to dissolve the United States-Tunisian Joint Military Commission.

At the eighth congress of the PCT in 1981, a three-member Secretariat was elected, headed by Secretary General Muhammad Harmel, plus a Political Bureau of six members and a Central Committee of 12 members. The party was believed to have no more than 100 committed adherents. Its six candidates in the 1981 election attracted a vote of 15,000.

Islamic Political Organizations

The upsurge of orthodoxy and piety in the observance of religion in Muslim countries had had its resonance in Tunisian politics. The government, although initially tolerant of preaching and other activities of the Islamists, did not permit them to organize as a political party. Especially after their disruption of the University of Tunis in 1981 and their role in the 1984 rioting, the militant Muslims were liable to prosecution for sedition because their goals and methods were perceived as a threat to the stability of the state.

Bourguiba's secularist policies had been the object of complaints by more conservative elements of the Muslim community. They had never reconciled themselves to the reforms introduced by him in 1956—the suppression of religious courts and Quranic schools, the prohibition of polygyny, the restrictions on divorce, and the procedure used to calculate the beginning of Ramadan, the month of fasting. Wearing of Islamic garments by women was prohibited for students and for workers in government offices. Bourguiba's opposition to observance of the Ramadan fast by working people on the grounds of reduced productivity was a particular source of distress. Nevertheless, these differences did not bring the Islamists into direct conflict with the government until the late 1970s.

The Islamic renewal took a more militant turn after the Iranian revolution in 1979, led by Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini. Although the Tunisian Islamists drew encouragement from Khomeini's success in transforming Iran into a religious state, there was no direct link between the Shia activists in Iran and the Tunisians who adhered to the mainstream Sunni division of Islam. The

Islamic Revival Movement that formed in November 1979 soon split into a number of smaller groups, the only significant one being the MTI, which filed in June 1981 for recognition as a political party. Its application was refused by the government, and large-scale arrests of MTI sympathizers followed; charges included offending the dignity of the head of state, disseminating false information, and belonging to an unauthorized organization. Government officials blamed the MTI for violent incidents on university campuses and inflammatory sermons by dissident imams (see Glossary). About 70 of those arrested received prison sentences of one to 11 years.

Beginning in 1984, the government shifted to less suppressive tactics in dealing with the MTI. In August all 17 MTI leaders still in jail were pardoned, including the movement's president, Rachid Ghanouchi, and its secretary general, Abdelfattah Mourou. The group was still refused registration as a legal party, and its journals, *Al Maarifa* and *Al Mujtamaa,* continued to be banned. Permission to hold public meetings was not granted, and MTI activists—many of them civil servants or government-employed teachers—remained under surveillance. Nevertheless, in late 1985 Mzali met with the MTI leadership and hinted that an end to its political exclusion was a possibility.

The MTI calls for the application of Islamic principles to all forms of political, economic, and social life. It rejects the "cultural colonization" of the Islamic world by Western influence. It believes that the Islamic code of conduct as expressed in sharia should be the law of the land. Bourguiba's economic policies have been criticized as overly dependent on tourism from the West and on employment of Tunisian workers abroad. The MTI demands greater self-sufficiency for Tunisia by modernizing and raising the productivity of agriculture and by turning industry to the production of goods for domestic needs.

In June 1985 the MTI issued a declaration that was interpreted as an effort to help establish it as a popular movement and to make common cause with other opposition forces. The declaration urged respect for the independence of mass organizations (including the UGTT labor federation), a general amnesty for all those jailed or exiled for their views and political affiliations, a guarantee of the rights of expression and association, and an end to preventive detention and other violations of civil liberties. It was also announced that the MTI would be headed by a Political Bureau of five members including, in addition to Ghanouchi and Mourou, Hammadi al Jibali (political relations and organizations), Habib al

Lawz (Islamic religion and culture), and Habib al Suwaysi (information).

Leaders of the MTI attributed government repression of them to fear of MTI popularity if tested in an election. Although judged to be the most moderate and politically sophisticated of the Islamic groups, the MTI seemed saddled with contradictions, calling for progressiveness and political liberalization when the implications of this demand for a society guided by Islamic principles could only bring new restrictions to political life. A militant wing of the party was openly antidemocratic, standing for an authoritarian Islamic regime.

A smaller and less tolerant group, the Islamic Liberation Party, reportedly originated as a secret society in the Federal Republic of Germany (West Germany) but decided in early 1983 to mount a recruiting campaign inside Tunisia. Its efforts to gain a foothold among the Tunisian military resulted in the trial of 30 individuals before a military court in August of that year. The party has called for a return to the Islamic caliphate, embracing the concept of a nation rallying under a single leader embodying both spiritual and political authority.

Although the Islamic renewal had made the most headway among students, it had also gained a foothold in some labor unions and among the professions and the intelligentsia. Its message reached many others who felt that a strong Islamic orientation—if moderate and enlightened—could be a factor for stability and morality. In late 1984 a number of members of the Chamber of Deputies urged the government to convert compensation payments to imams into fixed government salaries and to fund education for the imams on the premise that these changes would qualify them to exercise greater freedom from official control in their choice of sermons. One deputy called for a prohibition on gambling, the sale of alcoholic beverages, and the adoption of Friday as the day of rest. In reply, a deputy representing the government claimed credit for actions that had already been taken to upgrade the status of the imams and to construct more mosques.

Other Groups

Other political organizations have been launched from time to time purporting to represent a range of viewpoints from Arab nationalism to various forms of socialism. None is known to have attracted any significant following. One of these, the National Arab Rally (Rassemblement National Arabe) was considered to be little more than a front for Libyan political doctrines and slogans. Its

leader, Bechir Essid, was sentenced in 1984 to a two-year jail term for slandering the head of state and members of the government. Twelve members of the Popular Revolutionary Movement (Mouvement Populaire Révolutionnaire) connected with Syrian-supported dissidents of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) were jailed in 1983 for planning attacks against Saudi Arabian and United States installations in Tunisia. The Progressive Socialist Rally (Rassemblement Socialiste Progressiste), formed in 1984 by Ahmed Neguib Chabi, framed its appeal in terms of radical social reform, drawing on Marxist principles.

Interest Groups

Several national groups having a semiofficial status have been created to represent the interests of various segments of Tunisian society. Most of the organizations were established during the independence struggle to contribute to the resistance effort against the French. Although autonomous from the PSD, these organizations were expected to act with the interests of the entire nation in mind and to contribute to national goals of social progress and economic modernization. Organized labor had been close to the PSD since the preindependence period and at times was regarded as one of the pillars of the Destourian movement. But by the mid-1980s the government was in bitter contention with the leaders of the labor unions and seemingly was determined to curb labor's efforts to become a separate political force. Students and youth tended to be among those most easily aroused to react to political events and had repeatedly been a source of social disruption. The official student organization was moribund, leaving most of the politically active students divided into antagonistic Islamic and leftist camps.

Other national organizations were concerned with women, traders, makers of handicrafts, and professional groups. They were not in the habit of openly confronting the government in the pursuit of their interests. The Tunisian Federation of Industry, Commerce, and Handicrafts (Union Tunisienne de l'Industrie, du Commerce, et de l'Artisanat—UTICA) represented employers in negotiations over wages and other conditions of work in pacts among government, industry, and labor that embodied long-range economic goals. The farmers' union, the National Union of Tunisian Farmers (Union Nationale des Agriculteurs Tunisiens—UNAT), has also been enlisted as a signatory in such social pacts.

The Tunisian League of Human Rights has succeeded in maintaining its independence from the government and has met

regularly with government officials to discuss arrests and detention procedures. It has chapters in a number of cities and publishes a bulletin recording claimed abuses of human rights.

The Tunisian military has been called upon to deal with internal disturbances in situations where the police have proved to be inadequate. The military is unusual in the Arab world, however, in never having acted except as an arm of the civilian state. The buildup of the armed forces in reaction to the perceived threat from Libya and the need for help in dealing with recurrent civil unrest have projected the military into a more prominent role. The possibility of involvement by politically conscious younger officers in a succession crisis or during severe domestic turmoil no longer seemed entirely implausible.

Organized Labor

In 1946 Ferhat Hached, who later became a national martyr in the fight for independence, led other Tunisian members out of the communist-dominated French General Confederation of Workers (Confédération Générale des Travailleurs—CGT) to form the UGTT. After its rift with the French group, the UGTT joined the noncommunist International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and established links with Western labor federations, including the American labor movement. The UGTT "froze" its relations with the ICFTU between 1982 and 1984 over the international body's failure to adopt a position of recognizing the Palestinians' right to self-determination after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon.

The UGTT had been strongly identified with Tunisia's independence struggle, serving as a front for Bourguiba's supporters when the Neo-Destour Party was banned by the French in the early 1950s. After Hached's assassination in 1952 by French colonial terrorists, Ben Salah aligned the UGTT with strongly socialist economic policies. Although later forced from the UGTT leadership, Ben Salah was able to see his views prevail for a period in the 1960s when he was the architect of the country's economic policies as secretary of state for planning and finance. The official relationship between the UGTT and the government and party remained cooperative into the early 1970s even though the UGTT, under the direction of Habib Achour, made greater efforts to chart an independent course. Strikes, almost nonexistent until 1970, increased in number and duration between 1974 and 1977, reflecting growing estrangement with the government. Violence broke out in January 1978 when the UGTT called a general strike in protest

over the arrest of a union leader and alleged that attacks against union offices in several towns had been officially inspired. Many people were killed and injured as workers clashed with the police, the army, and the PSD militia. Among the hundreds of persons arrested were Achour and nearly all of the 13 members of the UGTT Executive Board.

With the exception of Achour, who was kept under house arrest, the labor leaders were gradually released. At a special congress of the UGTT in May 1981, a new Executive Board was elected, 11 of whose members had served on the pre-1978 board, with Taieb Baccouche as secretary general. Baccouche, regarded as being to the left of Achour, was the first head of the UGTT who was not a member of the PSD. Pardoned by Bourguiba on the eve of the national election in November 1981, Achour was immediately elected to the newly created post of UGTT president. Baccouche and Achour shared the leadership until Achour engineered his own election as secretary general and the election of a new Executive Board supportive of his policies at a UGTT congress in December 1984. The post of president was abolished. Baccouche, given responsibility for the weekly *Ach Chaab,* was dismissed in 1985 for articles of a leftist and anti-Muslim slant deemed likely to invite official retribution. He apparently kept his post as deputy secretary general of the UGTT.

The decision by the UGTT to participate with the PSD in a national front in the election of 1981, reached by a narrow majority, remained a source of dissension within the federation. The 27 members of the UGTT elected as deputies to the Chamber of Deputies included eight members of the Executive Board. In debating economic and social issues, the UGTT members found themselves in an awkward position when they were expected to support even those government programs that had been opposed by the federation.

A new labor body, the Tunisian National Workers' Union (Union Nationale des Travailleurs Tunisiens—UNTT), was founded in February 1984 by Abdelaziz Bouraoui and six other members of the UGTT Executive Board who had previously been expelled as a result of internal disagreements. The dissidents had been associated with the controversial decision to join the PSD in a common election front. They accused Achour of conducting the UGTT's affairs in an increasingly authoritarian manner after his release from arrest. The UNTT was in turn suspected of having been formed with the encouragement of the government in an effort to divide the labor movement. The UNTT subsequently cooperated with the

PSD in the 1985 communal elections, which were boycotted by the opposition parties as well as the UGTT.

In 1985 unionized workers represented only about 17 percent of the total work force. They were concentrated in the public sector, state-owned industries, and some of the larger private enterprises. Although agriculture absorbed 32 percent of the labor force, only 2 percent—those employed by large, state-owned cooperatives—were unionized. Before the formation of the UNTT, the UGTT claimed a membership of 400,000. The UNTT was reported to have 55,000 members in 1985, all from unions that had disaffiliated from the UGTT.

The government had traditionally been willing to ensure that workers would share in economic growth by steadily raising wages. Faced in the mid-1980s with converging strains on the economy, however, the government was unwilling to lift its wage freeze in spite of mounting inflation. The UGTT threatened general strike action in 1985 if its demands for halting the decline in real wages were not met. The government reacted by withdrawing the check-off of union dues at the source—a serious threat to union finances—and the right to hold union meetings in the workplace. The labor newspaper was also banned for six months (see Politics and the Information Media, this ch.).

The struggle escalated later in the year when Mzali, abetted by the government media, embarked on a fierce campaign to bring about Achour's downfall. Achour was subjected to house arrest on charges of mismanagement, diversion of union funds, and sympathy for Libya. In December 1985 he and other union officials were sentenced to prison. Sadok Alouch was installed as the new secretary general. The government apparently had curbed the federations autonomy and had parried the threat of a new labor party sponsored by the UGTT.

Students

University campuses have been the scenes of repeated protests, strikes, and violence between students of the Islamic movement and Marxists. The majority of students are not aligned with either group and are generally not politically active, although they have been involved in demonstrations against policies imposed by educational authorities. The General Union of Tunisian Students (Union Générale des Étudiants Tunisiens—UGET), autonomous but historically connected to the PDS, had become moribund after the government removed its elected leaders during the 1970s. The new Mzali government had committed itself in 1981 to the revival of

the student movement by permitting a national student congress and promised that it would recognize whatever leadership was properly elected. The turmoil created by extremists from the Islamic and leftist factions had, however, frustrated efforts to launch a new movement that would be more representative of the student population.

Founded clandestinely by the Neo-Destour Party in 1952, the UGET made significant contributions to the fight against the French. UGET strongly supported Bourguiba's domestic social and economic policies but criticized him for an approach deemed too conservative on some foreign policy matters. The relevance of the UGET as an instrument for focusing attention on student political concerns faded after 1971 when the government replaced the UGET executive bureau, elected by the student organization's national congress, with a pro-PSD faction. By the mid-1970s the contest for control of the UGET was overshadowed by mounting student dissatisfaction with the government over a wide range of issues.

Student unrest and disturbances, resulting in the suspension of classes, became virtually an annual phenomenon after 1978. Although in many cases student agitation was directed at specific grievances—the use of government "monitors" in classrooms, examination practices, or the detention of student activists—it also was a manifestation of alienation from what was perceived as an outmoded political and social system dominated by a declining Bourguiba. In 1982 Mzali maintained that, of a university student body of 35,000, only 5,000 were interested in politics. Most of these, he said, were Islamists inspired by Iran's Khomeini. Mzali attributed the recurrent unrest to a situation in which more and more young people were being offered an opportunity for education at the same time that the faltering economy was unable to absorb new graduates in meaningful employment.

Since 1981, student politics have crystallized into a power struggle between the Islamic militants and the Marxists. Clashes between the two groups practically paralyzed the university faculties and institutes between November 1984 and March 1985. To alleviate the crisis, the authorities endorsed the convocation of a general congress of students, a proposal both the leftists and the Muslims favored in principle. Differences over the specifics of launching such a congress and over the creation of a new student union prevented its realization. In 1984 a renewed effort was made to resuscitate the student wing of the PSD by forming party cells at each university faculty. Student moderates, however, were discouraged from attempting to meet and express themselves out of fear of

encountering violence from the Islamists. In 1985 the PSD student movement issued an invitation to the non-Destourians to combine and form a new body to negotiate differences with the administration, but it was received negatively by the other factions, and physical attacks on the PSD students by the Muslims were renewed.

A troublesome source of potential destabilization, the student element had repeatedly proved difficult for the government to negotiate with or to control. Although bitterly divided ideologically, the students could at times join forces with other dissidents to protest social conditions or economic injustice. Many of the students supporting the MTI were not eager for a return to the Islamic orthodoxy but simply regarded the movement as the best organized opposition force to a regime that no longer commanded their allegiance.

Women

The emancipation of women has always been extremely important to Bourguiba. Legal equality between the sexes has been vigorously upheld by the Tunisian government in spite of Islamist pressures for a much more restrictive role for women. The Code of Personal Status of 1956, considered to be virtually unique in the Arab world, did much to place women on an equal social and economic level with men. Rights similar to those found in Western legal systems permit women to initiate divorce actions, ban the practice of polygyny, and protect women in child custody cases. Inheritance procedures remain more restrictive (see The Individual, the Family, and the Sexes, ch. 2).

Women are encouraged to vote and participate in the political process. Many women are in the labor force, and more and more are found in administrative positions or are teachers, lawyers, physicians, and civil servants. Relatively few are active in political life or hold high government office. The restraints of Arab and Islamic traditions, especially in rural areas, have inhibited women from insisting on the full expression of their legal rights.

Of 40,000 students enrolled in the 41 faculties and institutes of the University of Tunis in 1984, about 40 percent were women. Among the 132 deputies elected to the Chamber of Deputies in 1981, seven were women. In 1984, there were 478 women among the 3,540 PSD candidates elected to communal councils on the single electoral slate. A small number of female jurists are active among the country's magistrates. The first two women to sit in the Tunisian cabinet since independence were named by Bourguiba in 1983. Fathia Mzali, wife of the prime minister, was appointed min-

ister of family and women's advancement. She had been politically active as a deputy and a member of the Political Bureau of the PSD. The other new female cabinet member was Souad Yacoubi, dean of the Faculty of Medicine at Sousse, who was designated minister of public health.

The National Union of Tunisian Women (Union Nationale des Femmes Tunisiennes—UNFT), founded in 1956, offers through its local branches instruction in literacy, civics, hygiene, family planning, sewing, and other courses. It also helps to operate nurseries, and it participates in public health campaigns. The UNFT has less of a political character than the UGTT or the student movements. Fathia Mzali was president of the UNFT at the time she was nominated to the cabinet.

Politics and the Information Media

In spite of strict supervision imposed by the government, the communications media have been an important and accepted feature of political life in Tunisia. As part of the liberalizing trend under Mzali, several opposition journals were licensed in 1980, and scrutiny of the press was relaxed. The tolerance shown for editorial independence proved to be only transitory, however. Especially after the strikes and demonstrations of January 1984, seizures and suspensions had a crippling effect on the opposition publications. Western and Arabic-language journals published abroad continued to be available, although those issues critical of the Tunisian leadership were likely to be seized. Radio and television stations were operated or controlled by the government. Television was the primary source of news and played a major role in forming the political opinions of most Tunisians.

Newspapers

During the period of the French protectorate (1881–1956), the press was dominated by French-owned, French-language newspapers. Bourguiba wrote for two years for the organ of the old Destour Party, *La Voix du Tunisien*, until in 1930 he founded his own newspaper, *L'Action Tunisienne*. Before the French suspended all nationalist publications in 1933, Bourguiba used his journal to appeal for solidarity among all Tunisians—not just among Muslims but also among Jews and poorer European workers.

After independence a press regulation law was passed requiring official approval for all domestic and foreign journals. In 1955

L'Action appeared as the organ of the Neo-Destourian Party. The independent *La Presse*, politically neutral but leaning toward the French administration, was suspended and reappeared as *La Presse de Tunisie*, a progovernment newspaper published by the official news agency, Tunis-Afrique Press (TAP). Another daily, *Al Amal*, was the Arabic-language counter part to *L'Action*. These three officially sponsored publications plus two independent newspapers constituted five of the six dailies published in 1985 (see table 11, Appendix).

Efforts to establish a genuine opposition press met with little success under the rigid stewardship of Prime Minister Nouira. The weekly *Ar Rai*, linked with the dissidents of the MDS, obtained permission to publish in late 1978, but editor Hasib Ben Ammar was among those who abandoned the movement when the decision was made to convert it into an opposition party. In 1980 the MDS weekly organs, *Al Mostakbal* and *L'Avenir*, were authorized, although the party itself had not yet been legalized. When permission was granted for the communist PCT to resume its activity in 1981, its weekly *Al Tariq Al Jadid* was also licensed to publish.

A press code adopted in 1975 required that all persons managing or financing publications in the country be Tunisian citizens. The code reaffirmed freedom of the press but prescribed limits where necessary "to protect society from anything injurious to tranquillity, security, and public order," as well as to "protect the state and the constituted agencies of government against anything liable to cause foreign or domestic disorders." Direct attacks against the president, senior members of the government, or the structure of the state were also forbidden. Formal censorship has not been practiced, but editors have generally been able to sense what would be tolerated. Criticism by the opposition press has been constant but has been expressed in guarded terms. Suspensions, usually of three to six months, have nevertheless been frequently imposed, sometimes for seemingly trivial lapses. The UGTT journal, *Ach Chaab*, was suspended for six months just after it began to appear on a daily basis in July 1985, ostensibly because it had printed untrue statements predicting a shuffle of regional governors found to be incompetent. It was believed, however, that the real reason for the government's curb was its sensitivity to an editorial that attacked an announced rise in bread prices. Among 10 suspensions or seizures recorded in 1984, the independent weekly *Réalités* was banned for six months for printing excerpts of an interview with an exiled politician. Even the PSD magazine, *Dialogue*, was suspended for three months, reportedly be-

cause it gave less prominence to Bourguiba's meeting with Algerian president Chadli Bendjedid than to Mzali's visit to India.

The government has also been in a position to influence the press by offering subsidies in the form of official advertising or by bringing pressure to bear against would-be advertisers in opposition journals. The government has maintained further control through its news agency, TAP, which edits news items supplied to the domestic media. No reporter may legally function without a press card issued by the Tunisian journalists' union. Although affiliated with the PSD, the union has protested against the suspension of newspapers and the detention and imprisonment of journalists. It has urged the government to amend the Press Code to make it more democratic in accordance with constitutional provisions on freedom of opinion, thought, and expression.

Because the two independent dailies, *As Sabah* and *Le Temps*, have observed official guidelines, their content has differed little from that of the three government-sponsored dailies. Government policy statements and Bourguiba's pronouncements or public appearances received generous treatment in all newspapers. After Bourguiba's recovery in 1985 from a heart attack suffered the previous year, photographs of him receiving visitors in his office or taking walks were featured on almost a daily basis. The unofficial publications have been somewhat more popular because they have reported more details and have expressed opinions more openly. Government newspapers have tended to adopt a friendly tone toward the United States—with the exception of Washington's policies on the Middle East and the Third World generally. The independent dailies, however, have made the United States a target of severe criticism whenever an opportunity presented itself.

The most influential foreign journal, especially among intellectuals and senior officials, has been the Paris newspaper *Le Monde*. Other French publications, as well as Arabic-language journals published in London and Paris, have also been widely read. The weekly *Jeune Afrique*, edited by Tunisian expatriates in Paris, has remained popular, especially among students. Its coverage of Tunisian events has frequently resulted in individual issues being seized and, in late 1984, an outright ban for three months.

Radio and Television

The broadcast media have been a state monopoly since independence, administered by a public corporation, Tunisian Radio and Television (Radiodiffusion Télévision Tunisienne—RTT), under the Ministry of Information. RTT operated radio stations

broadcasting in Arabic and French from Tunis, as well as regional stations in Sfax and Monastir. It was estimated in 1984 that there were about 1.5 million radio receivers in the country.

Television had overtaken radio in popularity and was considered the most influential medium of information. In 1985 there were over 500,000 television receivers, of which 50,000 were located in community centers in villages and settlements. Virtually everyone in the country had access to television. According to a public opinion poll, 62 percent of the Tunisian population relied on television for their news and information used in forming their opinions.

When younger, Bourguiba made effective use of television and radio to explain his policies and maintain personal touch with the public. After his health declined, his earlier talks were widely rebroadcast as reminders of his importance to the nation's development and as lessons in Destourianism.

Three television channels were available in 1985. The Arabic-language channel operated in the late afternoon and evening for 47 hours per week. A second channel, which began broadcasting in mid-1983, had 90 percent of its programming in French and went on the air daily at 8:30 P.M. Financed by France, this channel carried a selection of programs from French, Belgian, and Swiss television. Protests that the second channel would have a negative effect on the Arabic-Islamic personality of the country were rejected by the minister of information, who reasoned that the "maturity of the Tunisian people and their attachment to Arab-Islamic authenticity" had protected them against French cultural domination in spite of 75 years of colonization. The third televison channel transmitted Italian and Eurovision programs by means of a microwave relay station built before RTT had its own television facilities.

Foreign Relations

In the conduct of its foreign affairs, Tunisian's primary concern is with the management of its manifold ties—political, economic, and social—with its neighbors of North Africa. Its relations with Algeria and Libya, the two stronger contiguous states, have alternated between periods of tension and periods of relative harmony. During the 1980s relations with Algeria have improved dramatically, but relations with Libya have been buffeted by recurrent crises.

In the past, Tunisia's moderation on the emotional issues of the Middle East at times caused misunderstandings with the more radical Arab countries. More recently, the republic's foreign policy has largely corresponded to the mainstream Arab position, emphasizing the need for a peaceful resolution of the Palestinian problem as part of an overall Arab-Israeli settlement.

Under Bourguiba, Tunisia has generally aligned itself with the West on major East-West questions and has played a constructive role in debates in Third World and Arab forums. The president has cultivated ties with the United States and has cooperated with Washington in efforts to find peace in the Middle East. United States economic and technical aid has accounted for one-third of total foreign economic assistance received by Tunisia. Sharp disputes with France in the early years of Tunisian independence were bridged during the 1970s. Bourguiba's affinity for France contributed to the continuing importance of that country in cultural and educational matters. France was also the North African republic's primary trading partner and the leading source of its tourist revenue.

Its many ties to the West notwithstanding, Tunisia has remained an active member of the major organizations of the Arab, Muslim, and African worlds. It has participated in the Nonaligned Movement and its economic counterpart, the Group of 77 (see Glossary); the League of Arab States (Arab League); and the Organization of the Islamic Conference. Tunisia was a founding member of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 and associated itself with other moderate French-speaking African states when disputes threatened the cohesion of the OAU in the early 1980s.

Maghribi Affairs

The ideal of a unified Maghrib recalls the splendors of the past, and all of the states of northwest Africa pay homage to it. In spite of the similarity of societies, language, religion, and history, no meaningful steps have been taken in the postcolonial era to advance the unity to which each country subscribes.

In its Constitution, Tunisia proclaims that it "is part of the Great Arab Maghrib and shall work for its unity within the framework of common interests." Indeed, Tunisia has consistently supported initiatives to expand coooperation among the countries of the Maghrib. Tunisia was a founding member of the Maghrib Permanent Consultative Committee, established at Tunis in 1964 with the aim of eventually creating a Maghribi economic community. Bi-

lateral difference prevented any real progress toward this goal, although a rudimentary secretariat was still in place in 1985. Various efforts have succeeded in reducing some of the formal barriers to trade among Maghribi countries, and joint projects have been initiated; but the prospects for much economic integration appear limited. Inter-Maghribi trade remained at a low level owing in part to the absence of complementary products. To a large extent the countries of the region saw one another as commercial rivals marketing similar agricultural products in Western Europe.

A preoccupying factor for Tunisia has been the need to neutralize periodic threats to its security from the unpredictable Libyan leader, Muammar al Qadhaafi, either by finding common grounds for cooperation with him or by seeking protection through alignments with other powers. It previously feared efforts on the part of Algeria to destabilize the Bourguiba regime, but since 1980 Tunisia and Algeria have gradually succeeded in harmonizing their political and economic relations, culminating in a joint security treaty in 1983. Division of the Maghrib into rival camps was formalized the following year when Morocco and Libya announced that they had secretly entered into an alliance. Officially, Tunisia adopted a positive tone regarding the new Morocco-Libya "union," professing to accept it as a step toward rapprochement and unity among Maghribi members. In reality, however, Tunisian officials were made uneasy by a pact that seemed directed against their friendly neighbor, Algeria, and that seemed to place the conservative Moroccan King Hassan's seal of approval on Qadhaafi's adventurism. During the first part of 1985, Tunisian diplomacy was directed at convening a summit meeting of the Maghribi heads of state to prevent the new alignments from hardening into separate power blocs and to rekindle the unification movement. But Qadhaafi's political unreliability and differences centering on Morocco's claim to sovereignty over the Western Sahara complicated all such initiatives designed to relieve tensions in the region.

Algeria

Tunisia contributed material support to the Algerian war of independence against the French (1954–61) and permitted the provisional Algerian government and its armed forces to operate on Tunisian soil. Diplomatic relations were briefly severed after Algeria was accused of involvement in the December 1962 plot to assassinate Bourguiba. Despite the fact that both countries gave sanctuary to the opponents of each other's regimes during the 1960s, political relations were normal, and economic ties were reinforced,

notably in the energy sector. A long-standing disagreement over their mutual border was resolved in 1970, at which time a treaty of friendship and good neighborliness was also concluded, providing for a joint Algerian-Tunisian commission to meet annually.

Misunderstandings arose in 1974 after Tunisia signed an accord—quickly renounced—for a merger with Libya and again in 1980 when a group of Tunisian insurgents who were trained in Libya crossed Algerian territory in an unsuccessful attack against the city of Gafsa. The Algerian government denied any part, maintaining that local Algerian officials had acted on their own in facilitating the transit. In spite of its suspicions of higher-level complicity, Tunis chose to accept this explanation.

During the visit of Mzali to Algiers in September 1980 shortly after being named prime minister, the two neighbors affirmed their intent to give new impetus to their relationship. It was agreed that the two heads of government would meet every six months; that the joint commission, which had not come together for five years, would be revived; and that a number of jointly agreed upon projects and forms of cooperation that had not materialized would be relaunched.

The dramatic improvement in relations between the two countries was cemented in 1983 by a 20-year treaty of friendship and concord. Although widely interpreted as a precaution against the Libyan threat, this security pact was to remain open for other Maghribi states to join and was represented by its two signatories as a suitable framework for regional unity. Mauritania endorsed the treaty later in the same year. The three countries were pledged to respect one another's territorial integrity, to avoid resorting to force in settling differences, to reject alliances or coalitions hostile to any of them, and to deter activities by any group on their soil that threatened the security of another or that sought to change its government by violent means.

Several new forms of economic collaboration, including joint projects for the manufacture of cement and diesel engines, were subsequently announced by Algeria and Tunisia. Working groups were studying the joint manufacture of chemical fertilizers, tires, and trucks. Apartment construction in Algeria's border areas by Tunisian firms was foreseen. A pipeline through which Algerian natural gas flows to Italy across Tunisian territory and beneath the Mediterranean Sea was inaugurated in 1983.

Libya

Libya has often been a troublesome neighbor, especially since 1974, when a projected union between the two countries was aborted by Tunisia. The impulsive Qadhaafi has repeatedly sought to inject himself into the internal politics of Tunisia. It has been feared that should Tunisia become embroiled in a dispute over the succession to Bourguiba, Qadhaafi might well exploit the situation as a pretext to intervene. The Libyan-supported insurgent attack at Gafsa and the presence of about 2,000 Tunisian dissidents in Libyan training camps during the early 1980s were viewed as evidence of Qadhaafi's capacity for stirring unrest. In addition to its vastly greater military power, Libya also has held important economic cards. The two countries have staked competing claims to an oil-rich sector of the Gulf of Gabès. Repatriated earnings of Tunisian migrant workers in Libya have provided needed incomes for several hundred thousand of their dependents remaining in Tunisia.

In January 1974 Bourguiba surprisingly agreed to a merger with Libya in spite of the fact that only a year earlier he had rejected such an idea as unrealistic and had chided Qadhaafi for his youth and inexperience in suggesting it. Prime Minister Nouira, out of the country at the time, quickly returned home and apparently prevailed upon Bourguiba to retract his acceptance. Foreign Minister Mohamed Masmoudi, who was thought primarily responsible for the unity plan, was dismissed. In 1984 Masmoudi briefly became a renewed source of contention between the two countries when he accepted the post of Libyan permanent representative to the United Nations (UN). Threatened under a special law with the loss of his Tunisian citizenship, he relinquished the Libyan appointment.

The question of continental shelf oil reserves provoked another dispute with Libya. Eventually the two countries agreed to submit their cases to the International Court of Justice in The Hague, whose judgment on a line of demarcation in February 1982 favored Libya. The Court rejected Tunisia's plea that its relative poverty in oil and gas resources was a relevant factor. As of 1985 a treaty accepting the court's suggested boundary had not been concluded. The proposed delimitation left enough ambiguity to enable Tunisia to claim rights to exploit significant fields of oil and gas.

The attack on Gafsa in 1980, although mounted from Algerian territory, brought relations to a new low. Members of the captured raiding party confessed that the plot had been planned and organized in Libya on the initiative of the Libyan government,

which had recruited the group from Tunisian migrant workers. Tunisia addressed complaints against Libya's role to both the Arab League and the OAU. Neither body specifically condemned Libya but offered mediation facilities to help normalize relations. Tensions eased somewhat after Mzali succeeded Nouira as prime minister; the Libyans had considered Nouira as hostile to them since Tunisia's reversal on the merger plan.

A further stage of reconciliation was reached in January 1981 when, during a visit to Tunis by the Libyan secretary of state for foreign affairs, agreement was reached on a three-stage program for improving relations. These stages included the resumption of diplomatic relations, which had been suspended over the Gafsa raid; the examination of possibilities for widespread economic cooperation; and the establishment of a joint commission to study political coooperation and the opening of borders. A cooperation agreement signed during Qadhaafi's visit to Tunis in February 1982 held out the promise of a wide-ranging partnership in industrial and financial activity, the linkage of road networks and an electric power grid, the abolition of tariffs and entry visas, and the adoption of common customs procedures. A supreme joint commission, composed of members of the Tunisian Council of Ministers and the Libyan General People's Council, held three sessions between March 1982 and December 1984.

In spite of the improved atmosphere for economic collaboration, several minor border incidents and continued sniping at Bourguiba in the Libyan press (described as an "elderly marionette in the hands of the Americans") continued to plague political relations. In a joint security committee, Libyan officials called upon Tunisia to expel anti-Qadhaafi Libyans. Tunisian officials, in turn, wanted Libya to close its training camps for dissident Tunisians. Tensions flared in August 1985 when Libya carried out the sudden deportation of some 30,000 migrant workers. The number of Tunisians working in Libya had gradually fallen from a peak of 200,000 in the mid-1970s to less than 25,000 by December 1985 as the result of an austerity program and a drop in oil revenues. The Libyans made half-hearted attempts to justify their 1985 eviction on economic grounds, but the brusque and harsh way in which it was carried out served to remind Tunisians of Qadhaafi's capacity for mischiefmaking. In retaliation, Tunisia severed diplomatic relations and expelled several hundred Libyan officials.

Morocco

Tunisian-Moroccan relations have rarely been disturbed by serious differences. Both countries have a tradition of friendship with the West, share similar views on major international issues, and are among the more moderate Arab voices on relations with Israel and the problem of the Palestinian Arabs. Tunisia refrained from openly criticizing Morocco's 1984 alliance with Libya, directing its efforts to the avoidance of further polarization in the Maghrib that could inflame the rivalry between Morocco and Algeria. The Moroccan-Libyan "union" did introduce a potentially complicating dimension to the relationship. In the event of an open clash between Libya and Tunisia, Morocco was committed under the terms of the alliance to stand by Libya. In reality, such an eventuality seemed highly improbable.

On the primary matter of contention among the Maghribi countries—Morocco's annexation of the Western Sahara—Tunisia had originally favored partition between Morocco and Mauritania. This placed the government in Tunis at odds with Algiers, which backed the anti-Moroccan independence movement that in 1976 declared itself the Saharan Arab Democratic Republic (SADR). Tunisia's Saharan foreign policy gradually shifted to one of strict neutrality and support for a referendum by the Saharawi people (residents of the Western Sahara) on self-determination. It joined with other members of the OAU, mostly moderate French-speaking states, to block Algeria's efforts in 1982 and 1983 to gain recognition for a SADR delegation at OAU summit meetings. In 1984, however, Tunisia did not oppose the near-unanimous vote for seating the SADR, which precipitated Morocco's withdrawal from the OAU.

Other Arab Countries

During the early years of its independence, Tunisia did not place high priority on its relations with the eastern Arab countries, whose disputes and preoccupations had little to do with the problems facing the new republic. It did not join the Arab League until 1958, and Tunisia boycotted its meetings between 1958 and 1961 because of differences with the Egyptian leader, Gamal Abdul Nasser. Tunisia generally allied itself with the conservative Arab oil states—first against Nasser's domination of the league and later against the radical policies of some of the organization's other members. Bourguiba adopted a relatively moderate position over the Arab-Israeli conflict. He advocated acceptance of the 1947 UN

resolution that sanctioned the partition of the area, then called Palestine, into independent Arab and Jewish states as the basis for a negotiated settlement. His stand aroused ill-feeling among other Arab states, but differences were resolved with the outbreak of the Arab-Israeli June 1967 War. Tunisia organized a military expeditionary force, which did not see action, however, because of the brevity of the war. A small military contingent and matériel assistance were contributed to the Arab cause in the October 1973 War. Bourguiba's commitment to an eventual negotiated settlement based on the 1947 UN resolution remained unchanged by the two conflicts.

The gradual reconciliation between Tunisia's views on the Middle East and those of other Arab states made it possible for the headquarters of the Arab League to be transferred from Cairo to Tunis when Egypt was ostracized as a result of its peace treaty with Israel in 1978. A Tunisian, Chadli Klibi, was appointed secretary general of the league and was reelected for a second five-year term in 1984. The Organization of the Islamic Conference, a grouping of 45 Arab and non-Arab Muslim states, has had as its secretary general since 1979 another Tunisian, Habib Chatti.

The Tunisian leadership was active in the formulation of the peace plan at an Arab summit meeting at Fès, Morocco, in September 1982. The plan, which called for Israeli withdrawal from the territories occupied after the 1967 war and the dismantling of Israeli West Bank settlements seemed consistent with Bourguiba's long-held position, although it did not promise formal recognition of the state of Israel.

The Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982 was strongly criticized by Tunisia, as was United States aid to Israel, which was viewed as having made the Israeli attack possible. When the PLO forces were obliged to evacuate Beirut, their leader, Yasir Arafat, was permitted to shift his headquarters to Tunis. The move helped Tunisia's standing with other Arab nations but was later to entangle it more directly in Middle Eastern politics. In 1985 about 500 PLO officials and their families, as well as representatives of other Palestinian mass organizations, were lodged in various suburbs of Tunis. Most of the 1,000 or so PLO combatants who had been evacuated with Arafat had drifted back to Lebanon or Syria.

Tunisia was critical of Egypt's confrontation policy toward Israel during the late 1950s and 1960s and of Nasser's ardent pan-Arabism and his friendly relations with the Soviet Union. Anwar al Sadat's accession to the presidency after Nasser's death in 1970 brought a marked improvement in relations. Sadat's peace initative toward Israel, beginning in 1977, was, however, regarded

by Tunis as a unilateral action damaging to Arab solidarity. Tunisia joined the Arab consensus in severing formal relations with Cairo and in suspending Egypt's membership in the Arab League in protest over the Camp David Agreements with Israel in 1978. In practice, normal contacts were maintained.

Tunisia has generally found itself in harmony with the policies of the more moderate nations of the Mashriq, or eastern Arab world. Disappointed in its efforts to expand trade and investment ties with Western Europe, Tunis had courted participation in its economic development plans by the oil states of the Persian Gulf, with which it has shared an aversion to Arab extremism. Loans and grants from Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Saudi Arabia have contributed significantly to Tunisia's economic infrastructure, major industrial projects, and development of tourism. Tunis has also maintained cordial ties with Iraq. Without directly supporting Baghdad after its attack on Iran in 1981, Tunisia denounced Iran's conduct, called for nonintervention by other Arab states to prevent further division, and appealed for peace negotiations under the auspices of the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

France and the European Community

Tunisia has maintained extensive historical, cultural, and economic ties with Western Europe. France has been by far the most prominent among the European powers as a result of the two countries' long common experience and of Bourguiba's determination after independence that his country's Gallic cultural heritage should not be weakened. The two states shared several political objectives—a peaceful Mediterranean, pacification in the Middle East, and a desire to resolve regional differences in North Africa in order to concentrate on economic development.

During the early years of Tunisian independence, cooperation was hampered by a succession of disputes. Relations were briefly broken in 1958 in the aftermath of a border incident provoked by Tunisian efforts to aid Algeria in its war of independence against France. The 1961 crisis over continued French use of the military airfield at Bizerte again resulted in a rupture of relations. Tunisian nationalization of French-owned property in 1964 produced a new period of strain resulting in the cancellation of French economic aid (see Relations with France, ch. 1).

In 1972 Bourguiba visited France for the first time in his official capacity as president of Tunisia. When French president

Valéry Giscard d'Estaing reciprocated by coming to Tunis in 1976, the communiqué at the conclusion of his stay described relations between the two countries as "exemplary." Some of the warmth was dissipated after socialist François Mitterrand became president of France in 1981. During Mitterrand's official visit to Tunisia in October 1983, however, progress was made in resolving a number of outstanding problems. Agreement was reached on a method for speeding up the unblocking of nearly US$50 million in French assets that had been frozen more than 20 years earlier. Mitterrand reiterated assurance of the well-being and security of 214,000 Tunisian residents in France who had felt threatened by attacks from right-wing groups.

Although France extended no formal commitments to Tunisia, it had by its gestures implied a readiness to come to the aid of the existing government. As a reminder of France's capacity to intervene at short notice, three French warships hastily sailed from Toulon on a "routine maneuver" after the attacks on Gafsa in 1980. Emergency shipments of wheat and other foodstuffs were announced after the disturbances of January 1984. The visit by the French foreign minister, Roland Dumas, to Tunis in September 1985 at a time of tensions with Libya was interpreted as symbolizing French concern for Tunisia's security and territorial integrity.

France has long been Tunisia's leading trade partner, but efforts to correct a persistent imbalance in France's favor have not been successful. Economic aid, mostly in the form of long-term loans at subsidized interest rates, has financed major industrial projects and encouraged small and medium-sized enterprises. The responsibility for equipping and training the Tunisian army has also been assumed primarily by France. Cultural and technical cooperation has been extensive, taking the form of support for a number of schools providing French-language education, the loan of professors of science and mathematics, and the supply of television and radio programs.

Tunisia has been associated with the European Economic Community (EEC) since 1969, when an agreement was concluded granting the republic free access to the community for most of its industrial products and extending preferences for certain agricultural exports. A broader agreement, ratified in 1978, closely matched the terms of similar agreements with Morocco and Algeria. The trade provisions, which had already entered into force in 1976, extended free access to the EEC for Tunisian raw materials and industrial products, with the important exception of clothing and other textiles. Tariff reductions were also granted for Tunisia's main agricultural exports to the EEC—olive oil, wine, fruits, and

vegetables—although the benefits were restrained by quotas, safeguards, and restrictions to certain periods of the year. Two five-year economic aid packages amounting to US$117 million and US$111 million were allocated between 1976 and 1986. These were supplemented by bilateral aid from individual EEC members; in addition to France, West Germany was a substantial donor.

The trade balance between the EEC and Tunisia was strongly favorable to the EEC. In 1984 Tunisian imports valued at US$1.9 billion were far in excess of EEC imports from Tunisia amounting to US$1.2 billion. Petroleum products were the main sources of export earnings. To some extent the Tunisian trade deficit was offset by remittances from Tunisian workers in EEC countries and receipts from well over 1 million European tourists who have vacationed at Tunisian beach resorts each year. Although the West European market for Tunisian products was indispensable, the future of this trade was made uncertain by the accession of Spain and Portugal to full membership in the EEC at the close of 1985. This could endanger Tunisia's exports because their competing Mediterranean-type crops would benefit from more liberal trading rules within the EEC.

United States

Official relations between Tunisia and the United States have been maintained for nearly two centuries since the arrival of the first American consul in 1797. A treaty was negotiated in the same year dealing with commerce, tariffs, and protection against attacks or extortions by Tunisian corsairs. In return, gifts and naval supplies were promised to the bey. The United States was the first foreign country to recognize Tunisia upon its independence in 1956. The cordiality that has since prevailed between the two countries has rarely been disturbed. Beginning in 1946, Bourguiba has paid numerous visits to the United States and has met with most of the presidents who have held office since World War II.

Tunisia has never accepted the radical Third World view of the United States as an imperialist, neocolonialist power. Bourguiba once characterized the United States as "the country of liberty and of generous ideas." Tunisia was nearly alone among nonaligned nations in not condemning the American war effort in Southeast Asia, a policy it eventually reversed after 1969. Subsequent to the Israeli invasion of Lebanon in 1982, Bourguiba has repeatedly criticized Washington's policy of close military and political cooperation with Israel. Tunisians reacted angrily when the

President Habib Bourguiba, speaking at White House ceremonies in June 1985, after welcoming remarks by President Ronald Reagan (right)
Courtesy White House/Pete Souza

United States initially appeared to condone the Israeli bombing attack on the PLO headquarters near Tunis in October 1985 in retaliation for a terrorist attack against Israeli tourists in Cyprus. Bourguiba's official protest conveyed his "profound regret and great astonishment" over Washington's position, which he said was contrary to international law and the existing state of relations between the two countries. Subsequent statements and actions by American officials helped to repair the breach, although popular feeling against the United States remained high.

The United States has expressed admiration for Bourguiba's political courage on Middle Eastern issues and appreciation for Tunisia's moderating influence in the Arab League. Although the two governments were not linked by security accords, President Ronald Reagan said during Bourguiba's visit to Washington in

June 1985 that the United States "remains firmly committed to the sanctity of Tunisia's territorial integrity and to the principle of noninterference in its internal affairs."

Since first agreeing to provide economic and technical assistance to Tunisia in 1957, United States aid has amounted to nearly US$1 billion. Development aid was suspended in United States fiscal year (FY) 1981 because Tunisia's per capita income had risen to a point where this was no longer justified. In FY 1985 and FY 1986, however, economic support funds totaling about US$20 million were earmarked by the United States Congress in recognition of Tunisia's worsening economic situation and its importance as a moderating factor in the Middle East peace process. Most of these contributions were dedicated to agricultural loans for small farmers, technical training in both Tunisia and United States, and family planning. Additionally, proceeds from surplus grain provided under Public Law 480 (Food for Peace) were used for development of the private sector. The Peace Corps, which had been active in Tunisia since 1961, had approximately 100 volunteers in 1984 participating in rural development, vocational education, and public health projects.

Although there were no United States military facilities in Tunisia, vessels of the Sixth Fleet, including nuclear warships, were welcomed for port calls. The United States-Tunisian Joint Military Commission has met annually to discuss Tunisia's defense modernization needs and broader security questions. United States military aid, which until 1979 had been on a modest level averaging about US$8 million annually, rose steeply in the early 1980s to support Tunisian efforts to upgrade its armed forces' firepower and mobility (see Foreign Military Assistance, ch. 5).

The United States ranked second (after France) as a market for Tunisian products, imports of petroleum products predominating. Its 8-percent share of Tunisia's imports ranked it behind France, West Germany, and Italy. Among the leading products exported by the United States to Tunisia were cereals, soybean oil, industrial equipment, and chemicals and pharmaceuticals. In spite of efforts by both countries to encourage American capital, activity by United States investors was still limited in 1985.

Communist Countries

Tunisia has cultivated normal relations with the Soviet Union and the countries of Eastern Europe, entering into numerous commercial, technical, and cultural agreements. Nevertheless, its politi-

cal and economic links with the communist states were of far less significance than its ties with the industrialized West.

Formal relations between Tunisia and the Soviet Union were not established until 1960. Moscow subsequently strongly backed Tunisia in the UN debates on the Bizerte crisis and supported the Tunisian demand for French evacuation of the military base there. During the 1970s Tunisia expressed uneasiness over the mounting Soviet involvement in Africa, notably in the Horn of Africa dispute and its activities in several other African countries. The Tunisian government joined in the condemnation voted by the UN General Assembly and by the Nonaligned Movement in early 1980 over the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Tunisia is the only Maghribi country that has never accepted Soviet military equipment or training personnel. It regularly permits Soviet naval vessels to make port calls, use port facilities, and repair ships at the Bizerte drydocks.

A trade protocol covering 1986–90 had as its target a total exchange of goods valued at US$250 million during the period, a figure that would represent a doubling of trade over the previous five-year period. The exchange heavily favored Soviet exports consisting of machinery, ammonia, sulfur, and lumber. Tunisia's trade with the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe combined accounted for less than 1 percent of its total exports in 1984 and only 4 percent of its imports. According to the United States Department of State, Soviet and East European personnel providing various technical services in Tunisia numbered 600 in 1981. In addition, these countries had accepted over 1,000 Tunisian students for professional training.

Tunisian relations with China have been conducted in a generally favorable climate, although limited to certain spheres of activity. The decision to form the Tunisian-Chinese Commission of Economic, Commercial, and Technical Cooperation in September 1983 seemed to herald a greater degree of interchange between the two countries. At the first session of the commission in 1984, it was announced that Chinese medical teams, which had been operating in a provincial hospital since 1975, would be augmented. In addition, a project was outlined to produce phosphoric acid and chemical fertilizer in China using resources and technology from Tunisia and financing from Kuwait. Previously, the most significant form of cooperation had been the construction of a 120-kilometer canal to convey water to the Cape Bon area, a five-year project completed in 1984 with a contribution of TD23 million (for value of the Tunisian dinar—see Glossary) from China plus the services of 850 Chinese personnel.

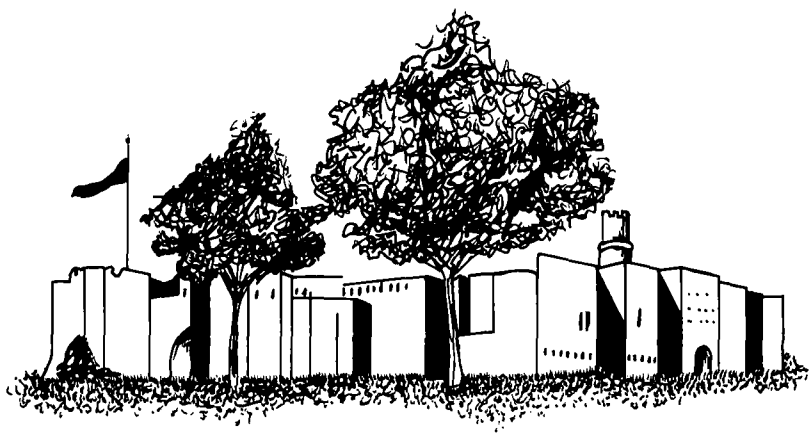
* * *

As a general work on Tunisia's political evolution from the colonial period to the mid-1970s, Wilfred Knapp's *North West Africa: A Political and Economic Survey* is useful. Subsequent developments are examined in briefer studies, such as the section of Tunisia in *Comparative Politics of North Africa* by John P. Entelis (1980) and the chapter dealing with sources of power in Tunisia in Russell A. Stone's *Political Elites in Arab North Africa*. Mark Tessler's "Tunisia at the Crossroads" is a short appraisal of the balance of political forces after the riots of 1984. A concise overview of Tunisia's politics and foreign relations in the context of United States interests in the Maghrib can be found in *North Africa: Regional Tensions and Strategic Concerns* by Richard B. Parker, a former United States ambassador to both Algeria and Morocco.

Tunisia's moderate and pragmatic approach in its diplomacy is viewed in Robert Santucci's article, "La politique étrangère de la Tunisie." The Islamic revival is the subject of numerous studies; a relatively current and accessible study is "The Islamist Challenge in Tunisia" by Susan E. Waltz. An account of Tunisia's constitutional and juridical development is contained in *An Introduction to Law in French-Speaking Africa, II: North Africa* by Jeswald W. Salacuse (1975). Tunisia's record in the area of civil and legal rights is appraised annually in the series, *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices*, produced by the United States Department of State for the United States Congress.

Contemporary Tunisian political events are the subject of regular commentaries in *Jeune Afrique* and are also treated frequently in *Le Monde*, *Africa Research Bulletin*, and *Marchés tropicaux et méditerranéens*. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Chapter 5. National Security



Monolithic ribat (fort) at Monastir

ALTHOUGH IT HAD LONG been regarded as the most peaceful and stable of the Maghribi countries, Tunisia faced a series of challenges in 1985 that could conceivably threaten the viability and effectiveness of the political system built up by President Habib Bourguiba. At the same time that the national leadership was encountering increased international tension, it was facing a growing challenge from organized domestic opponents. Its ability to contend with these problems was complicated by political uncertainty brought on by the advancing age and questionable health of Bourguiba, who had dominated the national leadership for three decades.

Domestic security was threatened by causes deeper than the problems of presidential succession. Widespread riots that grew out of the general strike in January 1978 gave observers their first indication that the national consensus behind the leadership and policies of Bourguiba and Destourian Socialist Party was not as strong as it had once been. Estrangement between the government and the labor movement and the growth of Islamist opposition continued in the 1980s and concerned government officials. To a degree, the emergence of a strong, political opposition reflected the relative openness of Tunisian society. It also indicated the existence of widespread dissatisfaction with the ruling Destourian Socialist Party, the pace of economic growth and development, high unemployment, official corruption, and the apparent rejection of Islamic values by some of the top national leaders. The fact that limited government reforms had not sufficiently ameliorated the causes of dissent was emphasized in January 1984 by rioting throughout the country that was triggered by an increase in the price of bread and other staples.

The republic's domestic difficulties have been compounded by problems with neighboring states. Tunisia is flanked by Algeria and Libya, two much larger and militarily stronger states whose militancy on Third World and Pan-Arab issues contrasted with Bourguiba's more pro-Western attitudes. During the early 1980s relations with Algeria began to improve, and a treaty of friendship and concord made the countries virtual allies. At the same time, however, Libya has repeatedly posed a potential threat to the Bourguiba government. By periodically threatening Tunisia with greater military strength and by instigating at least one armed rebellion in Tunisia, Libyan leader Colonel Muammar al Qadhaafi has proved himself a dangerous neighbor. Tunisian vulnerabilities were also

demonstrated by the October 1985 air raid by Israeli warplanes on the headquarters of the Palestine Liberation Organization near Tunis.

Lacking any hope of absolute defense and preferring to invest in domestic programs, the Tunisian government had long been content to maintain a military establishment of modest size and limited combat effectiveness compared with those of its neighbors. By the 1980s, however, even Tunisia's relatively small armed forces become extremely costly. In 1985 the defense force consisted of a predominant army of 30,000 officers and men, a small navy of 2,600, and an air force and 2,500; collectively these forces were designated the Tunisian National Army. The military and a largely paramilitary police system were key elements in a defense strategy that called on the security forces to provide credible deterrence against external aggressive threats and, failing that, to deal effectively with minor incursions until assistance arrived from friendly states.

International Security Concerns

Since the nation's formal independence from France in 1956, the Tunisian government has generally attempted to concentrate its efforts and resources on domestic development while maintaining harmonious relations with its neighbors and other powers. Despite these efforts, Tunisia's location between Algeria and Libya—two states long characterized by their oil wealth and revolutionary ethos—its identity as an Arab and Islamic state, and the generally pro-Western, modernist tendencies of Bourguiba's leadership have prevented the country from avoiding regional disputes.

In the first years after independence the Bourguiba government was concerned with clashes and threats from France and Egypt (then known as the United Arab Republic). France, occupied with the revolution in Algeria, had kept a large number of troops on Tunisian soil after 1956. Intent on limiting Tunisia's role as a sanctuary for Algerian revolutionaries or as a conduit for material assistance, the French on several occasions used force against Tunisians who were giving support to the Algerians. The most notable example was the French bombing in 1958 of the Tunisian border village of Sakiet Sidi Youssef. Later, Tunisian attempts to end the French military presence by mobilizing civilian demonstrators and irregular militias resulted in some 1,000 Tunisian deaths in the so-called Battle of Bizerte in 1961 (see Relations with France, ch. 1).

The Egyptian government, then led by radical Pan-Arabist president Gamal Abdul Nasser, presented even more of a threat to the Bourguiba government during this period than did the French. Although the French experienced major differences with Bourguiba over the war in Algeria, the presence of French troops and the disposition of French-owned assets in Tunisia, these issues were eventually resolved without a serious breach. The Egyptians, by contrast, were known to be active supporters of the domestic opposition linked to Bourguiba's Neo-Destour Party rival, Salah Ben Youssef. In October 1958 Tunisia broke diplomatic relations with Cairo over its alleged involvement in a "Youssefist" attempt to assassinate Bourguiba. Relations with Cairo remained strained for years because of Egypt's continued support for Youssefists and because of Nasser's criticisms of Tunisia's unwillingness to subscribe to the Egyptian leader's brand of Pan-Arabism.

After its independence from France in 1962, Algeria soon moved to the forefront of Tunisian external security concerns. Under the leadership of its first president, Ahmed Ben Bella, Algeria took an active role in supporting "progressive" and "revolutionary" forces in Africa and the Middle East, including Tunisian opponents of Bourguiba. In January 1963 the Tunisian government recalled its ambassador to Algiers because of alleged Algerian involvement in an aborted coup attempt the previous month involving Youssefists and army officers. The Tunisian government was not known to have supported any actions against the Algerian government, but Algerian dissidents found assistance and sanctuary in Tunisia.

Relations between Algeria and Tunisia improved somewhat after Ben Bella was replaced by Houari Boumediene, but sharp political disagreements over Tunisia's generally pro-Western ties and its moderation on the Arab-Israeli problem remained a source of tension. From the perspective of the Tunisian government, the significance of the dissension was magnified by Algeria's overwhelming military strength (see fig. 12). In 1980 the Algerian government was briefly suspected of seeking to foment a rebellion inside Tunisia when it became known that a group of Libyan-backed insurgents who attacked the Tunisian town of Gafsa had entered the country from Algeria. Subsequently, low-ranking Algerian officials were implicated in the operation, but Chadli Bendjedid, who had replaced Boumediene in 1979, made overtures to convince the Tunisians that he and his government were not involved.

In the early 1980s Tunisia and Algeria steadily strengthened their relationship into a de facto alliance. The treaty of friendship and concord signed by the leaders of the two countries in March

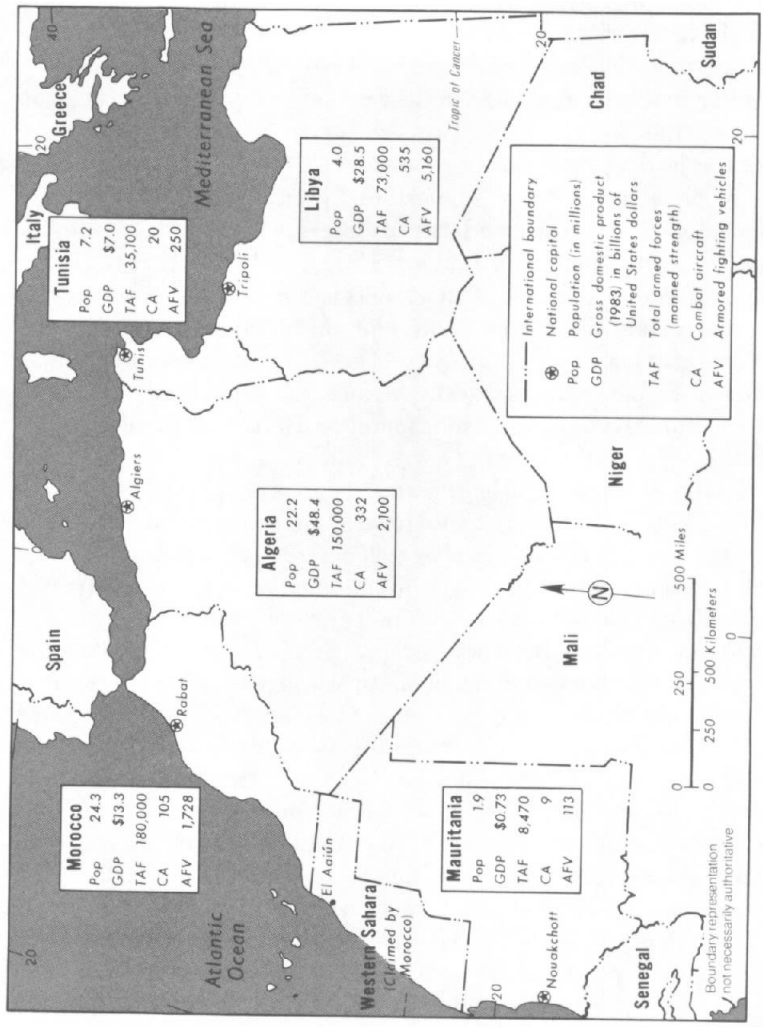


Figure 12. Balance of Power in the Maghrib, 1985

1983, hailed as the first step in forming a "Great Arab Maghrib," called for military liaison and consultation as well as economic cooperation and settlement of border issues. In late 1985, in the context of a Libyan troop buildup on the Tunisian border and the Israeli air attack, frequent discussions between Tunisian and Algerian officials appeared to indicate a further tightening of their security relationship.

Libya's destabilizing activities have troubled Tunisian leaders since the mid-1970s. Before the 1969 coup that brought Qadhaafi to power, Libya under the conservative King Idris I was regarded as a weak, sparsely populated wasteland whose friendship with Tunisia was symbolized by a 1957 treaty of good neighborliness. The military coup led by Qadhaafi and the increase in oil prices during the 1970s, however, gave rise to a more difficult security relationship between the two states. Relations chilled in 1974 when the Tunisian government hastily backed away from a merger agreement between the two countries, to which Bourguiba had earlier agreed. Abusive Libyan propaganda combined with military power—growing rapidly with new stocks of Soviet-supplied weapons—to induce the Tunisian government to begin the most extensive (although modest by regional standards) modernization of its armed forces undertaken since independence (see Armed Forces, this ch.).

The raid on the mining town of Gafsa focused attention on the potential danger from Libyan subversion or intervention. Early on January 27, 1980, a band of 50 or 60 armed Tunisians, equipped and trained in Libya, captured the police and army barracks in Gafsa, seized several hostages, and drove through the town calling on local Tunisians to rise up against the Bourguiba government. Accounts differed as to how much support they received from townspeople, but it was apparently not significant. Tunisian security forces were sent to Gafsa, and, in the heavy fighting that followed, official sources reported the 22 security personnel, 15 civilians, and four insurgents were killed. The attack, in concert with a sustained propaganda barrage from Libyan radio, was apparently intended to catalyze a popular uprising against the Bourguiba government. Its failure caused Tunisians from across the political spectrum to unite behind Bourguiba during the crisis. The Gafsa raid demonstrated for most Tunisians the magnitude of the threat posed by Libya and drew the immediate support of France and the United States, Tunisia's two closest Western allies. The French quickly dispatched a squadron of ships to the coast off Tunisia and Libya in a show of force, and the United States subsquently sent a military mission to evaluate Tunisian security needs.

After Gafsa, Qadhaafi made gradual moves to restore ties with Tunisia and was rewarded with the resumption of diplomatic relations, which had been broken at the time of the raid, and by agreements aimed at intensifying economic links. At the same time, however, he provided the Tunisian government with cause for continued concern. In the early 1980s some 2,000 Tunisians were reportedly receiving military training in Libyan camps. Members of the so-called Islamic Legion, they were purportedly being trained to liberate Palestine, but, given the precedent of Gafsa, officials in Tunis worried that they could be used against Tunisia. (In 1982 a small-scale attack on Kasserine, ostensibly supported by Libya, reminded Tunisians of this capability.) Although there was no direct evidence of Libyan involvement in the January 1984 riots, Qadhaafi's reputation led many Tunisians to suspect Libyan involvement. Tunisians were suspicious because at the time of the riots the price of Libyan bread was lowered, and major oil pipeline in Tunisian territory near the Libyan border was sabotaged. A concurrent Libyan offer to provide Tunisia with security assistance—which could be viewed either as an olive branch or a threat—was refused by Prime Minister Mohamed Mzali. Later in 1984 a Libyan show of force on the Tunisian border, the kidnapping of three Tunisian border guards in Tunisian territory, and ongoing rumors of Libyan arms shipments to Bourguiba's domestic opponents also kept Tunisian officials suspicious of their neighbor.

The basis for Tunisian-Libyan estrangement was reinforced in August 1984 when Qadhaafi and Morocco's King Hassan II announced a "merger" of their two countries. Rejected by the Tunisian-Algeria alliance (which had expanded to include Mauritania), it appeared that Morocco and Libya were directing their pact against Algeria and its allies. Despite the diplomatic efforts of the Tunisians to lessen regional tensions, the states of the Maghrib polarized into two contending blocs (see Maghribi Affairs, ch. 4).

The large-scale expulsions of Tunisian citizens from Libya in August and September 1985 appeared to bring Tunisian-Libyan relations to their most dangerous state since Gafsa. The expulsion of some 30,000 of the 90,000 to 100,000 Tunisian workers living in Libya threatened Tunisian security on two levels. First, the new arrivals exacerbated an already serious domestic unemployment problem, and, second, Tunisian officials feared the infiltration of dissidents who had received military training in Libya. Background checks on the returnees indicated that they were simply Tunisian workers forced to leave Libya when the Libyan economy could no longer afford their services. These expulsions were followed by Tunisia's ejection of some 300 Libyan officials and residents, the

breaking of diplomatic relations and, according to Tunisian reports, the massing of Libyan troops on the border and flights of Libyan military aircraft into Tunisian airspace. The episode served to reaffirm Tunisian mistrust of the Qadhaafi regime and caused the government in Tunis to seek stronger security ties with the United States and Algeria.

Immediately thereafter, the raid by Israeli warplanes on the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) headquarters at Hamman-Lif on the outskirts of Tunis on October 1, 1985, raised new concerns in Tunis over national security. The raid, which killed as many as 20 Tunisians in addition to scores of Palestinians, demonstrated that Tunisia was not immune from involvement in the Arab-Israeli conflict although the Israeli government stated that it "had nothing against Tunisia" in striking "the headquarters of those who make the decisions, plan, and carry out terrorist actions." Bourguiba had previously sent small contingents of Tunisian troops and matériel to Egypt after the Middle East wars in 1967 and 1973, but the Arab-Israeli problem had always been on the periphery of Tunisian security concerns and outside the scope of Tunisian military planning. Beyond that, Bourguiba has long been considered the most moderate of the Arab leaders; his 1965 call for the recognition of Israel, which was based on the 1948 United Nations (UN) partition resolution, had led to difficulty for Tunisia in the League of Arab States (Arab League) during the Nasser era. Tunisian involvement in the issue intensified when Tunis was made the headquarters of the Arab League in 1979 and when the PLO moved its headquarters there in 1982 after being expelled from Beirut. Before the Israeli raid, however, the PLO presence—strictly limited by the Tunisian authorities—was a source of concern mainly as a potential threat to domestic stability (as it had been in Lebanon) rather than as a magnet for an Israeli attack.

Initially, the Israeli raid and the short-lived American support for it as a "legitimate response" to terrorist attacks made it appear that Tunisia had lost a friend and source of security assistance. The United States immediately adopted a more evenhanded approach to the issue and indicated a willingness to continue the two countries' longstanding security relationship. The Tunisian government, after initial shock and disbelief over the incident, also indicated that it did not intend to interrupt its security relationship with the United States (see Foreign Military Assistance, this ch.). It appeared, however, that Tunisian officials might become more circumspect and less inclined to advertise those ties because of sensitivity to criticism from both allies and enemies.

Domestc Security Issues and Policies

Between the 1960s and the mid-1980s, the Bourguiba government's vulnerability to perceived challenges from domestic opponents—and its methods of dealing with them—changed markedly. At the beginning of the period, Tunisia was a one-party state with a broad base of popular support where almost all opposition outside the Destourian Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Destourien—PSD) was considered to be a threat to national security. In the 1970s the government continued to refuse to recognize the legitimacy of any critics outside the PSD, but the party's base of support was shrinking considerably even as opponents were becoming more numerous, more vocal, and more dangerous. In the period after 1980, Mzali, with Bourguiba's support, was apparently attempting to redefine what constituted a security threat. By taking steps toward allowing some of the opposition to vie for power through legitimate channels, it was thought that the prime minister was seeking to weaken and divide the government's most dangerous rivals while making government institutions (and the PSD itself) stronger, more vital, and more relevant to Tunisians. The Tunisian experiment was complicated, however, by a PSD leadership that was concerned about presidential succession and was divided over whether and how fast to proceed with liberalizaton of the political system. Even if the government did decide to hold elections that included broadly representative opposition groups, there were doubts as to whether the regime's strongest opponents, the Islamists (see Glossary), could be persuaded to participate.

Roots of Domestic Security Difficulties

During the 1960s a strong and popular party organization built on patronage and two-way communication with constituents served as the eyes and ears of the PSD leadership. In this environment, dissent was seldom expressed publicly except within the context of party loyalty, and civil disorders were kept to a minimum. Opposition was often placated by compromises on the part of the national leadership, but when this proved ineffective the government was able to act swiftly and effectively against dissidents. In the early years of independence, the most prominent opponents of the government were the supporters of Ben Youssef. Religious and cultural traditionalists objecting to the government's moves to build a more secular society occasionally demonstrated their contempt for

the Bourguiba government, but they were a declining force during that time.

The roots of Tunisian stability were weakened somewhat during the 1970's. Despite unprecedented economic growth and a high standard of living by regional standards, popular dissatisfaction with the Bourguiba government increased as some of the structural shortcomings of the politico-economic system appeared to have become intractable. The gap between rich and poor Tunisians had grown since independence and showed no signs of narrowing. The citizens of the southern desert areas saw themselves excluded from the country's political elite and from sharing in the nation's economic growth. Partly as a result, large numbers of young unemployed Tunisian men flocked to the major cities, swelling the ranks of the urban poor. Ordinary crime, previously a negligible problem, increased with the influx of migrants, although reliable statistical data on the magnitude were not available. More important, the growth of a large mass of disaffected and disenfranchised young Tunisians had ominous implications for national security.

Government policies and the increasingly rigid and arbitrary style of Bourguiba's leadership also contributed to the growth of public discontent. In the early 1970s Bourguiba rejected the nation's socialist economic policies as well as new proposals to move toward the establishment of a multiparty democracy. In ousting officials most closely linked with those initiatives, the aging president indicated that he feared being overthrown by subordinates who had built up independent power bases. Political expression had always been limited in Tunisia, but the president and then-Prime Minister Hedi Nouria appeared to be unwilling to tolerate any dissent or accept any criticism, even from within the PSD. The regime's increasing remoteness combined with the rise in domestic criticism of its leadership to stifle the PSD's grass-roots dynamism, which had been the foundation of the government's security and effectiveness.

The 1970s were characterized as a decade of increasing civil unrest in Tunisia. At the beginning of the period, large numbers of students for the first time began to object publicly to the direction of government policies. Dominated by Marxist critics during this time, student dissent resulted in growing numbers of disturbances at Tunisian universities, unrest that continued despite the government's demonstrated willingness to arrest and impose strict prison sentences on offenders. At the same time, organized labor showed itself to be an important opposition force. The General Union of Tunisian Workers (Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens—UGTT), which had long been closely allied with the PSD, became

increasingly militant in demanding better working conditions and wages, criticizing growing unemployment, and protesting the economic gap between the affluent and poor elements in the society. Illegal strikes, rare before the mid-1970s, became more and more frequent, numbering approximately 600 between 1976 and early 1978 alone. When strike actions were joined by large numbers of unemployed urban youths and supplemented by the persistent dissidence of students who viewed the PSD as an outdated and increasingly ineffectual political party, they posed a direct challenge to the government.

The scope of Tunisia's discontent was first dramatically demonstrated by the violence connected with the general strike of January 26, 1978, a day Tunisians remenber as Black Thursday. The strike, coming after months of what observers called government intimidation of the UGTT leadership, was interpreted by the government as a direct threat to its authority. The violence was controlled after two days by army units equipped with infantry weapons and armored vehicles after police were overwhelmed by demonstrators. According to official Tunisian figures, 42 were killed and 325 were wounded before government forces restored order; other, unofficial, sources put the number of casualties far higher. Over 1,000 were arrested, and many, including the entire UGTT leadership, were brought before the State Security Court on charges of subversion. Even before the trials began, pro-PSD elements moved into positions of power within the UGTT. The new union leaders immediately expressed regret for the riots and pledged to cooperate with the government.

After the 1978 unrest, the national government increasingly found antigovernment dissidence expressed in religious terms. The conservative Muslim imams had long opposed Bourguiba's securlarist social reforms, but during the 1970s the authorities had supported Islamists as a counter to the influence of Marxist groups on Tunisian campuses. The Islamists only became regarded as a threat after the Iranian revolution of 1979 demonstrated that, even in the late twentieth century, Islam could generate great social and political upheavals. In the early 1980s a variety of Islamist groups came into existence, most of them drawing their strength from university students and other educated young Tunisians disaffected by the PSD and the secular Marxist alternative (see Opposition Groups, ch. 4). The largest and most important of these groups was the Islamic Tendency Movement (Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique—MTI), which was formed in 1981. Because of its leadership's political sophistication and calls for democratization of the political process, the MTI was considered to be among the most "moderate"

of similar groups in existence throughout the Islamic world. The MTI's popularity, however, its calls for the rejection of Western values, and the militancy of some of its members (especially those on college campuses) made the government deeply concerned about the movement's potential as a threat to national security.

Government Security Policy under Mohamad Mzali

By early 1980, when militant Islam was beginning to be identified as a security problem in Tunisia, it was obvious that the government's hard line against dissidents had been unsuccessful in bringing back the order and stability that the country had known in the 1960s. Shortly after the shock of the Gafsa incident, then-Prime Minister Nouria—the person most closely associated with the government's strict security policies—reportedly became seriously ill and was replaced by Mzali. The new prime minister quickly made it clear that he would seek to deal with the regime's opponents in a different manner than had his predecessor. Forming a cabinet that included some of the PSD officials who had resigned in protest over the government's strict policies against the UGTT in 1977, Mzali in his first year in power released almost all Tunisian political prisoners and pardoned some 1,000 unionists who had been jailed for their participation in the 1978 riots. The UGTT was allowed a freer rein, press restrictions were eased, and the president and Mzali indicated that opposition parties would be allowed to compete against the PSD in elections.

It soon became clear that the moves to open the political system to opposition groups would be limited, cautious, and gradual. The Tunisian Communist Party—which had a very small popular following—was granted official recognition and allowed to contest the 1981 parliamentary elections. By contrast, the MTI—which probably was the country's most popular political grouping—had its application for recognition denied. In July 1981 the government arrested virtually the entire MTI leadership after a number of violent incidents blamed on Islamic extremists. In the trials that followed, 89 Islamist leaders were sentenced to prison for up to 11 years for offending the head of state, spreading disinformation, and belonging to an unauthorized organization. The severity of the sentences in what was thought to be a relatively liberal political environment was criticized by many, including the non-Islamist opposition parties. That the government was still not used to the concept of a loyal opposition was demonstrated in November 1981 when three opposition parties that had been allowed to con-

test the parliamentary election received only some 5 percent of the popular vote between them; widespread voting irregularities were reported (see The 1981 Election: Opposition Parties Sanctioned, ch. 4).

In the early 1980s other smaller Islamist and secular groups emerged and were perceived as threatening by Tunisian authorities. In 1982 and 1983 a number of dissidents linked to the Islamic Liberation Party, the Popular Revolutionary Movement, and the National Arab Rally—all of which were linked to Pan-Arab and Islamist causes—were arrested and convicted of criminal and political offenses (see Opposition Groups, ch. 4). During this period, the escalating conflict between Islamists and Marxists on University of Tunis campuses also worried the government insofar as the power and aggressiveness of the two radical groups resulted in the de facto suppression of student organizations affiliated with the PSD (see Interest Groups, ch. 4).

The January 1984 rioting, the most extensive in Tunisian history, clearly indicated that the government's political reforms had not removed the causes of popular discontent. The disturbances, which started in the south, spread nationwide and reportedly involved half a million Tunisians, 10 times the number in the 1978 violence. As in 1978, the police were overwhelmed by the protesters, and the army had to be called in to help restore order. The riots had heavy political overtones. Demonstrators, mostly young unemployed males, shouted slogans condemning Bourguiba, his wife Wassila, Mzali, and other PSD leaders and stoned the president's car in his hometown, Monastir. Although some observers suspected at the time that the riots were planned by regime opponents, later analyses indicated that they broke out spontaneously at the time of the price increases in bread and other staples. After the disturbances began, however, it appeared that government opponents, especially Islamists, were active in organizing antigovernment demonstrations. According to official sources, 89 Tunisians were killed in the disturbances and nearly 1,000 were injured. Over 1,000 others were arrested, some of whom were detained for as long as six months before being brought to trial.

The 1984 riots and their aftermath starkly revealed some of the regime's vulnerabilities. That the disturbances were completely unforseen showed the ineffectiveness of the PSD's local organization as a source of domestic intelligence. After the violence broke out, local PSD officials appeared to be unable or unwilling to stop the protesters or moderate their actions. Shortly after calm was restored, the PSD's internal disputes were also highlighted when the government's strongest reactions against the violence were reserved

for one of Mzali's political rivals, Minister of Interior Driss Guiga. The minister and his director of the Sûreté Nationale were dismissed from their positions, tried, and convicted of treason and corruption. After Mzali and his appointees came to dominate the ministry, some observers criticized the prime minister for being more interested in finding scapegoats and consolidating his political position within the PSD than in addressing the root causes of the violence.

After the riots, some suspected that the government would toughen its stand against domestic opposition and return to the domestic security attitudes and policies of the 1970s. In January 1984 Mzali's appointment of Brigadier General Zine el Abidine Ben Ali, who had a reputation as a hardliner on security issues, as the director of national security within the Ministry of Interior appeared to confirm this view (see Internal Security Forces, this ch.). Mzali, however, continued to indicate that government attempts to integrate the opposition (including, perhaps, the MTI) into the political system would continue. The release from prison in August 1984 of the last of the Islamist leaders, jailed three years earlier, was the most tangible evidence that Mzali was still seeking to reshape the government's domestic security policies.

Despite the prime minister's assurances, government policy in 1984–85 had in many ways become more repressive. The government was accused of supporting divisive tendencies within the labor movement. Opposition parties that had been given legal sanction complained of renewed suppression (including attacks on members by groups of PSD loyalists), destruction of offices, unjustified arrests by police, and general harassment. Censorship of the information media, relaxed in 1980, again became increasingly prevalent and was directed against opposition publications (see Politics and the Information Media, ch. 4). The situation led the recognized opposition parties to boycott the 1985 local elections and Ahmed Mestiri of the Social Democratic Movement to conclude that "those responsible within the [Destourian Socialist] party are not yet ready for opposition."

In late 1985, after nearly six years of erratic moves to liberalize the political system, the party's and the regime's security did not appear to have been significantly improved. There was no sign that its most serious opponents—Islamists, unionists, the urban unemployed, southerners, and students—had moderated their attitudes toward the regime. There was cynicism in some quarters that the liberalization effort was simply a method for Mzali to enhance his status and eliminate potential rivals as he positioned himself to take power after Bourguiba's passing. Others noted that the prime

minister's ability to recast Tunisian security policy had been frustrated by opposition from other elements within the PSD, notably Minister of Public Works and Housing Mohamed Sayah, who was reputed to favor a tougher attitude toward dissidence; by Bourguiba, who opposed Mzali's accumulation of too much political power; by those Tunisians who opposed Mzali as Bourguiba's successor; and by those PSD officials whose power would be diminished by the reforms. It was generally thought that as long as PSD leaders were more concerned with political maneuvering among themselves than with the potential threat posed by the country's disenfranchised opponents, disturbances such as those of 1978 and 1984 could become increasingly common, and the risk of domestic chaos or military involvement in the government might grow (see The Military and Politics, this ch.).

Armed Forces

The Tunisian National Army (Armée Nationale Tunisienne—ANT), which was divided into army, air force, and naval components, had a threefold mission: to defend the country's territorial integrity against hostile foreign powers, to assist the police as necessary in maintaining internal security, and to participate actively in government-sponsored civic action programs. The government has also sought to ensure, largely with success, that the ANT had little influence in the political sphere.

Since the late 1970s, all of the armed services have been undergoing expansion and modernization designed to improve their defenses against attack from potentially hostile states. Although the improvements have been extremely costly, the worsened relationship with Libya and the vulnerability demonstrated by the Israeli raid have heightened concern about Tunisia's military weaknesses. The president in 1985 therefore directed his government to explore with its friends and allies in the Arab world and the West the possibility of assistance in making new large-scale purchases of aircraft, armor, and naval vessels.

Military Tradition, Development, and Philosophy

Contemporary Tunisian society reflects little of the military tradition that permeates the national life of the other Maghribi countries. Many scholarly observers have attributed this anomaly partly to legacies of the era before Tunisia's protectorate period

and to experiences encountered during the 75 years of French domination. Political scientist Jacob C. Hurewitz has also pointed to changes that have occurred within the society, including the virtual disappearance of traditional Berber culture (see The Social System, ch. 2). Thus Bourguiba and the PSD have not had to depend on the leverage of a preeminent military establishment to settle internal disputes between contending ethnic or regional groups as have leaders in other developing countries. Neither has it required military help in unifying the large homogeneous population behind the goals and aspiration that Bourguiba and his political elite have upheld as national objectives. Even so, the national life of the country has not been entirely devoid of military experience.

Early Development

While under French control, Tunisia served France as an important source of manpower. After establishing the protectorate, the French, under a beylical decree in 1883, were granted the authority to recruit local Muslims for the purpose of forming mixed French-Muslim military units. By 1893 all Muslim males in Tunisia became subject to military duty, although it was possible for those chosen for service to provide substitutes as long as induction quotas were fulfilled. As a result, most of the recruits came from the poorer classes of Tunisian society, and illiteracy was the norm among them. Conscripted Muslim Tunisians were required to serve for three years, as were French settlers, who were subject to the conscription laws of metropolitan France.

To assist in the pacification effort throughout the Maghrib, the French—as they had done in Algeria—formed Muslim infantry regiments of *tirailleurs* (riflemen) and spahis (cavalry) in Tunisia. In the late nineteenth century some of these units joined with their Algerian counterparts in aiding the French in military conquests south of the Sahara. Muslim Tunisian soldiers also formed regiments in the Foreign Legion and served in southern Tunisia as *méharistes* (camel corpsmen). Although Muslims served in all branches of the French army, strict segregation was normal. Few Tunisian soldiers—unless they were naturalized French citizens—were able to become officers, and of those only a small number rose beyond the rank of captain. In mixed units Muslim officers were not permitted command authority, and none were given high-level staff positions anywhere in the French military organization. The infantry and cavalry units were strictly divided on ethno-religious grounds; Muslim soldiers served under the command of French of-

ficers and noncommissioned officers (NCOs). More equality existed in artillery units, where Muslim soldiers were assigned as drivers as the French served as gunners. Most of the transportation corps consisted of Muslims under French command.

Although recruited chiefly for military service in Africa, Tunisian members of the French army were liable for service abroad and served with courage and distinction in such divergent spots as France and Indochina. It has been estimated that of the approximately 75,000 Tunisians who served France during World War I, some 50,000 experienced combat in the trenches on the western front, where they suffered a high casualty rate. Before France collapsed under the onslaught of Hitler's troops in World War II, many Tunisian soldiers and their counterparts from Algeria and Morocco were sent to Europe to aid the French in their fight against the Germans. As part of Hitler's June 1940 armistice agreement that accompanied German occupation, France was permitted to retain 15,000 troops in Tunisia, of which roughly 10,500 were Muslims. After Allied successes in the fight to liberate North Africa in 1943, Tunisian and other North African soldiers saw action in the Italian campaign and the eventual liberation of France.

After World War II the rise of Tunisian nationalism and the emergence of sporadic guerrilla warfare directed against French interests heralded the quest for independence (see Toward Independence, ch. 1). From early 1952 Tunisian guerrilla bands enjoyed considerable popular support and conducted operations primarily in the south. Their activities consisted mainly of acts of sabotage and coercion against the French community as well as against Tunisians who sympathized with the French authorities. The Tunisians involved in these demonstrations of militancy were labeled *fellaghas* (rebels) by the French press. As a result of an intense counterinsurgency campaign waged against them by the Foreign Legion, the *fellaghas* sought refuge in the central and southern mountains, buying time and increasing their strength and support from muslims who resented French administrative policies and practices. Although the *fellaghas* were able to strike occasionally against French authority, they were never able to muster a unified and cohesive force. It has been estimated that their strength never exceeded 3,000 men. By early 1956 most of their bands were deactivated as an act of cooperation aimed at enhancing the prospects of independence.

In April 1956 the French transferred responsibility for Tunisia's internal security to the new Tunisian government, including indigenous elements of the police services that had operated under

French control during the protectorate era. The new Tunisian government used them to track down militants connected with nationalist leader Ben Youssef, who challenged Bourguiba's leadership of the Neo-Destour Party and the country. Some of the agitators of this group were arrested, tried, and sentenced as an example of the government's intention to ensure a climate of acceptable public order for its development goals. Despite these efforts, however, the Youssefist threat was controlled only with the force of large-scale operations by the French army three months after Tunisian independence.

In the matter of responsibility for defense—and the building of a national military establishment—the transfer of authority was more difficult. To support its activities in suppressing the revolution in neighboring Algeria, the French government sought to maintain its military presence in independent Tunisia, espousing the notion that both countries would share in the new state's external defense needs. This form of interdependence, however, drew a less than sympathetic response from Bourguiba and his Neo-Destour Party hierarchy. It was only after long months of negotiations that in June 1956 the French government, beset with greater concerns for the Algerian conflict, agreed to assist Tunisia in the formation of its own military arm.

The nucleus of the new military force—the ANT—consisted of roughly 1,300 Muslim Tunisian soldiers, who were released from the French army, and some 600 ceremonial troops of the beylical guard, which the French had permitted the Tunisian bey to retain as a personal bodyguard throughout the protectorate era. These sources of military personnel were supplemented by volunteers—loyal party youth and politically reliable *fellaghas* of the earlier resistance movement. Key officer and NCO positions were filled by personnel carefully selected by the leadership of the Neo-Destour Party. Many of those selected had received training at Saint Cyr, the French military academy, or had served as NCOs in French Military units. All were loyal Neo-Destourians.

By the end of 1956 the force consisted of roughly 3,000 officers and men organized in a single regiment, but its effectiveness was limited by a shortage of qualified officers. Resolution of this problem was aided through a negotiated agreement with the French, who provided spaces for 110 Tunisian officer candidates to train at Saint Cyr. Meanwhile, a school for NCOs was established at Tunis with French help, and 2,000 enlisted men were enrolled to build up the needed cadre for the NCO corps. In addition to training Tunisian personnel, France provided a modest amount of military equipment and established a small liaison unit of French

army officers, who were to advise and assist in matters of command and staff procedures.

Despite the assistance provided the new republic, independence did not remove frictions with the French. The war in neighboring Algeria and the continued occupation of bases in Tunisia by French forces—a concession of the independence agreement—served as unsettling factors for Tunisians. When the Bourguiba government pressed for the removal of its toops in mid-1957, France reacted with threats to terminate military assistance to the ANT. French intransigence led Bourguiba to turn to the United States, which had earlier concluded a bilateral agreement to supply the young republic with economic and technical assistance, and to Britain. Although they were allied with France in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), Britain and the United States were willing to supply Tunisia with arms out of concern that Bourguiba might turn to Egypt for assistance.

After settlement of the issue over arms aid, Bourguiba asked the French to evacuate their bases earlier than had been agreed in the pre-independence protocol. Tunisian public support was generated for what Bourguiba termed the "battle for evacuation," and military skirmishes between French and Tunisian forces occurred sporadically. The most serious of these encounters came in 1961 after the French had consolidated their forces at the major military installation in Bizerte. Refusal to evacuate from Bizerte led to an attack on the French base by Neo-Destourian militants, students, and volunteers from the trade unions, youth organizations and women's unions. Organized and directed by the Garde Nationale, the Bizerte confrontation was an ill-conceived and militarily inappropriate venture against professional French troops that resulted in the loss of about 1,000 Tunisian lives, most of them civilians. Although few ANT regulars were involved—four battalions of 3,200 men had responded earlier to the UN appeal for a peacekeeping force in the Congo crisis of 1960—the defeat at the hands of the French was regarded by the Tunisian military establishment as a painful humiliation. Nonetheless, the so-called Battle of Bizerte sped the final withdrawal of French troops and ushered in a new era of strategic independence.

Strategic Philosophy

After the French withdrawal, Tunisia's relations with neighboring Algeria and nearby Egypt, far larger and stronger states, were at a dangerously low ebb, and ties with France were unstable at best. In this environment the government in the 1960s took

steps to devise a defense policy tailored to protect Tunisia against stronger potential foes without sacrificing the national priority of promoting economic development. The Bourguiba government sought to construct a relatively low-cost military establishment—supported by a motivated and trained civilian population—capable of defending against a neighbor's attack until Tunisia's more powerful allies could assist.

Secretary of State for Defense Ahmed Mestiri first proposed a long-term plan that included military modernization and involvement of the civilian population in the country's defense in the aftermath of the Arab-Israeli June 1967 War. Greatly impressed by the Israelis' ability to defeat larger Arab forces in the brief encounter, Mestiri believed that Israel's defense strategy could be adopted by Tunisia. More important than the quantity of armaments, he pointed out, were the qualities of technical ability, leadership, the ingrained organizational structure of units, and the kind of faith that animates soldiers. He was greatly impressed by the concept of the Israeli citizen-soldier and advocated a program that would involve both the military and the civilian population in national defense. The program proposed by Mestiri seemed more economically feasible than joining a North African arms race, and the government approved it. An initial change in military policy involved amending the conscription law in an attempt to upgrade the quality of trained reserves (see Quality and Sources of Manpower, this ch.). The effort to improve the ANT's equipment and training, however, has proved more costly than expected; rising military costs and a continuing need for foreign military assistance have come to characterize Tunisia's military development.

Under pressures generated mainly by Libya, the Tunisian government in the late 1970s stepped up its program of military modernization and defined its strategy as one of "comprehensive people's defense." According to Minister of National Defense Abdullah Farhat in 1976, the republic's defense policy depended on two factors: a favorable external climate guaranteed by the leaders of friendly countries throughout the world and creation of a domestic climate that would make Tunisians feel they had something to defend. Further, the strengthening of the ANT was not only a question of quantity but also one of establishing cadres qualified in the modern technologies. "We have been able to provide these technologies and train the cadres to use them," Farhat said in a speech to the national legislature, "thanks to our relations and friendships. We are experiencing no difficulty in this connection at our schools or at schools abroad. We only need time to acquire the right training." Farhat went on to explain that Tunisian defense

policy did not rely solely on the ANT. "Victory in this age comes through one or two elements," he pointed out, "the atomic weapon or comprehensive people's defense. Since we have no expansionist aims or nuclear ambitions, the only thing left for us is the second alternative."

The Tunisian government continued to emphasize the notion of a comprehensive people's defense in the mid-1980s, but in reality, defense policy was oriented more toward the modernization of the regular forces than to the building of reserve strength. Bourguiba in public statements still stressed "the need to ensure participation of civilians and all the people in defending the gains of the state" and called for "military preparation for all citizens." As a practical matter, however, programs and budgets focused on building the conventional forces and on acquiring sophisticated modern weaponry and associated training. In 1985, given the immediate impetus of a renewed chill in relations with Libya and the weaknesses highlighted by the Israeli air strike, it appeared that Tunisia's comprehensive defense would, more than before, emphasize the regular forces. As it had been since independence, the military was still designed and configured to be strong enough to deter an attack until stronger allies could intervene. But in view of the major military buildup in neighboring countries and the high cost of modern military equipment and training, even the strategy of minimum deterrence was proving extremely costly for Tunisia to maintain.

The Military and Politics

Since independence Bourguiba has sought to perpetuate a military relationship in Tunisia in which all elements of the armed forces would be apolitical in outlook and completely responsive to the needs and commands of the president and civilian authority. By and large, he has been successful, and with the exception of an aborted 1962 military coup supported by Algeria, which allegedly involved younger Youssefist officers, former members of the beylical guard, and Islamists, the military has never significantly threatened the civilian leadership. Given the strains in the civilian leadership and the society in the 1980s, however, the possibility of military intervention in Tunisian political affairs could no longer be discounted.

As premier of Tunisia at independence, Bourguiba, the son of a former lieutenant of the beylical guard, assumed personal responsibility for the country's defense policies and posture. Upon becom-

ing president of the republic in 1957, he also took on the role of commander in chief of the armed forces as specified in the Constitution. Through Article 45 of the Constitution, Bourguiba has had the authority to make military appointments, a valuable prerogative that permitted close presidential control of the military establishment and its personnel.

His exclusive power to promote military officers has been among the strongest components of Bourguiba's control over the armed forces. From independence, high-ranking officers—general staff and senior commanders in particular—have been carefully selected for their party loyalty more than for their professional exprience and competence. This began in the late 1950s when the president dismissed those officers who had trained in the Middle East and who might therefore have been expected to sympathize with the militant Pan-Arab policies of Egypt's Nasser. The handpicked senior officers, in turn, carefully screened all officers who were considered for positions of authority in line units to ensure that antiregime elements did not pose potential threats at any level of the military establishment.

As a result of these promotion policies, the Tunisian officer corps took on a very homogeneous character that only began to break down in the 1970s. Senior officers have been generally representative of Tunisia's economically and politically dominant families from the north, the coastal areas, and the major cities. Although military men have been kept form operating major business ventures or holding political office while in uniform, it has been common for family members to be prominent in business or in the Destourian political movement. Generally Western and Francophile in outlook, tied by kinship to the country's upper socioeconomic stratum, and personally familiar with leading figures in the PSD, high-ranking Tunisian officers must be classed as part of the national elite.

In addition to the relatively small group of officers who have been elevated to senior military positions because of their political reliability, the military's expansion has brought into the services a growing number of younger officers from the less privileged segments of the society. Many of these young officers, along with enlisted men who have long been characterized as coming from the margins of society, have not been insulated from the political debate and social turmoil that has gripped Tunisian society since the 1970s. It is thought by observers of Tunisian affairs that many of the younger officers and enlisted men are more sympathetic than their leaders to the government's critics, including Islamists, leftists, and those opposed to the concentration of political power

in the top echelons of the PSD. This threat was glimpsed in 1983 when 19 air force cadets linked to the Islamic Liberation Party were tried along with 10 other defendants by a military court where they were found guilty of having helped form a political organization. It has also been noted that many of these junior and mid-level officers—who were generally better educated than their elders and in many cases exposed to Western military training and practice—may have resented the policies that promoted politically "safe" officers of questionable competence and limited their own opportunities for advancement. The existence of pockets of dissatisfaction within the military has not of itself posed a threat to the PSD government. In 1985, however, it was clear that unease among mid-level and junior officers, which has been at the root of numerous changes of government in other parts of the Middle East and Africa, could not be ruled out as a potential source of trouble in Tunisia.

Bourguiba has also demonstrated his seriousness in limiting the overt participation of military personnel in the nation's political life. Most notably, when members of the ANT were involved in planning and acting as stewards at the 1979 PSD congress, Bourguiba refused to attend and soon dismissed Minister of National Defense Farhat, who had organized the event.

Beyond controlling military involvement in politics, Bourguiba has long sought to keep his troops quiescent by limiting the size of the armed forces, the quantity and quality of their armaments, and their operational responsibilities. Beginning in the late 1970s, however, domestic security concerns and problems with neighboring Libya caused the government to increase the size and capabilities of the military and domestic disorders, especially during the serious civil disturbances of 1978 and 1984.

Whether the government's increased dependence on the military will lead to officers demanding a greater role in shaping the policies they are being asked to implement remains uncertain. According to political scientist L.B. Ware, some Tunisians affiliated with the UGTT saw the appointment of a military man to the directorship of national security within the Ministry of Interior immediately after the 1984 disturbances as a step toward greater military influence in the affairs of state. (The officer, Brigadier General Ben Ali, has since moved on to become the minister delegate attached to the prime minister for national security.) Although a gradual increase in participation in political affairs seems a possibility, the Tunisian military's long apolitical tradition and widespread respect for Bourguiba militate strongly against the possibility that senior officers would move to overthrow the existing government. The

country's political and economic crisis would have to grow considerably worse to warrant the intervention of senior officers, who are very much a part of the national elite. The younger officers are, however, much more of an unknown factor.

Although most observers believe that military intervention in politics is extremely unlikely as long as Bourguiba remains in control, few are as sanguine about military quiescence after Bourguiba passes from the scene. According to Ware, if post-Bourguiba Tunisia is characterized by economic decline and social tumult and if elite political forces long subsumed under the banners of "Bourguibism" and "Destourianism" break their facade of unity in a divisive struggle for control of the PSD and the country, the possibility of military intervention by senior military personnel is far more likely than was apparent in 1985. It was uncertain, however, whether the younger officers would be willing to support such a venture or whether some of them would seek to take it over to serve their own ends.

Defense Costs and the Economy

Throughout its history as an independent nation, Tunisia has maintained a record of having probably the smallest defense budget among all countries in the Arab world. Investment in impressive weaponry for the sake of prestige has never been a policy of the governing regime. In the 1980s, however, efforts to improve the armed forces' capabilities had strained a national budget oriented primarily toward economic and social development. Although spending increased to higher levels than Tunisian policymakers—and citizens—had been accustomed to, military spending as a percentage of total government expenditure or national income was still among the lowest in the region. Given continued political tensions in the Maghrib and the perceived need to modernize the relatively small armed forces, it appeared that military spending would continue to occupy a prominent place in the national budget.

The defense budget was drawn up annually by the national planning authorities in the Ministry of Finance and the president's office in consultation with the Ministry of National Defense. Although military officers historically have not exercised a major role in the process, greater military expenditures in the 1980s suggested that this pattern might be changing. In a shift from earlier approaches, most military spending in the early and mid-1980s came out of the capital budget. Capital expenditures in Tunisia included much of the new hardware being acquired during that time and

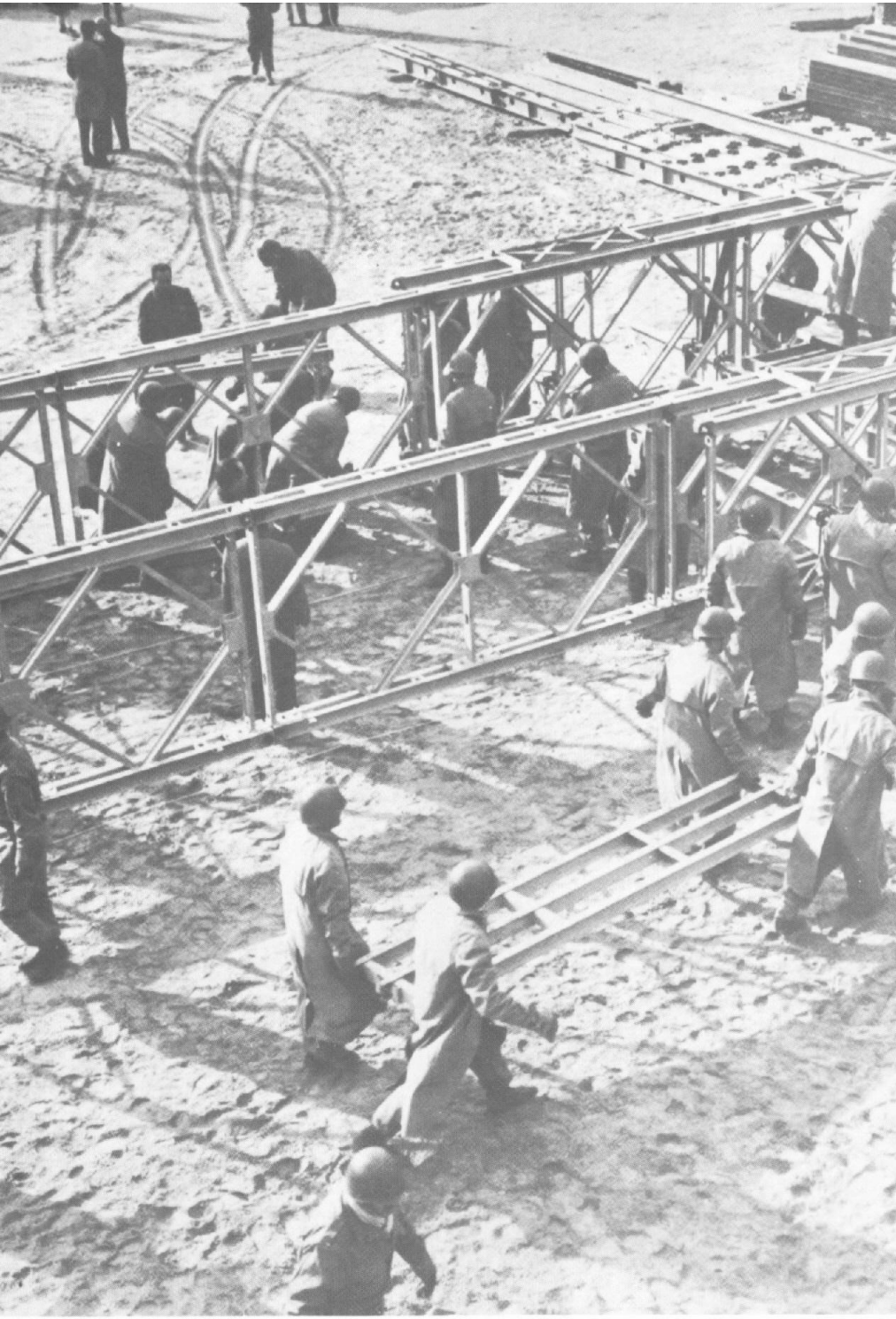
contrasted with current expenditures, which were primarily composed of the costs related to salaries, benefits, maintenance, and fuel.

From independence until 1979 Tunisia had never devoted as much as 2 percent of its estimated gross national product (GNP) to defense expenditures. During this period the military's share of the total government budget was consistently less than 5 percent, and combined government expenditures on health and education normally accounted for more than five times the amount spent on defense. Beginning in 1979, however, when the country began to order new equipment to modernize its armed forces, total defense spending rose dramatically. From a level of TD36.8 million (for value of the Tunisian dinar—see Glossary) in 1978 (4.4 percent of the total national budget for that year), military spending skyrocketed to TD147.7 million (14.9 percent of the national budget). Defense costs as a percentage of central government expenditures lessened over the next several years, except in 1982, when the government made a large purchase of arms from the United States.

According to Tunisia's 1985 budget, TD102.6 million (9.9 percent of the government's current expenditures) was devoted to defense. The Ministry of National Defense also received TD122.5 million (10.9 percent of the total) from the government's capital budget. By contrast, government spending on education amounted to nearly TD300 million (13.7 percent of the total government budget). Public spending on health was somewhat less, accounting for some 7.7 percent of the total 1985 budget.

To offset the cost of the military, the ANT since its formation has lent its support to civic development programs. Much of this effort has come from the engineering units and vast numbers of conscripts who have labored on construction projects or in the building of transportation facilities, mainly in the Sahara and other remote areas of the country. In 1985 the minister of national defense announced the formation of a special army regiment that would be devoted to developing the Sahara. Observers, however, have reported that the younger soldiers at times have shown as little enthusiasm for this tertiary mission as they have for their role as surrogate policemen.

Under the National Service law, which operated in conjunction with military conscription requirements, Tunisian youth who reached age 20 were expected to serve either in uniform for one year or for a like period on programs such as building roads in rural areas, laying railroad track, retimbering land, planting to control desert encroachment, or constructing rural housing units. The program operated as a responsibility of the army, but various min-



Army engineers restoring communications
after a natural disaster
Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia, Washington

istries provided technical planning and supervision of the work programs. In practice, the projects involving National Service conscripts were designed to avoid competition with workers in high unemployment areas. Almost all of the work, therefore, was located in remote rural regions of the country. In the mid-1980s it was thought that approximately 3,000 young people served in the National Service.

Quality and Sources of Manpower

The Tunisian military, a relatively small force, has never experienced difficulty in attracting adequate numbers of recruits for its needs. In the mid-1980s, according to United States government statistics, there were nearly 1.8 million males ages 15 to 49, of whom some 990,000 were considered fit for military service. Each year roughly 83,000 reached the age of 20, the age of eligibility for military service, indicating that basic manpower resources were more than adequate to meet military needs. Even with the addition of personnel needs for the paramilitary police units, manning of the ANT did not constitute a drain on the labor force. On the contrary, it was thought that any significant reduction in conscription requirements would only exacerbate the perennially high unemployment rate in the civilian sector.

Although the military has not faced any problems in filling numerical quotas, it has had more difficulty in attracting adequate numbers of technically trained personnel. The Tunisian people—especially educated citizens from the prosperous northern and coastal areas—have normally held those who volunteered for a military career in low esteem; this attitude persisted in the 1980s. In addition to the relatively low status of the job, engineers and technically trained Tunisians found the pay and benefits of the military to be less than what they could expect to attain in civilian life. Moreover, persons in these categories were able to obtain deferment if they were called up to serve under the conscription law. Although the technical competence of Tunisian soldiers was less than the high standards that the ANT expected of itself, the Tunisian military—which came from a society in which the literacy rate for people above the age of 15 was 50 percent—was considered to be among the better educated military forces in North Africa.

The Tunisian military in 1985 was built around a core of some 8,100 officers, NCOs, and enlisted men who volunteered for a military career. The regular establishment was strengthened by an annual quota of draftees, some 27,000 of whom were on active

duty in 1985. The vast majority of the conscripts—about 26,000—served with the army while over 40 percent of the regular military served in the much smaller navy and air force.

Under the conscription law first introduced in 1959, all physically able male citizens reaching the age of 20 have been technically required to serve in the armed forces. Active military service normally has extended for one year without interruption, but students, teachers, civil servants, and certain technicians could be authorized to fulfill their obligations in stages if continuous service would interfere with their studies or occupation. A one-year deferment could be requested in peacetime by students and by those who had brothers currently serving in the ANT. Besides the physically unfit, exemptions could also be given, except in a national emergency, to those who had lost close relatives in the service of the country or to those who were the sole support of others. Through the years the number of physically qualified men has increasingly exceeded the number of troops the government has found necessary to train and equip. As a result, by 1985 only a third of those eligible were serving the year of active duty technically required of them by law.

In theory, the system of conscription was designed to provide a ready source of trained personnel, but in practice it did little to enhance the capability of the ANT. Exemptions allowed to potential draftees were extremely liberal, and consequently a preponderance of illiterate young men were inducted for training and service. Moreover, most of the conscripts were separated from the ANT just when their training and experience had turned them into useful members of service units.

As part of the program of comprehensive defense, Tunisian authorities in the 1960s sought to create a strong force of military reserves. After completing active military service, enlisted men and officers were required to become members of the reserves. Recruits were assigned to regional mobilization centers where they would be expected to report if they were called up in an emergency. Original plans had called for quotas of 9,000 reservists to be inducted annually for one year of military service. In reality, however, the reserve forces did not function effectively because the government focused its limited resources on active units. Although call-up exercises reportedly did take place, observers believed that even if a limited mobilization of reserve strength were possible, there would not be enough weapons, equipment, and support facilities to outfit and sustain the active-duty reservists.

Military Structure and Training

Although Bourguiba served as the commander in chief of the armed forces and remained the final arbiter on all major decisions, in the mid-1980s his day-to-day influence over the military was limited. The National Defense Council under the chairmanship of Prime Minister Mzali appeared to take a more active role in assessing security threats and directing the security forces. In addition to the prime minister, the council also included Minister of National Defense Slaheddine Baly, as well as the ministers of foreign affairs, finance, and interior (a spot also held by Mzali in 1985). Its staff work was directed by an ANT officer, army Colonel Abdel Massid Fehri in 1985.

The council had originally been formed in 1970 to provide counsel on the "application of the [security] policy defined by the President of the Republic," but by the early 1980s it had ceased to operate. It was recreated by presidential decree after the January 1984 riots to improve coordination between the military and the forces under the authority of the Ministry of Interior. Observers noted, however, that the reemergence of the council gave the prime minister more influence and undercut the power and independence of the minister of national defense, who was not considered to be a close political ally of Mzali.

The Ministry of National Defense was responsible for transmitting policy decisions to the uniformed services as well as for administrative, logistical, and personnel matters. In late 1985 the position of ANT chief of staff, generally filled by the senior ANT officer, had been vacant since Major General Fariq Abdel Hamid el Chiekh was transferred to become ambassador to Sudan in 1984. The chief of staff normally did not command troops but served as a policy coordinator among the three services and as the preeminent military adviser to the minister of national defense. It appeared that, with the reestablishment of the National Defense Council, the need for the position had lessened.

The Ministry of National Defense also included chiefs of staff for each of the three services, but, rather than acting as a unified general staff, each was considered to be the commander of his respective service. General Muhammed Said el Kateb, who was the senior active ANT officer in 1985, served as the inspector general of the armed forces. Under the authority of the minister of national defense, he was responsible for ensuring discipline and efficiency in all military units. Other elements of the general staff organization were charged with carrying out the plans involving budgeting,

logistics, and various administrative support functions of their assigned areas of responsibility.

Army

Under the command of its chief of staff, General Youssef Baraket in 1985, the army was the largest and most developed branch of the armed forces. With a manned strength of 30,000 (of whom 26,000 were conscripts), the army was gradually continuing the expansion that had increased its size by two-thirds since 1979. More important, its units were absorbing new equipment that, it was hoped, would significantly improve the force's effectiveness.

According to *The Military Balance, 1985–1986,* published by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, the army was tactically organized much as it had been in the late 1970s. At the core were two combined arms brigades (each of which included one armored battalion and two mechanized infantry battalions), one so-called paracommando brigade of elite troops, and the Sahara Brigade headquartered in Remeda that was trained to operate in the arid areas of the south. In addition to these units, which had been in existence for more than a decade, the army also included one newly formed armored reconnaissance regiment, one regiment of field artillery, one so-called antitank regiment, two air defense regiments equipped with antiaircraft guns and surface-to-air missiles, and an engineer regiment.

Although the army had undergone only slight organizational changes, the infusions of manpower and equipment received in the early 1980s were thought to have filled out what had long been an undermanned and ill-equipped force. Most striking was the addition to the armored units of over 50 M-60A3 tanks and 14 older but equally capable reconditioned M-48A5 tanks from the United States. Other newly acquired armored vehicles included a large complement of M-113 armored personnel carriers, some of which were armed with TOW anti-tank missiles. Artillery had been upgraded by the acquisition of new weaponry, and the force's air defense capabilities had been vastly improved by the addition of relatively sophisticated surface-to-air missile systems purchased from Sweden and the United States (see table 12, Appendix).

In earlier times Tunisian soldiers had an excellent fighting record, as demonstrated by their service in the French army before independence, but the modern army has been largely untested. The battalions that assisted in the UN peace-keeping forces in the Congo in the early 1960s saw little, if any, combat action. Similarly a cease-fire was declared during the Arab-Israeli June 1967 War

before the symbolic contingent of army troops Bourguiba offered to the Arabs could be committed. The small military contingent contributed by Tunisia to the Arab cause in the October 1973 War with Israel may have gained valuable experience in terms of wartime planning, military deployment, and logistical support, but these forces did not gain combat experience.

In the 1970s and 1980s the army saw more action in internal security situations, where its record was mixed. The army was deployed in the Gafsa crisis of 1980 to put down the Libyan-supported insurgents. Although it was successful in the operation, shortcomings were pointed out by the army's delay in deploying troops to Gafsa and their difficulty in overwhelming some 60 rebels. Similarly, when it was used in support of the police in the major civil disturbances of 1978 and 1984, the army turned in a successful, but flawed, performance. Untrained in crowd control, the troops on both occasions used what observers considered to be excessive force to put down demonstrators. Reportedly, ANT officers and conscripts alike resented their role in these situations where their enemies were not foreign invaders but fellow countrymen.

Air Force

In the 1980s the air force was receiving new equipment and training to enable it to more adequately perform its principal missions. As the sole operator of military aircraft in Tunisia, the air force was responsible for the aerial defense of national territory, close air support of the army, air transport for the army and the police, and assistance to the navy in air-sea rescue operations. Under the command of Brigadier General Abdel Hamid el Farhi, who assumed the position of air force chief of staff in 1985, the force had a personnel strength of some 2,500, about 500 of whom were conscripts.

The last of the ANT elements to be established (in 1960), the air force has since received valuable assistance from a variety of Western sources. It commenced operations with the arrival of 15 Saab primary trainers and a contingent of instructors from the Swedish air force. In the mid-1960s a limited French training program coincided with the delivery of several French-built light fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters. In 1966 the Italians provided, along with training, eight Aermacchi M.B.326 trainer/light strike aircraft of a type still used in Tunisia. Subsequently, the United States agreed to assist in training, supplying equipment, and establishing the air force's technical support system. In 1969 Tunisia

Tunisian army unit on parade
Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia, Washington

took delivery of 12 F-86F Sabre jet fighters from the United States to establish the air force's first front-line combat squadron.

By the mid-1970s, however, aging equipment, shortages of highly trained technicians, and the low government priority given to defense had led to stagnation, if not deterioration, in the quality of the air force. The high costs of new equipment delayed efforts to modernize the force. Initially, when the Sabres were grounded at the end of the 1970s, they were replaced by new M.B.326s, which were relatively low-performance aircraft. Largely because of the high costs, a full decade passed after the Tunisian government first expressed an interest in purchasing Northrop F-5E and F-5F fighters, and they were finally delivered. By the end of 1985, however, the air force had largely completed the modernization begun in the late 1970s under the impetus of the Libyan threat.

The combat units of the air force included one fighter/attack squadron composed of 12 F–5s and one counterinsurgency/light strike squadron equipped with the M.B.326s. Two C–130Hs delivered in 1985 provide a transport capability, the need for which had been pointed out in 1980 by the army's difficulty in moving units to Gafsa to counter the attack on that town by Libyan-supported insurgents. The air force's training unit operated various types of aircraft, including 1940s vintage T–6 Texans delivered almost two decades earlier from France. The helicopter wing also used a wide variety of aircraft, mainly of French origin (see table 13, Appendix).

The air force units operated from facilities established by the French during the protectorate period and further developed by them for use by the Tunisian squadrons of the French air force during World War II. In the 1980s the main base was at Sidi Ahmed near Bizerte, but other air bases were located near Tunis, Sfax, and Gabès. The air force could also use the runways and support facilities of the country's major commercial airports (see Transportation and Telecommunications, ch. 3).

To protect its airspace, Tunisia in 1980 acquired from Sweden LM Ericcson Giraffe radar systems designed to be used in concert with fighter aircraft and surface-to-air-missiles. The air force had not been able to use its air defenses effectively to prevent reported incursions of Libyan aircraft or stop the Israeli warplanes that raided PLO headquarters at Hammam-Lif in 1985. In the latter instance, it was believed that not more than one F–5 was able to scramble, and this did not occur until the Israeli aircraft had left the area. It should be noted, however, that at the time of the raid the F–5s were newly delivered and that pilot and technical training were incomplete.

Navy

In the mid-1980s the navy had undergone a far more modest modernization than the other services, and much of its inventory was approaching obsolescence. The navy had a relatively limited mission concentrating on coastal protection, enforcement of customs regulations, rescue operations within territorial waters, and protection of the country's maritime boundaries. It was commanded by the chief of naval staff—Captain Habib Fadhila in 1985—and had a manned strength of 2,600 including 500 conscripts.

Established in 1959, the navy initially received French assistance, including advisory personnel and several small patrol vessels. In the mid-1980s the force included the frigate *President Bourguiba*

(a World War II vintage destroyer escort transferred from the United States), two United States-built coastal minesweepers, and a variety of fast-attack and patrol craft. The most important additions to the fleet in the 1980s were three Combattante III fast attack craft armed with Exocet surface-to-surface missiles. Apart from these vessels, however, most of the fleet's units were old and capable of little more than coastal patrol duties (see table 14, Appendix).

During the 1960s and 1970s the navy was primarily involved in combating the smuggling of contraband, the illegal entry of undesirable aliens, and unauthorized emigration as well as other security activities affecting the coastal areas. In these matters the overall effort was shared with agencies of the Ministry of Interior, especially the customs agents and immigration personnel of the Sûreté Nationale.

Throughout the 1970s the navy also responded to government concerns over unauthorized use of Tunisian fishing waters through aggressive actions against encroaching foreign fishing fleets. In what many observers described as the "sardine war," armed patrol boats repeatedly engaged Italian vessels from Sicily, firing on them and forcing them into Tunisian ports for the imposition of heavy fines. During this period a longstanding dispute over the maritime border with Libya also resulted in shows of force by Tunisian naval vessels. Although the issue was later referred to international arbitration, its reemergence as a point of conflict could put the navy in the center of a future Tunisian-Libyan clash.

Training

Long-term absence of quality training programs for military personnel has resulted in a shortage of technically trained officers and enlisted specialists, hampering the development of the ANT as a credible fighting force. To a degree, the problem with ANT training resulted from official reluctance to increase defense expenditures over many years, thus restricting expansion of training facilities. Because of the relatively small size of the military elements and the scope of their technical requirements, the government has relied to a large extent on foreign assistance in matters of training.

In the mid-1980s basic training for conscripts normally lasted three months and was taught mainly at the army training center at Bizerte. After basic training, recruits received further specialized training with their units over the next three months. NCOs were trained at their own academy near Tunis in a one-year program.

This was followed by a six-month specialization course and six additional months of service as instructors for incoming recruits.

In December 1967 a national military academy was opened with French assistance at Fondouk Jedad, south of Tunis. The academy provided military leadership instruction to officer candidates of all three components of the ANT, although each service operated separate schools for specialized training. Admission was competitive among those who had achieved a baccalauréat degree recognized by the Tunisian education system. The academy's four-year course of instruction included university courses as well as coursework with specifically military content and was reportedly weighted toward engineering and scientific subjects. Beginning in the early 1980s academy graduates were rotated through an instruction center where they would spend a year assisting in recruit training—like the NCO school of graduates—honing their skills as leaders and educators. A year of specialized instruction or weapons training normally followed before the young officers joined a regular unit with the rank of second lieutenant.

Tunisian military officers continued to receive instruction throughout their careers. Junior staff training, called "the stage of captains," prepared Tunisian officers for command at the company level. Officers of major rank might qualify for the School of Superior Military Instruction, a junior staff college that prepared them to command large units, lead in interservice operations, and perform staff functions. Selected lieutenant colonels would be chosen to attend the Superior War College, after which they would qualify for the top command and staff positions in the ANT.

As an addition to the purely military schools, Bourguiba in early 1984 inaugurated the Institute of National Defense. The new institute was designed to operate as a forum for exchanges between high-level civilians and military personnel. In a scholarly atmosphere the fellows of the center were expected to conduct research, reflect, and help shape policy on the major issues of national defense and international relations facing Tunisia.

Uniforms, Ranks, and Insignia

The uniforms adopted by the ANT in 1956 basically reflected the French tradition, particularly those worn by units in the field. Modifications have occurred since then, however, and the modern uniforms of all services have a closer resemblance to those worn by eastern Arab military personnel, although the traditional French collar patches have been retained. By law the grades in the army

rank structure ranged from basic private to lieutenant general (see fig. 13; fig. 14). Senior officer grades for the navy did not include officers of flag rank among their active-duty personnel in 1985 because of the small size of the service and the developing nature of its status within the ANT structure.

Foreign Military Assistance

Lacking a domestic arms industry, Tunisia since independence has remained dependent upon foreign sources for armaments and other defense-related equipment as well as for much of its military training. The United States and France, historically Tunisia's most important suppliers, continued to be predominant sources of aid in the 1980s when the country's military buildup caused a vast expansion in its arms imports. In the context of the ANT's growth, foreign military assistance has come to be an increasingly important military requirement and economic concern.

The United States began providing military assistance to Tunisia in 1957, and in 1967 a military liaison office attached to the United States embassy in Tunis was established. Throughout the first 20 years of Tunisian independence, however, United States military assistance remained modest, and the cost to Tunisia was low. Many of the most important items—including the F-86 fighters delivered in 1969—were surplus United States Air Force equipment supplied on a grant basis under the Military Assistance Program (MAP). ANT personnel were also trained through the International Military Education and Training (IMET) program, which was cost-free to the Tunisian government. Tunisian purchase of United States military equipment under the Foreign Military Sales (FMS) program never exceeded US$2.3 million in any year before United States fiscal year (FY) 1977 and were generally far less. In FY 1977, however, as Tunisia first began to modernize its armed forces, it placed some US$44 million in orders for United States equipment through the FMS program. The equipment it received included mainly transport helicopters and armored personnel carriers.

The Gafsa incident in 1980 and the specter of Libyan involvement served as an impetus for increased United States interest in supporting Tunisia's military needs. In early 1980 a survey team from the United States Department of Defense was dispatched to Tunisia to outline the country's defense capabilities and requirements. Its report found that the ANT was so poorly equipped that

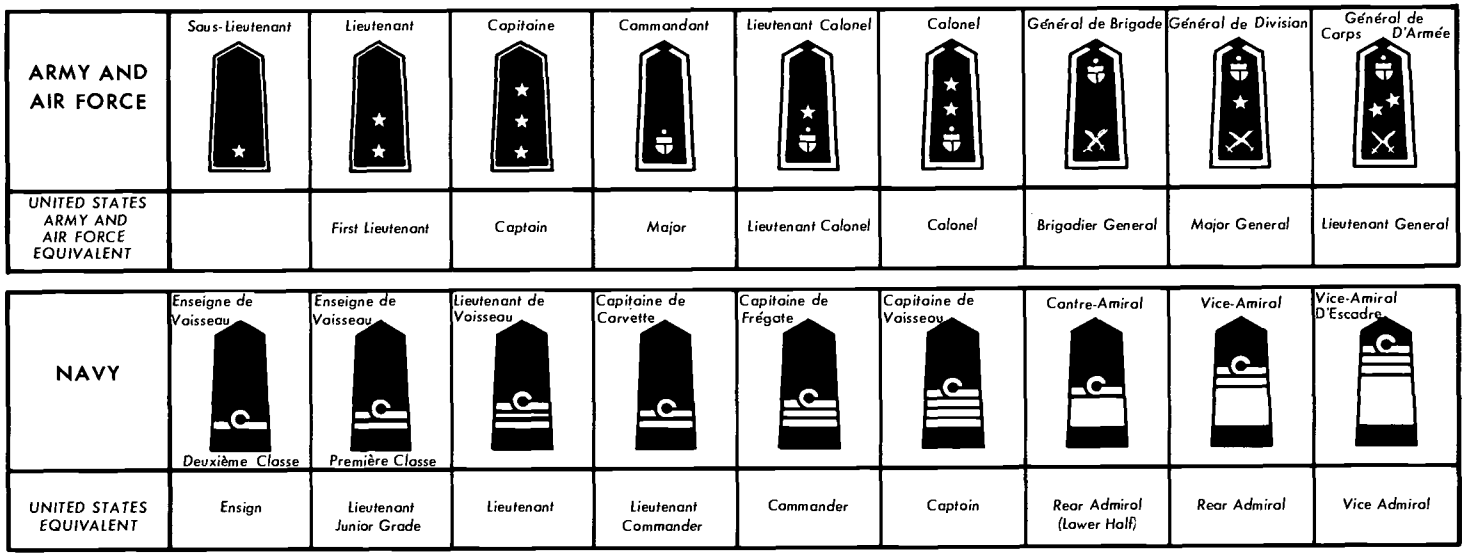
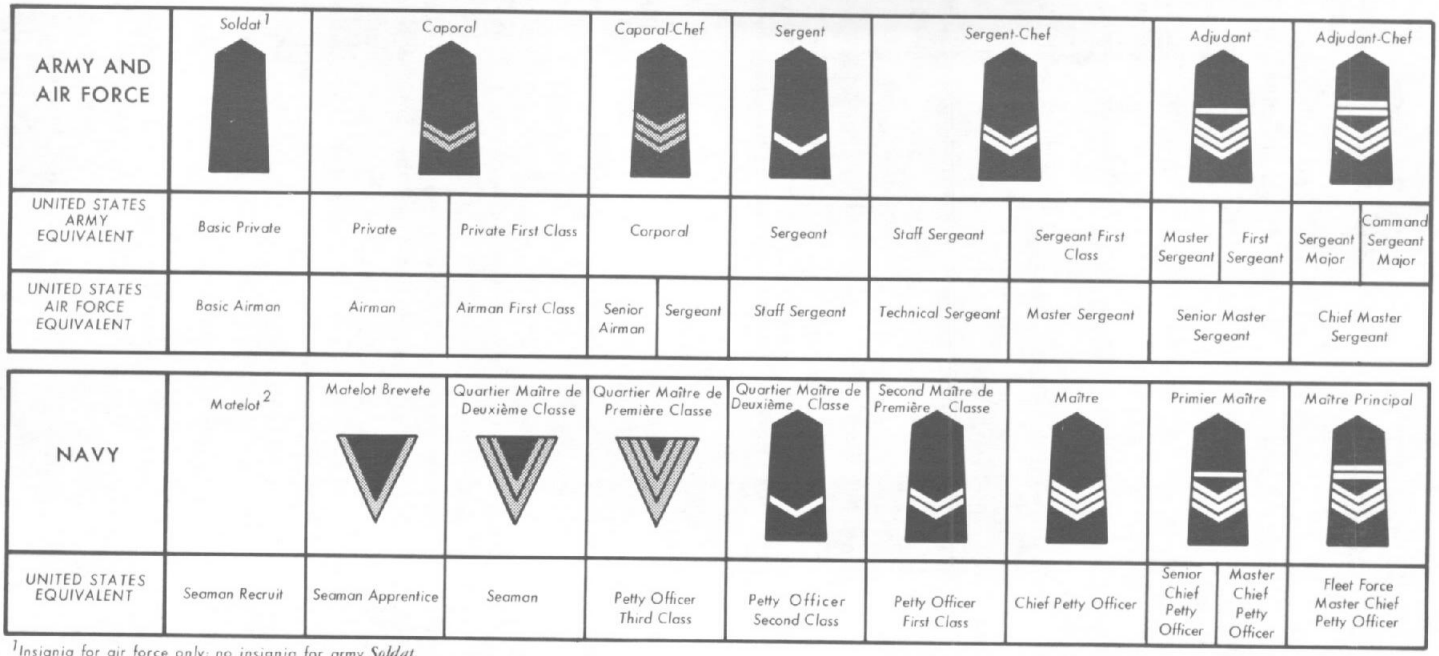


Figure 13. Officer Ranks, Insignia, and United States Equivalents, 1985



[1]Insignia for air force only; no insignia for army *Soldat*.
[2]No insignia.

Figure 14. Enlisted Ranks, Insignia, and United States Equivalents, 1985

it could probably not offer more than token resistance against an attack from Libya. In particular, the Tunisian military was lacking infantry weapons, communications equipment, and transport, including trucks, armored personnel carriers, and helicopters. The team also noted that Tunisia did not have an air defense capability or the ability to deter an armored thrust; the acquisition of interceptor aircraft and tanks would help remedy these deficiencies. Tunisian-American talks on new arms sales began but were stalled by the reluctance of the American administration to finance the costs—estimated by one source to be some US$1 billion—implied by these purchases.

The administration of United States president Ronald Reagan was willing to supply arms to Tunisia as a counter to Libyan strength in the region, but, like its predecessor, it was reluctant to bear the high costs of Tunisian military modernization. Purchases of M–60 tanks and F–5 jet fighters were approved in 1981 but were delayed by Tunisian difficulties in finding financing. Finally, in 1982, the United States agreed to sell Tunisia the tanks and aircraft in a US$293 million arms deal to be financed largely by commercial loans guaranteed by the United States Department of Defense. Between FY 1982 and FY 1984 the United States government annually guaranteed some US$90 million in loans for Tunisian military procurement but, because the loans had to be repaid, the costs of the purchases were difficult for Tunisia to meet. Continued difficulties in financing the sale caused the deliveries of the F–5s and the M–60s to be delayed until 1984 and 1985.

After the delivery of the aircraft and tanks, many United States officials believed that, despite Tunisia's continued problems with Libya, arms purchases from the United States would decline as Tunisia absorbed the new equipment in its military inventories and turned to the business of paying for it. At the time of Bourguiba's June 1985 visit to the United States, therefore, many were surprised when the president made a request for US$1 billion in grants to finance a second stage of military modernization, including another squadron of fighter aircraft. In late 1985 there was no indication that financing for such an expansion could be arranged, but the United States had already begun increasing grant assistance through the MAP program, the Economic Support Fund, and the IMET program. (Between 1957 and FY 1984 some 1,740 Tunisian students had been trained in Tunisia or overseas under the IMET program, nearly 600 after 1980.) In FY 1985 it was estimated that some US$36 million in military assistance was supplied to Tunisia on a grant basis. This compared favorably with US$22.5

million in arms agreements made between the two countries that year and US$50 million in loans directly from the United States government, half of which were made at concessional rates.

Apart from high costs, some observers anticipated that political difficulties linked to the initial United States reaction to the Israeli air raid on the PLO headquarters in late 1985 might weaken Tunisia's security ties with the United States. Although there were reports that negotiations over the proposed United States use of a bombing range in Tunisian territory had briefly stalled, there was no indication that any aspect of the military relationship had been significantly affected.

France also furnished considerable military assistance to Tunisia and has had a marked influence on the ANT's establishment at all levels. A French liaison unit within the Ministry of National Defense provided guidance in organizational, planning, and logistical matters, mainly for the army and the navy. Tunisian officers and NCOs have been trained at French military academies, and French officers have been assigned to ANT schools and units to assist in training. French equipment provided to Tunisia has included trainer and transport aircraft, helicopters, naval vessels, armored vehicles, artillery, small arms, and ammunition. Before the 1980s the French provided the bulk of the equipment used by the Tunisian army and navy, but after 1980 the United States became more prominent in equipping the army. Apparently, the French government of President François Mitterand has not been as willing as the Americans to furnish military equipment on a concessional basis, and a proposed purchase of Mirage F–1 fighters was never made. The most notable French arms sale to Tunisia in the 1980s involved the three missile-armed Combattante III fast-attack craft.

Although the United States and France have supplied Tunisia with the bulk of its military equipment, other countries have also provided the ANT with valuable assistance. Britain, Italy, and Sweden have been among the most important of these. Certain Arab countries—chief among them Kuwait and Saudi Arabia—have helped to finance Tunisian military purchases, and Tunisian officials were reportedly hoping that they could assist in paying for the proposed second round of military modernization. Algeria, an increasingly valuable ally in the 1980s because of the conflict with Libya, was also reportedly willing to give military aid to Tunisia. Its ability to furnish Tunisia with military equipment was limited, however, because the ANT was equipped almost exclusively with Western-made hardware, whereas the Algerian armed forces relied mainly on Soviet-type equipment. Tunisia, in keeping with its de-

clared policy of nonalignment, has received some military equipment from communist countries. Notably, the Tunisian navy received two armed fast-attack craft from China in 1977. In addition, although the Soviet Union did not provide Tunisia with significant military assistance, Soviet naval and merchant vessels regularly called at Tunisian ports and occasionally used their ship repair facilities. Twenty-one Soviet naval vessels called at Tunisian ports in 1984, compared with six port calls by the United States Navy.

Internal Security Forces

Shortly after independence, responsibilities for maintaining public order and ensuring internal security were assigned to two separate police organizations: the Sûreté Nationale, an outgrowth of the administrative branch of its French counterpart of the protectorate era, and the newly established Garde Nationale. The Sûreté assumed responsibility for police duties in the urban areas; the Garde acted as a rural police force, much in the manner of the French gendarmerie units that had served this purpose in Tunisia until 1956. Since then the police system has been modified considerably as a result of experience gained during the decades since its creation and as domestic needs have dictated its expansion and upgrading.

Until 1967 the two police organizations operated autonomously, and the Garde was more related in its activities to the ANT, especially in matters such as exchange of officer and technical personnel, equipment, and training philosophy. Nonetheless, both police forces were under the supervision of the Ministry of Interior. After the anti-Jewish riots that occurred in Tunisia in the wake of the Arab-Israeli June 1967 War, the ministry was reorganized to centralize the control of domestic police functions and to clarify the separation of the Garde Nationale and the armed forces under the Ministry of National Defense. In this reorganization the two police forces were amalgamated under one Directorate of National Security, a section of the Ministry of Interior. The senior police administrative positions—director of the Sûreté Nationale and commandant of the Garde Nationale—still existed, but control over the operational use of all Tunisian police units was the responsibility of the director of the Directorate of National Security.

Minor reorganizations continued in the police and the Ministry of Interior over the next several years, but the personalities of the leaders have been more relevant to the operations of the internal security forces than the organizaton of institutions. In the late

1970s the director of national security, Colonel Ben Ali, also held the position of director of the Sûreté Nationale. The situation proved controversial for several reasons. Some Tunisians were concerned that holding both jobs made the incumbent too powerful, and the fact that Ben Ali was a military officer with long tenure as chief of military security concerned those who were interested in limiting military influence in the society. Ben Ali was also considered to be a protégé of Farhat, the former interior and national defense minister who fell from Bourguiba's favor in 1979. In 1980 after the Gafsa incident, Ben Ali was sent to Poland as ambassador and the director of national security in the Ministry of Interior remained vacant. His responsibilities were taken over by Abdelhamid Skhiri, who was named director of the Sûreté, and by Ahmed Bennour who was given the title of minister delegate attached to the prime minister for national security but who was not as closely involved in security operations as Ben Ali had been. The overall effect was to increase the direct influence of then-Minister of Interior Driss Guiga.

After the civil disturbances of January 1984, the leadership of the Ministry of Interior and the internal security forces was completely revamped. Bourguiba immediately dismissed Guiga, replacing him with Mzali, who held the interior post concurrently with the office of prime minister. Guiga, who left the country soon after his dismissal, was blamed for the relatively passive police performance during the rioting and for suggesting during the height of the crisis that Mzali should step down. Guiga was a political rival of Mzali, whose "personal interests had prevailed," according to Bourguiba, and had "threatened the superior interests of the nation." Guiga was tried in absentia by a special court and sentenced to 15 years in prison for treason.

As minister of interior, Mzali presided over a wholesale purge of the ministry's top leaders who had been closely linked to his predecessor. He immediately dismissed Skhiri as director of the Sûreté and abolished the Sûreté's Tunis prefecture, firing the prefect. Skhiri was later sentenced to a jail term on charges of treason and corruption. In May 1984 Bennour was eased out of his post and sent to Italy as Tunisia's ambassador.

To run the security forces, Mzali brought back Ben Ali, reappointing him to his old jobs and director of the Sûreté and director of national security within the Ministry of Interior. Reportedly, Mzali also wanted to appoint Ben Ali for his replacement as minister of interior. Bourguiba balked at this suggestion, but in October 1984 he consented to Ben Ali's being named minister delegate attached to the prime minister for national security. Because no one

was appointed to replace him at the Directorate of National Security, Ben Ali was able to combine operational control of the internal security forces with subcabinet rank. Ben Ali, who had received training in the United States, was considered to be a tough and politically well-connected leader. Ameur Ghedira, a cousin of Mzali's who had been commandant of the Garde Nationale, was promoted after the 1984 riots to secretary of state within the Ministry of Interior charged with internal security; his position in the Garde Nationale was taken by Colonel Habib Ammar.

To perform its duties of maintaining internal security and administering the rural areas, the Ministry of Interior increased its budget significantly in the early 1980s. The bulk of the budget was devoted to current expenditures; this component rose from TD79.5 million in 1983 to TD106.5 million in 1985, representing 10.1 percent of the total current expenditures in the latter year. Spending by the ministry classed as capital expenditures was much less, fluctuating between TD11 million and TD25 million in the same years. The bulk of spending, some 80 percent of current expenditures, was devoted to the salaries of personnel.

The government has experienced little difficulty in its efforts to maintain adequate numbers of recruits for the police services. When formed initially, both elements conducted recruitment among politically reliable party members, *fellaghas*, and men who had served with French law enforcement agencies. Since this initial effort, pay and conditions of service have been maintained at levels that have continued to attract recruits who prefer the security of government jobs rather than the uncertainty many face in the civilian sector with its high unemployment rates.

Sûreté Nationale

In 1985 the Sûreté Nationale—in effect a national police force—remained the primary enforcement authority in the principal cities and other urban centers. It was charged with the maintenance of public order, protection of life and property, investigation of crimes, and apprehension of offenders. In addition it performed other routine policy functions, including traffic control. Total personnel strength of the Sûreté was not publicly available but has been estimated as being roughly 12,000 men and women.

The Sûreté was organized generally along the lines of its French counterpart and had operational and investigative branches and supporting services. The section best known to the public was made up of the uniformed urban police, segments of which were

assigned to each of the 23 governorates. In the past, these elements have operated under the control of the individual governors, but in 1985 it was thought that they received orders primarily from Sûreté director Ben Ali in Tunis. Separate sections of the Sûreté handled functions that included border control, immigration services, political intelligence, presidential bodyguard responsibilities, and general information requirements. Other components were responsible for operations of the judiciary police, maintenance of criminal files, crime research laboratories, and licensing bureau, and the prison system.

In the late 1960s, particularly after the ineffectual performance of the Sûreté in coping with the anti-Jewish riots of 1967, the government established, with United States assistance, a unit of the Sûreté known as the Brigade of Public Order. Manned by some 3,500 policemen in 1985 and equipped with Fiat 6614 armored personnel carriers, the three battalions of this paramilitary unit specialized in tactics designed to be effective in controlling crowds and countering demonstrations and strike violence. The shortcomings of the brigade and other police elements were sharply pointed out by the riots of 1978 and 1984. In the former case, the police were generally criticized for being too aggressive. In the latter, the government's report of inquiry asserted that the police command was unprepared for the disturbances and did not deploy police units quickly and decisively enough to deter the rioters.

The Directorate of Territorial Surveillance was responsible for intelligence and counterespionage operation. Because of the clandestine methods used by its plainclothes personnel, this organization has engendered some fear and apprehension among the general public that it, in effect, has constituted a secret police of classic proportions. Tactics criticized by the United States Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1984* included the arresting of suspects on hearsay evidence without proper warrants during the 1984 violence. The police have also been noted for illegally detaining the relatives of fugitives in order to encourage them to surrender to the authorities. Veiled accusations have also persisted regarding possible police involvement in the 1961 murder in Western Europe of opposition leader Salah Ben Youssef and allegations of similar efforts against Ahmed Ben Salah during the years he spent in exile; the Tunisian government has vehemently denied such allegations. Overall, however, the security police have not displayed an obtrusive presence, although some observers were concerned that this might change under the aggressive leadership of Ben Ali.

Applicants accepted by the Sûreté were trained at its academy at Bir Bou Regba. The duration of their course varied with the service in which they were enrolled and was fixed for each applicant by the Sûreté director. Members of the force could be called upon at any time to take special training courses at the police academy, at a Tunisian institution of higher learning, or with a government agency. All those below the grade of superintendent could also be required to take any physical education or sports training the administrative section might organize.

Garde Nationale

The rural police force that was formed at independence—the Garde Nationale—assumed the investigative and internal security tasks formerly carried out by the units of French gendarmerie. The Garde was established in 1957 during the Algerian war of independence to give the Bourguiba government a strong border patrol force that could deter the infiltration of Youssefists and their supporters from Algeria. To man the Garde, former *fellaghas* were recruited, and the new paramilitary service began its operations with a personnel strength of roughly 3,000 officers and men. Its units suffered from shortages of small arms and other necessary military equipment, but its existence as a stopgap measure doubled the size of Tunisia's available security forces.

During the 1960s the Garde expanded its role from strictly border patrol duties and emerged as a major component of the police system. Eventually a large segment of the Garde consisted of a rural gendarmerie, which became active in all areas of the country where urban elements of the Sûreté did not exist. Other Garde units provided a highway patrol force, and still others served as presidential bodyguards and ceremonial troops for state occasions. In 1985 its personnel strength—including the rural gendarmerie elements—was estimated at roughly 6,000 officers and men.

Because of its size, training, equipment inventory, and tactical deployment capability, the Garde was thought to be a versatile paramilitary force. In operational terms it has been described as a combination rural security force and national guard always on active duty. In contrast with its Sûreté counterpart, the Garde was responsible for aiding the army in counterinsurgency tasks when needed. In times of emergency its mission has been to attempt, along with the Brigade of Public Order, to employ crowd control techniques. In addition to its paramilitary duties, the Garde has worked to create an improved environment through civic action, in-

Female members of the Tunis traffic police
Courtesy Embassy of Tunisia, Washington

cluding assisting public works projects and aiding the victims of natural disasters.

Personnel requirements of the Garde were met through recruitment in accordance with civil service regulations. In general most of the troop strength has consisted of former army enlisted men and junior NCOs who have completed their military training and tours of duty with ANT. Applicants selected for service with the Garde received instructions at the separate Garde training academy at Bir Bou Regba.

Prisons

The prison system, a responsibility of the Ministry of Interior, was administered by a department of the Sûreté Nationale. In 1985 it included central prisons at Tunis, Béja, Bizerte, Gabès, Gafsa, Kairouan, Le Kef, Sfax, Sousse, and Bardo as well as other smaller facilities at less populated centers. Habitual criminals, recidivists, were usually sentenced to hard labor at the agricultural penitentiary at Jabel Faqirin. Virtually all of the major prisons operating in 1985 had been established by the French during the protectorate era.

Attempts have been made to provide facilities and personnel to differentiate the kinds of offenders. Wherever possible, juveniles have been separated from adult prisoners, and most of the central prisons had segregated sections for men and women. Political prisoners were also normally separated from those jailed for ordinary crimes. For prisoners other than hardened criminals, attention has been given to rehabilitation programs in an effort to reduce recidivism. Selected prisoners serving sentences of less than five years could be transferred from the maximum security prisons to open camps called reeducation centers for social rehabilitation. Here they performed useful work inside or outside the camp and received a token wage. Industrial training has also been instituted in some prisons.

Prison conditions during the 75 years of colonial administration were generally grim, and the crowded institutions were usually the sources of labor crews used in construction projects, road maintainence, and general cleanup tasks. Reforms proceeded slowly in the three decades after independence, but, according to the United States Department of State's *Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 1984*, "conditions in Tunisian detention centers and prisons are generally poor and in some cases injurious to health." There have also been numerous reports of torture in Tunisian penal facilities, including floggings. Although there were no indications that these actions were ordered or carried out by higher authorities, neither was there any evidence that police or prison officials have been punished for brutal treatment of prisoners in custody. The Tunisian League of Human Rights, an independent watchdog agency formed in 1977, has documented prisoner abuse and has brought its findings to the attention of higher officials within the Ministry of Interior. Reportedly, some improvements have resulted.

* * *

Although no single reference is devoted to describing and analyzing the entire range of Tunisian national security issues, relatively comprehensive knowledge and understanding can be gleaned from examining a number of sources, each of which deals with a specific aspect of Tunisia's security situation. A valuable contribution to an understanding of the early development of the Tunisian military and its role in Tunisian society is found in Jacob C. Hurewitz' *Middle East Politics: The Military Dimension*. A more

recent treatment focusing upon the military's involvement in Tunisian politics is found in L.B. Ware's 1985 article "The Role of the Tunisian Military in the Post-Bourguiba Era."

Because relatively few books have been published on contemporary Tunisia since the early 1970s, periodicals provide an indispensable source of information on the government's security concerns and policies as well as on the military and police forces. Among the most consistently useful are the Paris daily *Le Monde* and the weeklies *Jeune Afrique* and *Marchés tropicaux et méditerranéens*. Another valuable reference on security developments is the Paris monthly *Afrique Défense*, which is also available in English translation as *Defense Africa*. Articles from a wide variety of other publications that deal with Tunisia are available as part of the *Near East/South Asia Report*, which contains translations by the Joint Publications Research Service. *The Military Balance*, produced annually by the London-based International Institute for Strategic Studies, is essential as a starting point for examining Tunisia's military inventory and order of battle. The detailed annual *Africa Contemporary Record: Annual Survey and Documents*, edited by the noted Africanist Colin Legum, and the quarterly journal *Maghreb-Machrek* are general works that often have useful sections, articles, or information relating to Tunisian security affairs. (For further information and complete citations, see Bibliography.)

Appendix

Table

Table 1. Metric Conversion Coefficients

When you know	Multiply by	To find
Millimeters	0.04	inches
Centimeters	0.39	inches
Meters	3.3	feet
Kilometers	0.62	miles
Hectares (10,000 m^2)	2.47	acres
Square kilometers	0.39	square miles
Cubic meters	35.3	cubic feet
Liters	0.26	gallons
Kilograms	2.2	pounds
Metric tons	0.98	long tons
	1.1	short tons
	2,204	pounds
Degrees Celsius (Centigrade)	9 divide by 5 and add 32	degrees Fahrenheit

Table 2. Population by Governorate, 1975 and 1984

Governorate	Population		Distribution in Percentage	
	1975	1984*	1975	1984*
Ariana	205,668	374,192	3.7	5.4
Béja	248,770	274,706	4.5	3.9
Ben Arous	152,011	246,193	2.7	3.5
Bizerte	343,708	394,670	6.1	5.7
Gabès	186,033	240,016	3.3	3.5
Gafsa	184,968	235,723	3.3	3.4
Jendouba	299,702	359,429	5.4	5.2
Kairouan	338,477	421,607	6.1	6.0
Kasserine	238,499	297,959	4.3	4.3
Kebili	69,684	95,371	1.2	1.4
Kef	233,155	247,672	4.2	3.6
Mahdia	218,217	270,435	3.9	3.9
Medenine	220,123	295,889	3.9	4.2
Monastir	223,150	278,478	4.0	4.0
Nabeul	368,114	461,405	6.6	6.6
Sfax	474,879	577,992	8.5	8.3
Sidi Bouzid	218,511	288,528	3.9	4.1
Siliana	192,668	222,038	3.4	3.2
Sousse	254,601	322,491	4.6	4.6
Tataouine	72,847	100,329	1.3	1.4
Tozeur	52,876	67,943	0.9	1.0
Tunis	692,665	774,364	12.4	11.1
Zaghouan	99,883	118,743	1.8	1.7
TOTAL	5,589,209	6,966,173	100.0	100.0

*Preliminary.

Source: Based on information from Tunisia, Ministry of Plan. National Institute of Statistics, *Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat*, Tunis, March 30, 1984, 24.

Table 3. Population by Communes with Populations over 25,000 in 1984, Selected Years, 1956–84

Commune	1956	1975	1984*
Tunis	410,000	550,404	596,654
Sfax	65,636	198,872	231,911
Ariana	16,341	47,833	98,655
Bizerte	52,239	78,772	94,509
Jerba	13,456	70,217	92,269
Gabès	24,420	48,612	92,258
Sousse	48,172	69,530	83,509
Kairouan	33,968	54,546	72,254
Bardo	15,997	49,367	65,669
La Goulette	26,323	41,912	61,609
Gafsa	24,345	42,225	60,970
Ben Arous	7,248	27,001	52,105
Menzel Bourguiba	34,732	42,111	51,399
Zarzis	10,829	14,420	49,063
Kasserine	2,705	22,594	47,606
Hammam-Lif	22,060	35,634	47,009
Béja	22,668	39,226	46,708
M'saken	26,142	33,559	41,217
Nabeul	14,047	30,467	39,531
Marsa	14,225	35,124	38,319
Mahdia	10,842	26,007	36,828
Monastir	12,596	26,759	35,546
Le Kef	14,743	27,939	34,509
Moknine	17,699	26,035	31,783
Manouba	14,780	23,167	31,758
Kalaa Kebira	16,708	23,508	31,406
Hammamet	7,088	17,295	30,441
Tataouine	2,599	10,399	30,371
Rades	13,184	20,164	30,218
El Metaoui	1,052	17,748	29,850
Sakiet Ezzit	--	22,427	26,771

—nonexistent in 1956.
*Preliminary.

Source: Based on information from Tunisia, Ministry of Plan, National Institute of Statistics, *Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat,* 1, Tunis, March 30, 1984, 26.

Table 4. Gross National Product by Industrial Origin, 1981–84

(in millions of Tunisian dinars)*

Economic Sector	1981	1982	1983	1984
Agriculture (including forestry and fishing)	568.8	629.9	688.8	823.0
Hydrocarbons	449.3	503.6	563.5	579.2
Other mining	64.9	52.7	65.0	74.5
Electricity	42.0	43.6	53.0	67.0
Textiles	121.0	142.8	164.9	187.8
Other manufacturing	372.9	412.0	484.1	586.2
Construction and public works	262.0	308.0	332.9	356.0
Tourism	160.6	184.6	191.6	215.0
Administrative services	442.4	564.3	676.3	752.0
Other sectors	1,129.6	1,345.2	1,542.2	2,594.3
TOTAL	3,613.5	4,186.7	4,762.3	6,237.0

*For value of the Tunisian dinar—see Glossary.

Source: Based on information from Economist Intelligence Unit, *Quarterly Economic Review of Libya, Tunisia, Malta*, 3, London, 1985, 2; and Economist Intelligence Unit, *Quarterly Economic Review of Libya, Tunisia, Malta: Annual Supplement 1984*, London, 1984, 27.

Table 5. Production of Selected Commodities, 1982–84

Commodity	Unit	1982	1983	1984
Agriculture				
Cereals	Thousands of tons	1,255	921	1,023
Olives	-do-	400	275	700
Citrus fruit	-do-	165	138	200
Potatoes	-do-	110	150	135
Meat (including poultry)	-do-	193	181	190
Sugar beets	-do-	82	67	n.a.
Dates	-do-	27	56	n.a.
Tomatoes	-do-	260	360	n.a.
Eggs	millions	830	940	970
Milk	thousands of tons	244	277	290
Olive oil	-do-	80	55	140
Fish	-do-	63	67	74
Mining				
Petroleum	-do-	5,102	5,531	n.a.
Natural gas	millions of cubic meters	449	441	n.a.
Phosphate	thousands of tons	4,745	5,796	5,500
Iron ore	-do-	275	316	320
Lead	-do-	8.6	7.8	8.5
Zinc	-do-	n.a.	13.7	13.5
Spar	-do-	n.a.	33.8	35.0
Manufacturing				
Cloth	millions of meters	64.8	71.7	76.0
Clothing	millions of pieces	60.6	62.9	61.6
Other textiles	thousands of tons	31.9	33.4	35.0
Footwear	millions of pieces	12.1	13.3	14.6

n.a.—not available.

Source: Economist Intelligence Unit, *Quarterly Economic Review of Libya, Tunisia, Malta: Annual Supplement 1984*, London, 1984, 29–31; and Economist Intelligence Unit, *Quarterly Economic Review of Libya, Tunisia, Malta*, 1, London, 1985, 20–23.

Table 6. Employment by Economic Sector, Selected Years, 1975–83

(in thousands)

Sector	1975	1980	1983
Agriculture	508.9	551.7	554.0
Mining and energy	38.1	46.7	48.8
Manufacturing	235.2	299.9	350.7
Construction	128.4	158.1	169.4
Transport and telecommunications	56.0	70.0	75.5
Commerce, banking, and insurance	124.3	119.8	135.1
Other services	213.3	271.6	315.6
Miscellaneous	62.3	59.1	59.1
TOTAL	1,366.5	1,576.9	1,708.2

Table 7. Foreign Trade by Major Commodities, 1981–83

(in millions of Tunisian dinars)*

Commodity	1981	1982	1983
Exports			
Hydrocarbons and derivatives	647.0	527.3	582.3
Textiles	181.3	215.2	248.3
Fertilizer	96.3	104.2	116.5
Chemicals	57.6	67.4	91.8
Olive oil	50.0	57.2	26.3
Phosphates	24.3	26.3	27.9
Fruit	24.7	13.6	19.9
Machinery (electrical)	14.5	16.8	27.6
Leather	15.8	20.1	22.0
Fish	8.1	14.4	24.3
Wine	4.4	4.2	3.2
Lead	3.2	4.6	1.1
Imports			
Machinery	261.3	276.8	n.a.
Mineral fuel and lubricants	466.7	258.0	225.9
Textile fibers	179.1	207.3	239.5
Metal goods	165.2	43.2	22.1
Automobiles	126.9	139.7	150.2
Cereals	86.5	84.2	124.1
Sugar	41.3	24.6	42.6
Cement	5.7	19.8	9.5
Animal and vegetable oil and fats	n.a.	n.a.	37.0
Dairy products	n.a.	n.a.	38.6

n.a.—not available.

*For value of the Tunisian dinar—see Glossary.

Source: Based on information from Economist Intelligence Unit, *Quarterly Economic Review of Libya, Tunisia, Malta: Annual Supplement, London, 1984,* 1984, 38.

Table 8. Balance of Payments, 1980–85

(in millions of United States dollars)

	1980	1981	1982	1983	1984*	1985*
Current Account						
Goods and services						
Exports	3,912.3	3,932.4	3,457.9	3,284.2	3,113.6	3,501.0
Imports	4,384.9	4,623.9	4,256.8	3,954.7	3,871.3	4,160.9
Net balance	-472.6	-691.5	-798.9	-670.5	-757.7	-659.9
Net Transfers	58.5	50.6	51.0	56.3	45.1	48.1
Current account balance	-414.0	-640.9	-747.9	-614.2	-712.6	-611.8
Capital account						
Medium- and long-term loans						
Official	263.0	247.4	277.6	248.8	367.6	423.3
Private	81.5	47.6	63.2	122.6	138.7	-5.8
Total loans	344.5	295.0	340.8	371.4	506.3	417.5
Direct private investment	236.0	387.4	420.5	223.9	219.1	215.6
Grants	41.5	20.3	19.0	25.4	25.8	27.1
Other capital	-143.1	28.3	-5.4	-21.2	-77.3	n.a.
Capital account balance	478.9	731.0	774.9	599.5	673.9	611.8
Reserves						
Change in reserves	-64.9	-90.1	-27.0	14.7	38.7	-48.4
International reserves	412.4	502.5	529.5	514.8	553.5	601.9

*Estimated.
n.a.—not available.

Table 9. Council of Ministers, 1985

Position	Incumbent
President	Habib Bourguiba
Prime Minister	Mohamed Mzali
Special Adviser to the President	Habib Bourguiba, Jr.
Minister, Special Representative of the President	Mongi Kooli
Minister Delegate attached to the Prime Minister	Hedi Baccouche
Minister Delegate attached to the Prime Minister for Civil Service and Administrative Reform	Mezri Chekir
Minister Delegate attached to the Prime Minister for National Security	Zine el Abidine Ben Ali
Ministers	
Agriculture	Lassaad Ben Osman
Cultural Affairs	Bechir Ben Slama
Family and Women's Advancement	Fathia Mzali
Finance	Salah Ben Mbarka
Foreign Affairs	Beji Caid Essebsi
Higher Education and Scientific Research	Abdelaziz Ben Dhia
Information	Abderrazak Kefi
Interior	Mohamed Mzali
Justice	Ridha Ben Ali
Labor	Noureddine Hached
National Defense	Slaheddine Baly
National Economy	Rachid Sfar
National Education	Mohamed Frej Chedli
Plan	Ismail Khelil
Public Health	Souad Yacoubi
Public Works and Housing	Mohamed Sayah
Social Protection	Ridha Hamza
Telecommunications	Ibrahim Khouadja
Tourism and Handicrafts	Ezzedine Chelbi
Transport	Mohamed Kraiem
Youth and Sports	Hedi Bouricha
Secretaries of State	
Ministry of Foreign Affairs	Mahmoud Mestiri
Ministry of Foreign Affairs in charge of International Cooperation	Ahmed Ben Arfa
Ministry of Interior	Ameur Ghedira

Table 10. Political Bureau of the Destourian Socialist Party, 1985

Members	Other Positions
President: Habib Bourguiba	President of the Republic
Secretary General: Mohamed Mzali	Prime Minister
Director: Hedi Baccouche	Minister Delegate attached to the Prime Minister
Treasurer: Rachid Sfar	Minister of National Economy
Slaheddine Baly	Minister of National Defense
Ferjami Belhaj Ammar	President, Tunisian Federation of Industry, Commerce, and Handicrafts
Sadok Ben Jomaa	Former Minister of Public Works and Housing
Zakaria Ben Moustapha	Mayor of Tunis
Bechir Ben Slama	Minister of Cultural Affairs
Habib Bourguiba, Jr	Special Adviser to the President
Mohamed Chaker	Former Minister of Justice
Mezri Chekir	Minister Delegate attached to the Prime Minister for Civil Service and Administrative Reform
Mohamed Ennaceur	Chairman, Economic and Social Council
Beji Caid Essebsi	Minister of Foreign Affairs
Mohamed Ghedira	President, National Union of Tunisian Farmers
Hamed Karoui	Not available
Mongi Kooli	Minister; Special Representative of the President
Mohamed Kraiem	Minister of Transport
Slaheddine Ben Mbarek	President, Arab Maghrib Cooperation Bank
Fathia Mzali	Minister of Family and Women's Advancement; President, National Union of Tunisian Women
Mohamed Sayah	Minister of Public Works and Housing
Bechir Zarg Layoun	President of Consultative Council of Militants

Table 11. Selected Newspapers and Periodicals, 1985

Name	Language	Circulation	Sponsorship or Orientation
Dailies			
L'Action Tunisienne	French	50,000	Destourian Socialist Party
Al Amal	Arabic	50,000	-do-
Ach Chaab[1]	-do-	n.a.	General Union of Tunisian Workers
La Presse de Tunisie	French	40,000	Government
As Sabah	Arabic	80,000	Independent
Le Temps	French	30,000	-do-
Periodicals[2]			
L'Avenir[3]	French	6,000	Movement of Socialist Democrats
Dialogue	-do-	50,000	Destourian Socialist Party
Al Mawqif	Arabic	n.a.	Socialist
Al Mostakbal	-do-	20,000	Movement of Socialist Democrats
Ar Rai	-do-	20,000	Liberal Independent
Réalités	French and Arabic	n.a.	Independent
Al Tariq Al Jadid	Arabic	n.a.	Tunisian Communist Party
Tunis Hebdo	French	25,000	Independent
Al Wahdah	Arabic	n.a.	Popular Unity Party

n.a.—not available.

[1]Converted from weekly to daily in July 1985; suspended for six months after eight issues.

[2]Weekly, except as indicated.

[3]Bimonthly.

Source: Circulation data based on information from *The Europa Year Book, 1984*, London, 1984, 2537.

Table 12. Major Army Weapons, 1985

Type	Estimated Number in Inventory	Country of Manufacture
Armored fighting vehicles		
M-60A3 main battle tank with 105mm gun	54	United States
M-48A5 main battle tank with 105mm gun	14	-do-
AMX-13 light tank	40	France
M-41 light tank	10	United States
Saladin armored reconnaissance vehicle	20	Britain
EBR-75 armored reconnaissance vehicle	30	France
AML-60 armored reconnaissance vehicle	10	-do-
EE-3 Jararaca armored reconnaissance	n.a.	Brazil
EE-9 Cascavel armored reconnaissance vehicle	n.a.	-do-
M-113A1 armored personnel carrier (APC)	50	United States
EE-11 Urutu APC	18	Brazil
Artillery		
M-109 155mm self-propelled howitzer	19	United States
M-114A1 155mm self-propelled howitzer	10	-do-
M-101A1 105mm towed howitzer	48	-do-
M-108 105mm self-propelled howitzer	48	-do-
25-pounder (88mm) towed field gun	6	Britain
M-106A2 107mm self-propelled mortar	12	United States
82mm mortar	n.a.	n.a.
81mm mortar	n.a.	n.a.
Antitank weapons		
STRIM-89 recoilless launcher	n.a.	n.a.
JPzSk-105 105mm self-propelled gun (tank destroyer)	54	West Germany
MGM-71A Tow antitank guided weapon (ATGW), 20 mounted on M-113 APCs	n.a.	United States
Milan ATGW	n.a.	France and West Germany
SS-11 ATGW	n.a.	n.a.
Air defense weapons		
RBS-70 surface-to-air missile (SAM)	n.a.	Sweden
MIM-72 Chaparral	62	United States

n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from *The Military Balance, 1985-1986*, London, 1985, 86.

Table 13. Major Air Force Weapons, 1985

Type	Estimated Number in Inventory	Country of Manufacture
Fighters		
Northrop F-5E Tiger II	8	United States
Northrop F-5F Tiger II (two-seat version)	4	-do-
Counterinsurgency/light-strike aircraft		
Aermacchi M.B. 326K	5	Italy
Aermacchi M.B. 326L (two-seat version)	3	-do-
Transport aircraft		
Lockheed C-130H Hercules heavy transport	2	United States
SIAI-Marchetti S.208M liaison aircraft	4	Italy
Training aircraft		
SIAI-Marchetti SF.260	17	-do-
Aermacchi M.B. 326B	7	-do-
North American T-6 Texan	12	United States
Saab-91 Safir	12	Sweden
Helicopters		
Aerospatiale Alouette III	5	France
Aerospatiale Alouette II	7	-do-
Aerospatiale Puma	1	-do-
Aerospatiale SA.365N Dauphin	1	-do-
Bell UH-1H Iroquois	4	Italy and United States
Agusta-Bell AB 205, Bell 205	24	-do-

Source: Based on information from *The Military Balance, 1985-1986,* London, 1985, 86.

Table 14. Major Navy Weapons, 1985

Type	Date Built	Date Delivered	Number in Inventory	Country of Origin
Surface combatants				
Savage-class destroyer escort	1943	1973	1	United States
Combattante IIIM-class fast-attack craft (FAC) armed with eight Exocet surface-to-surface missiles (SSMs)	1984	1984	3	France
P-48-class large patrol craft armed with eight SS-12SSMs	1970, 1975	1970, 1975	3	-do-
Shanghai II-class FAC armed with four 37mm, four 25mm guns	n.a.	1977	2	China
Patrol vessels				
Forgeux-type with one 40mm and two 20mm guns	1957	1969	1	France
Vosper Thorneycroft-type with two 20mm guns	1977	1977	2	Britain
Adjutant-class coastal minesweeper (used as patrol vessel)	1953 1977	1973,	2	United States
31.5-meter coastal patrol vessel	1957-67	1959-67	4	France
25-meter coastal patrol craft	1961-63	1961-63	6	-do-
23-meter coastal patrol craft	1981-82	1981-82	4	Spain

n.a.—not available.

Source: Based on information from *Jane's Fighting Ships, 1984-85*, London, 1984.

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Glossary

al—Arabic definite article "the"; connotes family or belonging to. Also seen as el.

alim—*See* ulama.

bakshish—Gratuity or tip offered in exchange for a favor or service in many countries of the Middle East and North Africa. Derived from the old Persian word *bakhshidan* (to give), the term is often translated by foreigners as *bribe;* indigenous people of areas where the practice is common, however, do not regard it in this connotation.

baraka—The quality of special blessedness or grace characterizing marabouts *(q.v.)* or other divinely favored individuals in North African Islam; also, the charisma that endows the blessed with a special capacity to rule.

ben—Literally, "son of"; used before or as part of a proper name to indicate patrilineal descent. Also seen as *ibn. Bani* (also *banu* or *beni*) is literally "sons of" and is used to mean "tribe of" or "family of."

Bourguibism—Term used to describe the pragmatic methodology, humanistic philosophy, and political ethics advocated by Habib Bourguiba.

casbah—The native (Arab) quarter of a city, usually surrounding the fortress or stronghold. Also seen as *kasbah* and *qasbah.*

colons—French colonists; term *grands colons* (great colonists) refers to large European landholders.

Destourian socialism—Tunisia's official political ideology, which, in its synthesis of Bourguibism (*q.v.*) and the concept of centralized state economic planning and intervention, closely resembles British Fabian socialism.

évolué—Literally, "evolved one"; a gallicized Muslim educated in French schools.

fiscal year (FY)—Same as calendar year.

gross domestic product (GDP)—The total value of goods and services produced within a country's borders during a fixed period, usually one year. Obtained by adding the value contributed by each sector of the economy in the form of compensation of employees, profits, and depreciation (consumption of capital). Subsistence production is included and consists of the imputed value of production by the farm family for its own use and the imputed rental value of owner-occupied dwellings.

gross national product (GNP)—GDP (*q.v.*) plus the income received from abroad by residents, less payments remitted abroad to nonresidents.

Group of 77—A grouping of developing countries that functions as a caucus on economic matters in the United Nations and other international forums; membership has increased to well over 100 countries since its organization in 1964.

habus—Islamic religious endowment. Occurs also in Islamic countries as *waqf*. Sometimes seen as *habous*.

hadith—Literally, the right path; tradition based on the precedent of the words and deeds of the Prophet Muhammad that serve as one of the sources of Islamic law.

hajj—Pilgrim; title of honor conferred on a Muslim who has made the pilgrimage to Mecca.

imam—In general, a Muslim leader who is a recognized authority on Islamic theology and law; also the prayer leader of a mosque.

International Monetary Fund (IMF)—Established along with the World Bank (*q.v.*) in 1945, the IMF is a specialized agency affiliated with the United Nations and is responsible for stabilizing international exchange rates and payments. The main business of the IMF is the provision of loans to its members (including both industrialized and developing countries) when they experience balance of payments difficulties. These loans frequently carry conditions that require substantial internal economic adjustments by the recipients, most of which are developing countries.

Islamist—Proponent of Islamic religious renewal and integration of Islamic values into all aspects of national life; popularly referred to in many Western publications as Islamic fundamentalist.

jihad—According to Islamic doctrine, the permanent struggle for the triumph of the word of God on earth. This additional general duty of all Muslims has often been translated simply as holy war, but modern Muslims see it in a broader context of civic and personal action.

Maghrib—The western Islamic world (northwest Africa); distinguished from the Mashriq (*q.v.*). Literally, "the time and place of the sunset—the west." For its Arab conquerors the region was the "island of the west" (*jazirat al maghrib*), the land between the "sea of sand" (the Sahara) and the Mediterranean Sea. Traditionally includes Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Tripolitania (*q.v.*); more recently some sources have treated Mauritania as part of the region. Also transliterated as Maghreb.

marabout (pl., *al murabitun)*—In North Africa an Islamic holy man and teacher thought to be touched by a special divine blessing; usually not a member of the ulama (*q.v.*). Transliteration of Arabic *murabit*; literally, a person of the *ribat*, a fortified camp occupied in some instances by a religious community. Understood figuratively as one who has made a religious conversion at a *ribat.*

Mashriq—Eastern Islamic world (the Middle East) in contrast to the Maghrib (*q.v.*).

Mauretania—Classical name for the ancient Berber kingdom in northwest Africa and Roman provinces that succeeded it. Cited in some sources as Mauritania but not to be confused with the modern Islamic Republic of Mauritania.

Nonaligned Movement—A grouping of countries that have deliberately chosen not to be associated politically or militarily with either the West or the communist states. Member countries are expected to pursue independent foreign policies, support national liberation movements, and refrain from participating in multilateral or bilateral military alliances with the major powers. The movement's seventh summit meeting, held in New Delhi in March 1983, was attended by 97 nations.

Punic—From the Latin *punicus*, generally describing any people speaking a Semitic language; more specifically applied to Carthage and Carthaginians.

qadi—Religious judge who interprets and administers sharia (*q.v.*). Also seen as *cadi.*

qaid—In modern Tunisia, the official who heads the local government structure in a district; formerly a tribal chief and representative of the bey and having broader judicial powers than the postindependence *qaid.* Primary historical function was that of collecting taxes. Also seen as *caid.*

Quran—Islamic scriptures believed by Muslims to be God's (Allah's) revelation to Muhammad. Derived from the Arabic verb *qaraa*, "to read." Commonly written as Koran.

Sahil—Region in eastern Tunisia. Literally, the shore or coast.

shahadah—Islamic statement of belief: "There is no god but God (Allah), and Muhammad is his Prophet."

sharia—The traditional code of Islamic law, both civil and criminal, based in part of the Quran (*q.v.*). Also drawn from the hadith (*q.v.*), consensus of Islamic belief (*ijma*, i.e., the faith as it is believed by the faithful at any given time), and *qiyas* (analogy, an elaboration on the intent of law).

Shia—The smaller of the two great divisions of Islam (literally, "party"). Adherents are referred to as Shias (also seen as Shiites). According to Shias, the Quran (*q.v.*) is not a closed body of revelation but is open to further elaboration by inspired imams (*q.v.*).

souk—A traditional market; also seen as *suq*.

the Sudan—Historical geographic region stretching across Africa and Cape Verde on the Atlantic coast to the Red Sea between 80° and 16° north latitude; characterized by savanna and semiarid steppe. Term derived from Arabic *bilad al sudan* (literally, country of the blacks). Not to be confused with the Democratic Republic of Sudan.

sunna—Body of Islamic customs and practices based on the Prophet's words and deeds.

Sunni—The larger of the two great divisions of Islam. Sunnis consider themselves the orthodox adherents of the *sunna (q.v.)*.

Tripolitania—Most populous of Libya's three historic regions, situated in the northwestern part of the country. Name derived from Tripolis (Three Cities).

Tunisian dinar (TD)—Unit of currency since 1968; divided into 1,000 millimes. The average exchange rate was TDO.68 to US$1 in 1983, TDO.78 to US$1 in 1984, TDO.81 to US$1 in August 1985, and TDO.76 to US$1 in December 1985.

ulama (sing., *alim*)—The highest body of religious scholars learned in Muslim theology, philosophy, law, and Quranic studies; it elaborated and interpreted sharia (*q.v.*). Derived from the Arabic verb *alama*, "to know."

World Bank—Informal name used to designate a group of three affiliated international institutions: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD), the International Development Association (IDA), and the International Finance Corporation (IFC). The IBRD, established in 1945, has the primary purpose of providing loans to developing countries for productive projects. The IDA, a legally separate loan fund but administered by the staff of the IBRD, was set up in 1960 to furnish credits to the poorest developing countries on much easier terms than those of conventional IBRD loans. The IFC, founded in 1956, supplements the activities of the IBRD through loans and assistance designed specifically to encourage the growth of productive private enterprises in the less developed countries. The president and certain senior of-

ficers of the IBRD hold the same positions in the IFC. The three institutions are owned by the governments of the countries that subscribe their capital. To participate in the World Bank group, members states must first belong to the International Monetary Fund (IMF—*q.v.*).

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