

TUNISIA

Tunisia achieved her independence from France in 1956. Habib Bourguiba, now President, was the leader of the preindependence political forces. Through his efforts and his effective leadership, the Tunisians formed their own government.

The Republic is comparatively new but the area in which it lies is rich in culture and tradition. Originally the site of Carthage, a Phoenician trading center and rival of the Roman Empire, the nation's history provides a study of the determined efforts of these people to achieve a stature of independence and progress.

Americans should feel a close relationship with Tunisia. Located near the ancient city of Carthage is the American North Africa Military Cemetery. The cemetery is the final resting place of 2,840 American servicemen who gave their lives in Africa and the Middle East during World War II in fighting the forces of nazism and fascism. The land was donated by France to the United States in 1948, and the cemetery is under the jurisdiction of the American Battle Monuments Commission. Memorial Day ceremonies are held annually as well as other nondenominational services. An American is on duty there each day of the year. The study mission visited the cemetery on Tuesday, November 30.

The study mission met with the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and the President of the National Assembly and had discussions on Tunisia's economic problems.

The members of the study mission visited the following AID projects:

Mornag Experiment Station.—One of the most promising projects is the Mornag Experiment Station established in 1961 and one of 28 experiment stations, nurseries, and demonstration parcels for training of young Tunisian farmers under the auspices of the United States and Tunisian Government. These stations contribute to the development, improvement, and production of indigenous and American fruit and vegetable crop varieties. Assistance for this project was phased out in 1964 when aid was no longer necessary. Prior to the establishment of this project, the Tunisian Government spent millions of hard currency reserves in the importation of fruits, vegetables, and fruit tree seedlings. Because of a favorable climate assuring early harvests, and as a result of improved technological and agricultural methods, Tunisia is now advancing to the stage where it can profitably export fruits and vegetables to Europe and adjacent African countries. The success of this project should be an inducement for AID to appraise the expansion of agricultural experimental stations in the country, if more appear warranted, or in other fields such as cereals or livestock.

Khledia Railroad Bridge.—Another AID project which deserves worthy comment is the Khledia railroad bridge.

On October 31, 1964, this bridge, the connecting link to Tunisia's ore mines, was completely washed out by a flood. Tunisian engineers estimated that it would require 6 months to replace it. Meanwhile,