

#129: SPANISH SOUTHERN PROTECTORATE, 1957-58

*Parties:* Morocco v. France, Spain

*Agents:* US

Spain had been quite willing to cede the portion of northern Morocco that it controlled to the newly-independent Morocco in 1956 (with the exception of certain military ports); indeed, it had facilitated Moroccan nationalist military efforts against France by permitting guerrillas and the Moroccan Army of Liberation (AOL) to use the territory as a staging area (see case #004: Moroccan Independence, 1944-56). After independence, however, approximately 12,000 of the guerrillas did not join the new Moroccan National Army but instead moved south to form the "Army of Liberation for the Sahara." This "army" proceeded to militarily harass French forces fighting against nationalist rebels in Algeria (see case #097: Algerian Independence, 1954-62) and to attack Spanish forces remaining in the Spanish Southern Protectorate. Morocco had historically-based claims to sovereignty over major parts of the Sahara in addition to French and Spanish colonies remaining in the area (see case #122, 123: Mauritanian Independence, 1957-61; case #184, 185, 186: Moroccan-Mauritanian Border, 1961-70; case #202, 203, 204: Algerian-Moroccan Border, 1962-70; case #240: Ifni, 1964-69; and case #242: Spanish Sahara, 1964- ).

During November 1957 armed clashes broke out in Ifni between the southern AOL guerrillas and Spanish occupation forces; Morocco moved additional troops to Agadir and then sent them south to take up positions around the Spanish enclave. Their avowed purpose was to contain the fighting and to protect Morocco against Spanish incursions; at the same time, they provided the Ifni guerrillas with a safe refuge and staging area. Moroccan forces also used this opportunity to assert their domestic control by disarming several of the AOL forces in the area and dismantling their guerrilla camps, and they were generally successful in keeping the fighting on Spanish territory. The AOL was pushed south into the Spanish Protectorate, across what was then the southern boundary of Morocco, where further incidents occurred.

Fighting gradually diminished in 1958, particularly after Spain took stronger military measures; it threatened to carry the war to Agadir, an important Moroccan city just north of Ifni, and in February a joint Franco-Spanish military operation mounted from the Spanish Sahara and Mauritania was successful in pushing the AOL groups north toward Moroccan territory. In early March King Mohammed V of Morocco began negotiations with the various militant Saharan groups in

an effort to solidify his authority over them; these negotiations were largely successful, at least to the extent of permitting Morocco to exercise a restraining influence over their guerrilla operations. Negotiations between Spain and Morocco had been resumed after their failure the previous year, and in March an unofficial intervention in the dispute by the US (in the form of a representation to both parties) proved instrumental in leading to an agreement.

On 7 April 1958 Spain ceded its Southern Protectorate to Morocco. The actual transfer of control met with several temporary setbacks; Spanish troops destroyed wells, homes, and fortifications as they left the area and, in addition, refused to permit the Moroccan army passage over what was still Spanish territory, necessitating the building of a new road. Spain denied Morocco's charge of provocation but admitted that the incidents had occurred. When Moroccan forces finally established possession and Morocco requested in May that Spanish forces leave the territory, they did so. Spain apparently had been willing to concede the territory in the hope that it could bargain for maintaining its position in Ifni and Spanish Sahara, but Morocco refused to renounce its claims to other Spanish territories. Nonetheless, these claims were not actively pressed until the mid-1960s (see case #240 and case #242).

Refs: *NY Times*, 1956-58

I. William Zartman, *Problems of New Power: Morocco* (New York: Atherton, 1964) 64-86

### #130, 131: **LEBANESE/JORDANIAN CIVIL WARS, 1958**

*Parties:* Lebanon, Jordan, US, UK v. Egypt, Syria, Dissidents

*Agents:* UN, Arab League

Lebanon's social system involves many cleavages among its citizens; the primary division is between Christians and Moslems, but each of these groups is further segmented by ethnic, religious, and class differences. The political system has taken account of these divergencies in its fundamental structure in order to reduce the possibility of communal warfare. The basic balance between Christians and Moslems was politically established in a 1943 compromise among these groups, and part of that compromise involved agreement to maintain Lebanese neutrality in quarrels among Arab states.

Many Lebanese felt that this neutrality was being violated by President Chamoun during the mid-1950s; in the face of the growing appeal of Egyptian President Nasser's policies of Arab nationalism and