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PHILLIPS TALBOT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

H.M. THE KING

A Letter from Charles F. Gallagher

Tangier November 18, 1957

Morocco looks as if Christmas had come a month early. City streets are ablaze with crisscross lights forming a glittering awning above them, giant neon stars in red, white and green blink out in profusion, and the principal square here in Tangier is adorned with a great artificial crown, mounted on four white pillars and hung with streamers which reflect the multicolored bulbs strung through the ombutrees all around.

It isn't Christmas though. The excitement of the Moroccan population, the strident "youyous" of the women, the parades of boy scouts and military men, and the manifestations folkloriques (which have become a part of every celebration) soon dispel the first illusion. It is, instead, Morocco's principal national holiday -- Throne Day -- being celebrated this year with special brilliance because it marks the thirtieth anniversary of the accession of Muhammad V to the Sherifian and Alawite throne.

Throne Day has become in recent years more than just a sovereign's anniversary, however. In the period just before the deposition of the ruler, it was almost the only occasion on which nationalist sentiment, upon which a strict lid was clamped, could express itself openly; not only under the guise of allegiance to the head of the country, but in identifying him with its own goals. Those who were in Morocco in 1952 remember the almost frantic explosion of joy that accompanied Throne Day and gave such a fright to the Residency that it

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determined not to allow a repetition of the event. Then, in 1955, the return of Muhammad V from exile coincided by chance almost exactly with the date of the holiday. He arrived in Rabat on November 16, and the three days from the 16th to the 18th were named the "Three Glorious Days" and are now celebrated as marking the rebirth of the country (although for practical reasons of productivity only the 18th is now a legal holiday). This year the emotion aroused so easily in an overtly demonstrative people, which likes nothing so much as an excuse for floats and fireworks, is as great or greater than in preindependence days, but it is also more mature. A legitimate national pride is reflected on the faces of complacent middleaged town merchants, in the eyes of country farmers who come in to gaze on the wonders of the city on such days, and among the bright-eyed young nationalists who are seeing some, but not all, of their most fervent dreams realized.

It would be impossible to analyze the feelings of different groups in this still highly disparate society toward the king or the monarchy as exactly as might be done in a country like England. them, although certainly vocal enough in their celebrations, cannot put into words just what it all means to them. But there is no doubt at all that Muhammad V, and in lesser order the royal family and the institution of kingship, are a symbol of nationhood which is being inextricably woven in with nationalism to the extent that it is now quite impossible to imagine modern Morocco without a king -- something far from true in many Middle Eastern monarchies Moroccan attitudes toward the at present. King correspond a good deal to American views of the idealized Washington: like him, Muhammad V was first in the struggle for freedom, first in peaceful reconstruction and growth, and first in the hearts of his countrymen -- as well as of the foreigners living here and in the affections of many foreign diplomats. In spite of some minor deformations of past history now gaining currency, which attempt to recreate a golden age destroyed fifty years ago by predatory imperialism, no previous ruler

CHARLES F. GALLAGHER has since 1951 been a student of the affairs of Northwest Africa. He started his higher education at the University of California just after Pearl Harbor and soon was shifted to the Japanese language school at Boulder, Colo. He served out the war as an officer in the Navy and then became fine arts advisor on Japanese cultural property during the occupation of Japan. In 1949 he entered Harvard University to major in Far Eastern languages and history. He was graduated summa cum laude in 1951. Subsequently he was twice offered Harvard-Yenching fellowships to continue in the Far Eastern field, but decided instead to study Islamic society. Under Fulbright and Ford fellowships, he worked for two years in Paris and three years in North Africa. After completing his research in Rabat, he settled in Tangier to write a history of Morocco and a grammar of Maghrebian Arabic. He joined the AUFS in July 1956 as a staff member and participated in the 1956-57 program of visits to member institutions. In the summer of 1957 he returned to North Africa under AUFS auspices.

ever had the same kind of popularity. Indeed, Moroccan traditional institutions hardly allow a place for the kind of special aura which Muhammad V has spread over himself, and it is all the more a personal triumph that he has been able to do so.

What manner of man is this who has gained the adulation of Moroccan mountaineers and city proletariat, plus the first grudging but now open admiration of bourgeois French colonials? More than anything else he is a self-made ruler who in current jargon would probably be described as "inner-directed" but with just the right amount of outgiving appeal which makes successful a smile or a wave from his passing limousine and lends sincerity to a firm handshake and a word of encouragement to artisans as he inspects a workshop. Self-made in the sense that he came to a position for which he had no formal training as modern royalty knows it, and in that he has grown so enormously in stature during his occupancy of that position that he is now no longer the person he once was. Muhammad V is "The King"; there is no mistaking it and one is immediately and constantly aware of it in his presence. In his transformation, his magnetism has not only enhanced his personality but has given new presitge to what he represents.

For Muhammad V believes in "showing the King" as one might show the flag. It has been a most successful policy. Whether receiving deputations of tribesmen of factory laborers in the first hectic days after his return from exile, or traveling incessantly around the country, or hopping into a tractor (he is fascinated by heavy machinery) to plow the first furrows for the remarkable "Operation Work" which is setting up co-operative farms among peasants with minute land holdings, he has made the people aware of himself, and of his direct and personal interest in them as human beings.

It was his prestige alone that caused the disbanding of the unofficial Army of Liberation and its integration into the regular forces last year, in a situation more tricky than generally realized. Alternately serious and joking, but with an encyclopedic avidity for information on everything possible, he will stop to ask technical questions of the movie camera crews who are to photograph him for newsreels. When here in Tangier two months ago he got up on one occasion at dawn to inspect the port area, and another morning slipped into the Governor's office before opening hours to look over the offices, talk to the cleaning personnel, and see at what time the civil servants came to work. Word of this Harun-al-Rashidism, spreading among the people, gave them a new confidence in the personal justice and wisdom of their ruler, who represents as well as anyone ever has the concept of an "enlightened autocrat."

Muhammad V -- then the young prince Sidi Muhammad ibn Yusuf -- was certainly not this personality when he was selected for the throne as a shy boy of eighteen in 1927. Although there is no primogeniture in Islam and any prince may be chosen to

succeed to a vacant throne, he, as a younger son, had not been considered a likely prospect; events conspired to put him in power. French power had just been consolidated after the end of the bloody Rif Wars in 1925, and the paternalist orientation given to the early Protectorate by Marshal Lyautey was being dropped in favor of more direct administration and increased European colonization. A docile puppet was needed and Protectorate authorities thought they had found him in the young prince. His selection by the College of Ulemas ('Ulama') (Doctors of the Law) was a formality easily arranged in those days, and he was duly installed. Never was a greater political blunder made. Although some may argue that, given the inevitable rise of nationalism in the next generation, almost any ruler would have been able to take advantage of it to promote his career, the examples of Farouk in Egypt and Lamine Bey in Tunisia are there to point out monarchs who could not incarnate national aspirations in their own persons.

Muhammad V started slowly and has gone far, fulfilling the Italian proverb. He said little or nothing in the first years of his reign, and a policy of few but meaningful public statements has been continued down to the present day. But he set out to study, learn and think. He went abroad to France and soon became convinced that a thoroughgoing modernization of his country was vital. Looking to the future he began to apply this principle in the education of his own children who, although instructed in Quranic fundamentals as good Muslims, have all had a basically Western upbringing.

As the "Commander of the Faithful" in Morocco and the spiritual head of much of northwestern Africa he aligned himself strongly with religious orthodoxy. This involved him in politics in at least two ways. The existence for a long period of heterodox brotherhoods, many of which were headed by patent-medicinetype quacks, had been plaguing the Moroccan throne during the previous century. Itinerant religious preachers of specious quality but great rabble-rousing ability had many times led tribes of remote regions into insurrection and anarchy. When by 1930 the French had conquered all Morocco, they claimed they had done so "in the name of the legal ruler." This gave them a club to hold over his head, and they were astute enough to see the advantages of playing possible dissidents off against the central power. This in a word is what was done with the Pasha of Marrakesh, who was buoyed up with an irregular army as a means of pressure against Muhammad V, often quite successfully. Then came the so-called "Berber Dahir" which specifically exempted certain Berber areas from application of the religious law in favor of customary tribal law. Thus the sovereign's political power and his religious authority were both effectively compromised.

The "Berber Dahir" was directly responsible for the formation of the first political parties in Morocco, which were noticeably responding to a religious challenge. But Muhammad V,

held in his double straitjacket, was unable to move freely until French weakness gave him a chance. It was after the Allied landings in North Africa late in 1942 that he first began to act independently. Refusing an invitation of the Vichyite Resident General Nogues to resist the Anglo-Americans, he made his first act of disobedience. And in January, 1943, he was able to see for the first time a foreign head of state alone and without official French advisers about him. This well-known meeting with President Roosevelt produced unsubstantiated (but widely believed) assurances of American support for Morocco's postwar independence. In all events it involved the United States for the first time directly in Moroccan affairs and engaged its prestige in a balance which is still being weighed.

Muhammad V was first inclined to wait after the war for fulfillment of some of the promises made to Morocco, but by 1947, disgusted, he resolved to take a more personal hand in arranging matters. His Tangier speech in April that year is looked back on by nationalists as a turning point; it identified the throne irrevocably with the nationalist movement and particularly with the Istiqlal Party. Relations between the palace and the then semilegal nationalists became steadily closer during the next five years, and French disillusionment over their choice of a ruler became more profound. Periodic setbacks occurred, even humiliations. But the King, in signing in 1951 under duress an agreement to repudiate the nationalists and then letting it be known that his hand had been forced, showed both the wisdom of knowing when to retreat gracefully and a growing stubborness in his insistence upon action.

Having made their first mistake by choosing Muhammad V in 1927, the French compounded it by deposing him in 1953 and sending him off to Corsica first, later to Madagascar. Two wrongs do not make a right, but two major political errors make for catastrophe, and it is significant that the two great national holidays in Morocco are November 18, the day of the King's accession, and August 20 (1953), the "Day of the Revolution." For the revolution, not only of Morocco but of all North Africa, was galvanized then. Revolution would have come eventually in any case but the removal of the ruler -- again affecting both political and religious sentiments -- unified the issue and, incidentally, reconfirmed the pattern for the present close identification of the throne with nationalism.

Looking back to those days, two statements made to me during the period of the (then) Sultan's exile stand out in my memory. The first, jubilantly uttered by a traveling French salesman as we were caught by curfew in the lobby of a Fez hotel on the night of the deposition in 1953, was "Now all our troubles are over!" Then, after two years of nothing but troubles, when Muhammad V was returned to his throne in November 1955, a high Protectorate official lamented the weakness of Paris policy by saying, "He is our worst enemy and now they are bringing him back." Nothing illustrates better the unreal quality that usually

surrounded colonial thought in North Africa, and no statements were ever less true.

For Muhammad V is now considered, by all thinking Europeans in Morocco, as the best friend they could possibly have. Since his return to the throne he has not only been a judicious statesman, but he has gone out of his way to try to rebridge the gap that was formed between Moroccans and French during his absence. On numerous occasions he has emphasized in public the necessity for co-operation and mutual respect between the two groups, and in acts as well as words he has reserved a special place for the several minorities which live in this country.

The moderation which is the hallmark of his policy applies to his role as religious leader just as to his political statements. When Moroccans see the first spiritual authority of their country on excellent terms with the Christian and Jewish leaders of their communities, and when he patronizes the Interfaith Seminar held at Tioumliline in the Middle Atlas the past two summers, the cause of religious tolerance can hardly be better served. Because of his descent from the Prophet and his constant stand in favor of rational orthodoxy, the King is in an unassailable position from which to deal with what otherwise might be a thorny problem.

Since his return to the throne, Muhammad V has been in a paradoxical political posture. From having no real authority under the Protectorate, suddenly he found himself in an independent Morocco with as much power as any ruler ever possessed anywhere. Today Morocco remains in theory an absolute monarchy and to a certain extent it is that in fact as well. But the beginnings of constitutional monarchy have been laid in a gradual. informal way. The King has already delegated many of his powers. to the government which he formed, to cabinet ministers, and to local appointed officials. He has also chosen a Consultative Assembly, made up of representatives of the political parties, labor and business groups, religious leaders, and so on, who meet to discuss, criticize, or approve governmental action in entire freedom -- but who have no power to initiate legislation. Plans for local elections are going ahead, more slowly than first hoped for, and they should provide the groundwork for a gradually emerging democracy.

Not to be overlooked was the royal statement made the other day to the Consultative Assembly, to the effect that the majority should consult the minority, but the minority should obey the decisions of the majority. This is an ideal proposition which has overtones of something long claimed by Muslim theologians: that perfect government can be established in this world by a God-fearing leader who is guided by Heaven in making just decisions. In Morocco today we have touches of a theocratic state, an incipient parliamentary democracy, and social planning which is sometimes indistinguishable from pure socialism. It is too early to say what final shape the political or social

structure will take, but it would be unwise to underestimate the depth of present Moroccan sentiment that the whole episode of struggle, exile, return, and final triumph is a sign of God's will, and a proof of His marking of Muhammad V as a righteous prince.

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This week, as the 30th year of his reign ends, Muhammad V is absorbed in activities which show how great his role and influence have become in the past two years. Opening the second session of the Consultative Assembly he dealt with internal economic and social problems. The day before yesterday, he took the salute of the armed forces as Commander-in-Chief, and today is receiving the acclamations of his people. On Wednesday coming, November 20, he will meet in Rabat with President Bourguiba of Tunisia, at the latter's request, in an effort to find a compromise solution for the Algerian problem, probably through a joint French-North African states conference in which some guarantee approximating independence would be offered the Algerian nationalists. On the 25th, he flies to the United States for what may be a vital visit insofar as Moroccan-American relations are concerned.

This will be his first trip to America and the first state visit made to the United States by the sovereign of an independent North African country. After three days of official protocol in Washington, during which as always he will wear traditional clothing, he will travel privately across the country as far as California -- probably in the tweeds and dark glasses he prefers for nonofficial occasions -- to see what American life is really like. Just before leaving on December 10 he will speak to the United Nations, most likely on the subject of Algeria.

The choice of the United States for a first official visit to a Western country (his stays in France and Italy early this year were unofficial) is noteworthy. Although the question of American airbases in Morocco will certainly be discussed (and their prospects are not so good as they would have been if the issue had been settled a year ago), the over-all personal impressions of a man who so dominates the political situation in his country will be more pertinent in the long run. American kindness, simplicity and common sense should have an effect on someone who possesses these qualities himself, but it is never to be taken for granted that a foreign visitor to America is automatically charmed. Moroccans who have returned here are often sharply divided about us; the editor of the largest Arabiclanguage newspaper in Morocco, for example, seems to have been completely converted, but one of the top four or five men in the country greeted me bluntly last summer with the affirmation that "America is unequal to her international responsibilities." Final judgment will be passed by the King himself. This does not mean that America should be waiting, like a nervous debutante, for royal approval, but it might be kept in mind that the American



MUHAMMAD V inaugurates the National Consultative Assembly. On his right, Crown Prince Mulay Hassan; on his left, Prince Mulay Abdallah

role in Morocco's future may well be largely shaped in the next few weeks.

Americans will certainly find it hard to think of Muhammad V as anything but the "Sultan" of Morocco while he is among them. The 19th century, Pierre Loti vision of an exotic Oriental potentate living in secluded mystery and going to prayer under a "sacred" umbrella dies hard. In many ways it is sad that such romantic notions must go, but the Moroccan government and the King himself are determined that they go. If you ask Moroccan officials why the royal title was changed, and suggest that the box-office appeal of a sultan might be greater than that of a king, the overwhelming desire for respectability, conformity and modernity comes into relief at once. Kings are eminently respectable, sultans -- of Swat, Johore, and minor treaty ports -- are rather suspect and second-rate. Kings rule great countries, and some of the most advanced ones. Sultans are too closely associated, in the modernist Arab self-view, with Bedouin encampments and rug-strewn tents. To these ideas must also be added the serious consideration that, with de-emphasis of the religious nature of the state (Morocco is no longer the "Sherifian Empire") the foundations of an eventual lay body politic, with equality for all confessions, can be more easily built. The "king" can eventually become a constitutional and civil institution, the "sultan" could never have.

In his personal and family life, Muhammad V is in a way making this transition from sultan to king now. Like all pious Muslims he keeps his family, meaning his wives, in the strictest seclusion, and he lives, fasts, and prays much as any member of the older generation in Morocco would. At the same time he behaves much like a typical Western monarch in his avocations and tastes: driving fast sports cars, hunting and fishing, patronizing the auto races and the Grand Prix du Maroc, or seeing American Technicolor movies. Like most of his people he is practical rather than intellectual, and he prefers machines and activity to speculation or literary pursuits, but he has a genius for maintaining the fine line between piety and purism and in communicating to the whole country a relaxed air of tolerance.

He has seen that his eldest son, Crown Prince Mulay Hassan, earned a law degree from the University of Bordeaux, and his second son, Mulay Abdallah, attended St. Cyr, the West Point of France, until last year's temporary rupture with France caused him to be withdrawn. The feminist activities of the King's eldest daughter, Lalla Aisha, have done more than anything else to insure royal popularity with the women of Morocco. When the time comes, Mulay Hassan will be much better prepared to assume royal responsibility in a modern world than any previous member of the Alawite family has been.

But -- happily for Morocco -- that day may not come for a long time. Muhammad V, after thirty years of a sometimes troubled reign which finally established him as the "Father of

his Country," is only forty-eight. He can, <u>insha'llah</u>, look forward to a longer rule in the future than most other present heads of state. All those who hope to see Morocco develop in a steady, peaceful evolution can also look forward to his continuing reign and wish him well. There are certainly problems ahead for Morocco, but all in all the future of the country could not be in better hands.

Charles F Galligher

[Photograph on page 8 by Photo Belin, Rabat.]
[Photograph on page 10 by Photo DeFour.]



THE KING receiving the Archbishop of Tangier