

1943 The Bombings of Tunis

The Field marshal expresses his heartfelt sympathy to S.A. the Bey and to the inhabitants of Regency.

Vichy. – It is not only the inhabitants of French cities who live under bombs. Tunis and the Regency have paid a heavy tribute to the Anglo-Americans. The field marshal is also concerned about the suffering of the Tunisian families. In his last message to the Frenchmen, at the end of which condemned the attack against the Parisian suburbs, in addition, he said, “to the painful list of our northern cities, Brittany, Normandy” he mentioned Tunisia. And just after this statement he sent the following message to the Resident General in Tunis:
“Profoundly touched by the experiences that the Anglo-American bombing inflict on the population of Regency, the field marshal Pétain asks you to assure his Highness on behalf of the mourning which hits the kingdom. He asks you to express to the families of so many victims, his sympathy full of emotion. He puts at your disposal a sum of 200.000 francs personally to help some of the families most cruelly hit. He hopes that this modest contribution will take into account the amount of suffering and been damage subjected, bringing some relief to the most underprivileged in their trouble. He sends it to your care to divide the sum among the victims. He does not doubt that new ordeals which hit indiscriminately all

circles of Tunisia will have the effect of cementing the unity of all still more around the Bey and the protectorate. ”

Admiral Esteva, through president Laval, head of government, minister of Foreign Affairs, has just sent the following words of thanks to the Field marshal:

“His Highness makes me responsible for thanking field marshal Pétain for the feelings that the Head of State was kind enough to express through Your Excellency and of myself and those who bring us a big support? I am personally very thankful to the Field Marshal for his generosity regarding the victims and their families. The day before yesterday even, during a visit which I made, the sovereign spoke to me with his usual sincerity of the Head of State, the Head of government and his love to maintain that the whole Tunisian population in its various elements has strong feelings that aim at the unity of all around the Bey and the protectorate. Ongoing events can only reinforce it and it is this union which I have not ceased requesting, since, about three years ago when I was invested by the Field Marshal and by the government of your Excellency with the functions of Resident General of France in Tunis. ”

(O.F.I. Havas)