

Tunisia: benefiting from U.S. imperial decline?

It is still way too early to tell whether whatever new government eventually takes power in Tunisia (assuming a new government is necessary) will be able to stabilize the country, let alone be a marked improvement over the dictatorship of Ben Ali. Nonetheless, it represents the first time in known recent history that an Arab dictator has been toppled by a popular revolt. I don't know whether that has other dictators trembling in their boots, but perhaps it should. It is notable, as former Air Force officer Karen Kwiatkowski points out on LewRockwell.com, that the revolt occurred without the U.S. government prodding it along or even being particularly aware of it — though it seriously complicates the U.S. position in the Middle East. Malou Innocent of Cato also has a piece on the National Interest Online noting that events in Tunisia could well pose a threat to other U.S.-backed regimes in the Arab world, and noting also that some of the leaked cables from WikiLeaks may have presaged the uprising, or perhaps should have.