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ARMENIAN REPRESENTATION IN THE
LEBANESE PARLIAMENT

BY

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ARMENIANS IN LEBANON

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Abstract

This study entitled The Armenian Representation in the Lebanese Parliament is divided into four main related parts. In order to make the narrative intelligible to the reader it was necessary to give basic information on the Armenians of Lebanon and to describe the electoral campaigns in which Armenian deputies were elected. These are followed by the biographies of the successful candidates and a discussion of their achievements as members of Parliament since 1934. Throughout this thesis, each topic has been taken separately, and the facts relating to it were described.

The first chapter, entitled The Armenian Communities of Lebanon, discusses the following: the Armenian immigration to Lebanon from the earliest days to the present, the communal organization of the Armenian Orthodox, Catholic, and Protestant communities, the ideology and organization of the Sotsial Temograd Huntchagian, Hay Heghapokhagan Tashnagtsutiun, and Ramgavar Azadagan Armenian political parties and their affiliate organizations as they exist in Lebanon, the organization of the Armenian branch of the Lebanese Communist party, the so-called Independents, the economic life, medicine and public health, and educational and cultural life of the Armenians in Lebanon.

In the second chapter, after an introduction of the political activities of the Armenians in Lebanon, the electoral campaigns and legislative elections of 1934, 1937, 1943, 1947, 1951, 1953, 1957,

and 1960 at Beirut, and, since 1951 at Metn also are presented with emphasis on the Armenian participation in them. Before the description of the campaigns a brief account is given of the electoral law under which the elections were carried out, and the situation within the Armenian community prior to the elections.

In the third chapter the biographies of Vahram Leilekian, Khosrov Tutundjian, Hratchia Chamlian, Movses Der Kaloustian, Melkon Hairabedian, Dikran Tosbath, Khatchig Babikian, Vartkes Chamlian, Souren Khanamirian, and Joseph Chader, Armenian representatives of the Lebanese Parliament since 1934, are given.

In the fourth chapter, the functions, influence, policies, and actions of the Armenian representatives in the Lebanese Parliament since 1934 are presented.

A good deal of the information given in the last two chapters, is not documented as it was gathered first hand by the present writer, who throughout this thesis has made every effort to abstain from biased selection or suppression of facts and has endeavoured to collect available relevant material and organize it in a logical succession.

The bibliography includes the list of documents, books, theses, reference books, articles, newspapers, and periodicals used, and the list of the personalities interviewed by the author.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Abstract	iv
Table of Contents	vi
CHAPTER I - THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITIES OF LEBANON . .	1
The Armenian Immigrations to Lebanon.	1
The Armenian Orthodox Community	9
The Armenian Catholic Community	20
The Armenian Protestant Community	23
The Armenian Political Parties.	27
The Huntchag Party	28
The Tashnag Party	35
The Ramgavar Azadagan Party	42
The Armenian General Benevolent Union	48
The Armenian Communists	50
The Independents	51
Economic Life	53
Medicine and Public Health	54
Educational Life	55
Cultural Life	58
CHAPTER II- THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS 1934-1960 . .	60
Introduction.	60
The Elections of 1934	64
The Elections of 1937	80
The Elections of 1943	99
The Elections of 1947	136
The Elections of 1951	166
The Elections of 1953	192
The Elections of 1957	215
The Elections of 1960	259
CHAPTER III- THE BIOGRAPHIES OF ARMENIAN DEPUTIES. .	318
Vahram Leilekian	318
Khosrov Tutundjian.	321
Hratchia Chamlian	325
Moses Der Kaloustian	326
Melkon Hairabedian.	330
Dikran Tosbath	332

	<u>Page</u>
CHAPTER III- (CONT'D)	
Khatchig Babikian	334
Vartkes Chamlian	336
Souren Khanamirian	337
Joseph Chader	338
CHAPTER IV - THE FUNCTIONS, INFLUENCE, POLICIES, AND ACTIONS OF ARMENIAN DEPUTIES. .	341
Vahram Leilekian	341
Khosrov Tutundjian.	349
Hratchia Chamlian	354
Moses Der Kaloustian	358
Melkon Hairabedian	363
Dikran Tosbath	365
Khatchig Babikian	370
Vartkes Chamlian.	376
Souren Khanamirian	378
Joseph Chader	379
CONCLUSION	383
BIBLIOGRAPHY	386

CHAPTER I

THE ARMENIAN COMMUNITIES OF LEBANON

The Armenian Immigrations to Lebanon

The Armenians, a people of Indo-European tongue are not newcomers to Lebanon. In ancient times Armenians came to Phoenicia as traders, according to the writings of the Armenian historiographer Movses Khorenatsi.¹ In 83 B.C. King Dikran (Tigranes) II the Great of Armenia (95 - 54 B.C.) occupied Syria² and continued his advance over Phoenicia and in 72 B.C. captured its Queen, Selene.³ Until the Armeno-Roman Friendship Treaty was signed in 66 B.C., Syria and Phoenicia remained under Armenian rule.⁴ Henceforth Armenians started to move southwards and westwards of Armenia.⁵

Christianity became the state religion of Armenia in A.D. 301.⁶ The struggle between the Eastern Roman Empire and the Sassanid

¹ Kantarjian, Garo, "Hamabadger Lipanani Hay Kaghoutin", Aztag, special 25th anniversary issue, Beirut, 1952, p. 62.

² Archbishop Surmeyan, Ardavazt, Souria, Vol. I., p. 666 as quoted by Varjabedian, Sissag, Hayere Lipanani Metch, Beirut, 1951, p. 4.

³ Kantarjian Garo, op. cit., p. 62.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ibid.

⁶ Archbishop Ormanian, Malachia, The Church of Armenia, London, 1955, pp. 9-10.

Persian Empire and the weakness of the Armenian kings resulted, among other things, in the division of Armenia between two states in A.D. 387.¹ Under the Zoroastrian Persians, the Armenians, now Christians, although allowed to keep their kings, were exposed to religious persecutions during the fifth century.² The fall of the Arshagouni (Arsacid) Armenian royal dynasty in A.D. 428 complicated matters further.³ Shortly after embracing Christianity, some Armenians must have settled in Jerusalem. By the fifth century several monasteries had already been built, and by A.D. 607, a Patriarchate in Jerusalem was established.⁴ More hardships were in store for the Armenians as a result of the Arab conquest in A.D. 640 and the ensuing struggle between the Byzantine Empire and the rising Arab State. The next four centuries, during the Arab administration of Armenia A.D. 693 - 887 and the rule of the Pakradouni (Bagratid) Armenian royal dynasty (887-1040) over part of Greater Armenia (Armenia Magna), saw an increase in the number of immigrants to all parts of the world including the Near East.⁵

¹ Morgan, Jacques de, History of the Armenian People, Boston, 1919, p. 132.

² Alboyadjian, Arshag, Badmutiun Hay Kaghtaganutian, Vol. I, Cairo, 1941, pp. 144-145.

³ Ibid., p. 143.

⁴ Ibid., pp. 141-143.

⁵ Ibid., p. 404.

Armenian military colonies were settled in Lebanon by Byzantine Emperors. Emperors Nicephore Phocas (963 - 969) and John Tymiscis (Tzimisces) (969-975) used Armenian soldiers in their successful campaigns in Syria and Lebanon.¹

After the fall of the Pakradouni dynasty and during the rule of the Rupenian dynasty (1080 - 1375) in Cilicia or Lesser Armenia (Armenia Minor), the period corresponding to the Crusader invasion of the Near East (1096-1291), many Armenians helped the Crusaders as guides, soldiers, dragomans and settled with them in what is now known as Syria and Lebanon.² After the deposition of King Levon (Leo) VI of Armenia in 1375 by the Memlukes and with the breakup of Cilicia, thousands of Armenians migrated from Cilicia to many countries, including Lebanon.³ These Armenians settled in Tripoli, Zghorta, Ehden, Jounieh and Ghazir. After the Ottoman conquest of 1516 many Armenians settled in Tripoli and Jounieh.⁴ When Roman Catholic missionary activity among Armenians succeeded to some extent and newly converted Catholics emerged as a new community, they were persecuted by their Orthodox compatriots and some of them fled to safety by

¹ Ibid., p. 301.

² Kantarjian, Garo, op. cit., p. 62.

³ Vasjabedian, Sissag, op. cit., p. 8.

⁴ Kantarjian, Garo, op. cit., p. 62.

migrating to Mt. Lebanon, a predominantly Maronite land, where they established a patriarchate at Bzommar in 1742.¹ In 1860, the first governor of Autonomous Mt. Lebanon, Daoud Pasha, was an Armenian; so was the last, Ohanness Pasha Kuyumjian (1912 - 1915).²

Many famous Lebanese persons and families have Armenian origin, most of them Roman Catholic or Protestant in faith, such as Garabet Dyonisius, Nicola Turk, John Wortabet, Bshara Mehendiz, Antoun Massri, and Abkarios, Ishak, Khasho, Farajallah, Khayat, Meguer, Ghougas and Bayan families. Some streets of Beirut are still named after them, such as Daoud Pasha, Hanna Ghougas, Wartabet, Adib Ishak, Souk el Arman, Khan Antoun Bey, etc.³

According to a census taken in 1913, the number of Orthodox Armenians in Mount Lebanon was 67.⁴ Until 1914 Beirut had about 120 Armenian families. After the First World War the number decreased to 40 families.⁵

The massacres of Armenians in Turkey during 1895-96 brought to Lebanon few Armenians, but it was the large scale massacres and the

¹Varjabedian, Sissag, op. cit., p. 270.

²Varjabedian, Sissag, op. cit., pp. 192-224.

³For further details see Varjabedian, Sissag, op. cit., pp. 57-258.

⁴Rondot, Pierre, Les Institutions Politiques du Liban, Vol. I., Paris, 1947, p. 28.

⁵Varjabedian, Sissag, op. cit., pp. 432-435.

deportations by the Ittihad Ve Terake government during the First World War, which were later continued during 1921-22 by the Turkish nationalist government of Mustapha Kemal, that contributed towards the creation of the present Armenian community in Lebanon.

During World War I, the Turkish government started, by the spring of 1915, to deport the Armenians from the Armenian provinces of Eastern Turkey, Anatolia and Cilicia to the wilderness of Syria. More than one million Armenians were deported, a quarter million survived from the massacres and secretly settled in the districts of Aleppo, Homs, Damascus and the villages of Hawran. As a result of the famine during the war, the Armenian refugees could not settle down in Lebanon. Early in 1919 the Armenians in Lebanon counted only a thousand souls.¹

The Armenian Community of Lebanon can be said to have been created as a result of three large scale migrations.²

The evacuation of Cilicia by the French and its return to Turkey in 1921 forced the Armenians to migrate in large groups to different countries including Lebanon. By this migration the number of Armenians in Syria and Lebanon reached 200,000. During this same

¹ Chami, Jean "La Communauté Arménienne du Liban, facteur de dynamisme", L'Orient, December 20, 1959, No. 10326, p. 7.

² Ibid., Kantarjian, Garo, op. cit., p. 63., Hovivian, Simon "Hay Gyanke Lipanani yev Sourio Metch". Yeridassart Hayouhi, March 1953, No. 3., pp. 26-27.

period Armenians from other Arab countries, survivors of the massacres from Turkish Armenia, and a small group of refugees coming from the Armenian Republic in Transcaucasia, after it definitely became a Soviet Republic in April 1921, assembled in Lebanon.

After the entry of the Turkish forces to the Sandjak of Alexandretta in 1937, and during the span of one year, 12,000 Armenians migrated from the disputed area to Syria and Lebanon, and in the first two weeks of July 1939, on the eve of the evacuation of the area by the French forces and the annexation of the Sandjak to Turkey, 15,000 Armenians migrated to Syria and Lebanon. Whereas most previous Armenian groups had settled in Beirut and its suburbs, and in the cities of Tripoli, Sidon and Zahle, the latter refugees were allotted land by the French and established the village of Anjar in the Bekaa valley. Some were settled in the city of Tyre.

In March - April 1948, thousands of Armenians from Palestine poured into Lebanon as a result of the Arabo-Israeli conflict.

After the proclamation of the union of Syria and Egypt in 1958 and the discovery of a Tashnag "spying ring" in Syria in 1961¹ a number of Armenians, the majority of whom were Lebanese, returned to Lebanon.

¹ In July-August 1961 "a secret organization" within the Tashnag Party of Syria and Lebanon was accused by the Syrian Region of the United Arab Republic for "espionage" (see L'Orient, 38th year, August 2, 1961 No. 10906), 123 Tashnags were arrested most of whom were set free. In April 1962 the Military Court of the Syrian Arab Republic condemned 16 of them and set free 22 others. (see L'Orient, 38th year April 15, 1962, No. 11159, p. 8).

In contrast to all these immigrations 40,000 Armenians from Syria and Lebanon chose to be repatriated and left for the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic in 1946 and 1947.¹

The number of Armenians according to government estimates - as no census has been done since 1932² - compiled by the personal status offices through birth and death registrations in 1943³ and 1956⁴ is as follows:

	<u>1943</u>	<u>1956</u>	
Beirut	35658	42762	Orthodox
	5258	8809	Catholic
Mount Lebanon	15149	15600	Orthodox
	3038	3722	Catholic
Northern Lebanon	1007	1579	Orthodox
	186	354	Catholic
Southern Lebanon	1674	1833	Orthodox
	270	298	Catholic
Bekaa	5275	1905	Orthodox
	1117	1448	Catholic
Total	58763	63679	Orthodox
	9869	14631	Catholic

¹ Hovivian, Simon, op. cit., p. 28.

² According to the 1932 census the number of Armenians was as follows: Orthodox 26,102, Catholic 5,890. Emigrants included Orthodox numbered 28,072 and Catholics 6,344.

³ Conseil Supérieur des intérêts Communs, Recueil des Statistiques de la Syrie et du Liban, 1942-1943, Beirut, 1945 p. 18.

⁴ an-Nahar, April 26, 1956, No. 6249, as quoted by Fayyad, Halim Faris, The Effects of Secterianism on the Lebanese Administration, Beirut, 1956, p. 29 table 3.

The above estimates do not necessarily mean that all the Armenians registered in the various Mohafazats live in the particular Mohafazat in which they are registered.¹

However the basis upon which the distribution of seats in the parliament is done since 1953 is the official government estimate termed by most as census of 1953² according to which the Armenian recognized communities number as follows.³

Armenian Orthodox	68,679
Armenian Catholic	14,582

As the Armenian Evangelical Community is counted with the Protestants of all linguistic groups, the government estimates do not give the number of Armenian Protestants but of Protestants in general. The number of Armenian Protestants living in Lebanon, irrespective of their citizenship is 7000.⁴ Actually the number of Armenians in Lebanon is approximately 110,000 distributed as follows:⁵

¹ Interview with Archbishop Khoren Paroyan, then Prelate of the Armenian Orthodox Community of Lebanon, July 1961.

² According to government estimates of February 1952 the number of Armenian Orthodox was 67,139 and the number of Catholics 14,218. The Armenian Protestant Community according to the statistics of the Rev. Marganian counted 4240 souls. Thus the total number of Armenians was 85,597. Hovivian, Simon, op. cit., Yeridassart Hayouhi, 6th year, June 1953, no. 6, p. 27).

³ Zartonk, 23d year, February 27, 1960, No. 128 (6641).

⁴ Interview with the Rev. Garabed Tilkian, Pastor of the First Armenian Evangelical Church of Beirut, August, 1961.

⁵ Chami, Jean, op. cit., p. 7.

Orthodox	85,000
Catholic	20,000
Protestant	5,000

The majority of Armenians (about 100,000) live in Beirut and its suburbs including Bourj Hammoud, the rest live in Zahle, Anjar, Tripoli, Shtora, Bikfaya, Aley, Sidon etc. In Beirut the majority of Armenians live in Medawar, Rmeil, Eshrefieh, Saifi and Zokak el Blat quarters.

The Armenian Orthodox Community

As shown by the population estimates the majority of Armenians belong to the Armenian Apostolical Church¹ (wrongly termed in Lebanon

¹The Armenian Apostolical Church, which according to legend was founded by Apostles Thaddeus and Bartholomew and established as an Independent National Church in 301 A.D. by Gregory the Illuminator, has as its seat Etchmiadzin (Descent of the Only Begotten) in Armenia. Its theology and confession of faith is based on the canons of the first three Ecumenical Councils of the Universal Church. Under political unfavorable situations sometimes the Catholicossate throne has been moved from place to place, and as a result of this displacement more than one throne of the hierarchy have been created. The Catholicossate of All Armenians at Etchmiadzin (Armenian S.S.R.) is the seat of the Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians who exercises jurisdiction over both Armenian Patriarchates of Jerusalem, and Turkey, and 17 dioceses scattered all over the world. All these patriarchates and dioceses are locally independent. The Catholicossate of the Great House of Cilicia, established in Cilicia in 1447 and since 1930 at Antelias (Lebanon), is inferior to the Catholicos of All Armenians only in spiritual and doctrinal matters and is independent in administrative matters over its dioceses which until 1956 included Lebanon, Syria and Cyprus. At present the Cilician See considers the See of Etchmiadzin only first among equals with whom its relations are broken since 1956. Both Catholicossates are members of the World Council of Churches since August 1962.

as Orthodox, but used in this thesis for convenience). This community is governed by the Armenian National Constitution of 1863, recognized by a firman of Sultan Abdul Aziz as the legal instrument of the Ermeni Millet (Armenian Millet) and by the Treaty of Lausanne in 1923 binding over the area formerly belonging to the Ottoman Empire.

Early in 1921-2, 20,000 Armenians settled down in the eastern entrance of Beirut under tents which later became the industrial suburb of Beirut. The Armenian Orthodox Community was unorganized; there were internal disputes and quarrels among them and many religious, moral, health, educational, economic and administrative problems had to be solved.¹ Lebanon then was governed by the mandatory and local authorities and there was no official administrative body representing the largest segment of the Armenians. There were two churches in Beirut: The Church of St. Nshan administered by the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem through a representative and the Church of the Holy Cross administered by the Catholicossate of Cilicia through its representative. This dual authority within the Armenian Orthodox community created confusion both with the government and among the Armenians themselves.² The mandatory and local authorities

¹ Der-Melkonian, Hagop, "Orenke, Intchbes Gazmagerbovetsav Lipanahay Azkayin teme", Aztag, Special 25th Anniversary issue, Beirut, 1952, p. 69.

² Ibid., p. 70.

recognized Dr. Baghdassar Melkonian, an Armenian Catholic, and President of the Armenian National Union which had long ago ceased to exist, as representative of the Armenians of all denominations. Dr. Melkonian acted as representative without being responsible for his actions to any body. The Armenian camps situated in the eastern entrance of Beirut were administered by three Armenian directors appointed by the Mandatory power.¹

The situation of the Armenian community was chaotic until September 1924 when the Mandatory Government decided to grant Lebanese citizenship² to all Armenians who were willing to accept it, according to the stipulations of the Treaty of Lausanne.³

In Lebanon as sectarianism is part of its political structure, and as a degree of administrative autonomy within the various communities is carried over from the Ottoman Empire millet system, the Armenian Orthodox community tried to organize itself and elect its own administrative bodies.

¹ Tutundjian, Khosrov, Puroyagan Snangutiune yev Irav Tashnag-tsoutian Oughin, Beirut, 1959, p. 71-72.

² Despite opposition mainly by Moslems which accused the mandatory power for increasing the Christian majority and for allowing the Armenians to compete with the natives on the economic field (Oriente Moderno 1926, p. 203 as quoted by Rondot, Pierre, op. cit., p.55) mainly through the efforts of Maronite Patriarch Hoyek, Emile Edde, Ayub Tabet and Emin Pasha Saad the French High Commissioner Gen. Weygand granted the Armenians Lebanese citizenship conforming with the Treaty of Lausanne of 1923.

³ Arretés No. 1805 of September 19, 1924, Journal Officiel du Grand Liban, October 3, 1924, Beirut, p. 2.; Treaty of peace with Turkey and other instruments signed at Lausanne on July 24, 1923 ... London, 1923 articles 30-36 on "nationality" pp. 27-29.

With the help of General Gouraud, French High Commissioner of Syria and Lebanon, the Catholicos of the Great House of Cilicia, Sahag II (1902-1939) was allowed to minister to the needs of his followers. Catholicos Sahag II took the first steps towards the organization of the community.¹ He appointed a seven member National Council in 1925, with the intention of creating legal constitutional bodies to govern the community. After corrupt elections in 1925, which were declared illegal by the Catholicos and the National Council, new elections were held on July 18, 1926. Three clerical and eighteen lay representatives to the Communal Council were elected by the Armenian Orthodox to administer the community.² This Communal Council was provided for by the constitution of 1863 and was elected periodically by the Armenian Orthodox community at large. According to this constitution one fifth of the members were elected every two years. The council in its turn elected the Civil and the Religious councils, its president, and the Educational and Economic committees. The Communal Council also set up national dues stipulating that only those who pay their dues can vote in community elections based only on male suffrage.³

The community life was troubled by political murders, the immigration of Armenians from Lebanon to the four corners of the World

¹Der-Melkonian, Hagop, op. cit., p. 69.

²Ibid., p. 70.

³Ibid., pp. 70-72.

and the suspension of the constitution of 1863 and the elected bodies by the Catholicos. The Catholicos created appointed bodies.¹

In 1929 the Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem ceded jurisdiction over the dioceses of Beirut, Damascus and Latakia to the Catholicosate of Cilicia. The French High Commissioner Henri Ponsot was advised of the change in April 1929 and officially approved it on May 16, 1929. This act ended the duality of authority and permitted, in 1930, the Cilician see to be definitely established at Antelias in Lebanon.²

Because of his age, Catholicos Sahag II invited, in 1931, Archbishop Papken Gulesserian, Director of the Armenian Theological Seminary at Jerusalem as coadjutor. A Representative Assembly composed of 11 clerical and 24 lay delegates acting as a conclave elected the Archbishop who was consecrated Catholicos. The assembly furthermore discussed the organization of the Administration of the Cilician dioceses.³

The Catholicos, having re-established the constitution of 1863, had a new communal council elected in Lebanon.⁴

In 1936 Catholicos Papken died. In 1939, Catholicos Sahag II also died. During the crisis of the Sandjak of Alexandretta from

¹ Ibid., p. 72.

² Papken I Atoragits Gatoghikos, Badmutiun Giligio Gatoghigosats (History of the Catholicos of Cilicia), Antelias, 1939, p. 988-989.

³ Der-Melkonian, Hagop, op. cit., pp. 72-73.

⁴ Ibid., p. 73.

1937 to its evacuation by the French in 1939 the influx of Armenian refugees from the disputed area augmented the number of the Armenian population of Lebanon. In 1939 the Mandatory power, in agreement with the local authorities, granted Lebanese citizenship to those Armenians from the Sandjak area who applied for it.¹

A new conclave elected as Catholicos Archbishop Bedros Sarajian who died in September 1940. The Locum Tenens Archbishop Yeghishe Garoyan summoned a Representative Assembly which did not elect a Catholicos but approved a new constitution for the Cilician See.² According to the Constitution of 1941, which till now has not been approved by the Lebanese Government, a National General Assembly³ was created whose representatives were elected by the Communal Councils of the Cilician dioceses.⁴ The members of the National General Assembly in turn elected the first Religious and Central Civil Councils.⁵

¹ Arrête No. 182/LR of August 26, 1939, Journal officiel de la République Libanaise, Lois et Décrets, p. 3380.

² Der Melkonian, Hagop, op. cit., p. 73.

³ According to article 18 of the Constitution of 1941 (See Ganonakrutiun Gatoghigosoutian Hayots Medzi Dann Giligio, Antelias, 1941, p. 8). The National General Assembly is composed of 18 lay and 3 clerical members. The clerical members are elected by the General Convention of all ecclesiasts of the Cilician See. The General Assembly meets every other year in the month of April.

⁴ Ganonakrutiun Gathoghigosoutian Hayots Medzi Dann Giligio (Constitution of the Catholicossate of Armenians of the Great House of Cilicia) Antelias, 1941, article 22, pp. 8-9.

⁵ The members of the first Central Civil Councils were Dr. Hovsep Yenikomoshian (President) Vahe Setian, Meguerditch Messerlian, Dr. Aram Baghdassarian and Mardiros Altounian.

According to the constitution, new Central Councils were elected, after two years, which served until 1945 when Archbishop Karekin Hovsepiantz, Prelate of the Armenians of North America, having been elected by a Representative Assembly acting as conclave in 1943, was consecrated Catholicos of Cilicia. Karekin I, though elected according to the electoral procedure of the constitution of 1941, did not ratify the constitution of 1941 and acted on his own, with the help of the last Central Civil Council until his death in 1952.¹ After the death of Karekin I, Archbishop Khat Atchabahian and, as of October 1955, Bishop Khoren Paroyan administered the Catholicosate as Locum Tenens.

In a tense atmosphere on February 20, 1956 Bishop Zareh Payaslian Prelate of the Armenians of Aleppo, majority candidate of the Tashnag dominated Conclave, was elected Catholicos, and on September 2, 1956 consecrated by two Armenian and one Syriac bishops, at the price of disharmony within the community. The anti-Tashnag groups,²

¹Interview with Archbishop Khoren Paroyan, July 1961.

²After the Armenian Orthodox community administration was organized in 1926 Tashnags, Ramgavar Azadagans, Huntchags, anti-Tashnag or pro-Tashnag Independents, neutrals and even Communists (only from 1943 to 1947) had cooperated in the community administration until 1951. A special era of cooperation was between 1940 to 1946. The anti-Tashnag Independents collaborated until 1953. Since 1953 Tashnags and pro-Tashnag Independents have been controlling the community administration.

who had been boycotting all community elections and refusing to pay their national dues since 1953 alleging fraudulent communal council elections, acting as one front, considered the election and consecration of Bishop Zareh illegal¹ and refused to recognize his authority which was recognized by the governments of Lebanon, Syria and Cyprus, despite petitions, demonstrations and protests of the religious and lay opposition groups.²

Eleven out of the 19 members of the Religious Brotherhood of the Cilician See, likewise, refused to accept the authority of the

¹ In Zartok (22nd year April 11, 12, and 14, 1959 No. 6371-6373) in an article entitled "For History" the reasons were given why the anti-Tashnags considered the election illegal. Fourteen votes out of the 32 votes over 50 cast in favor of Bishop Zareh were from the delegates of Aleppo. The Aleppine delegates, they claimed, were illegal since 2/5 of the members of the Communal Council of Aleppo who elected the delegates were not renewed. This illegality, they claimed, was confirmed by the decree No. 5845-10 of the Syrian Minister of Interior, issued on October 9, 1955 and ratified by the Prime Minister's decree No. 7383-584 on the next day. They further claimed that the Constitution of 1941 on the basis of which the election was done is not approved by the governments of Lebanon, Syria, and Cyprus and the former Catholicos so it is illegal. They held that the election was declared as "defective and unacceptable", by the Armenian Bishops Synod of Cairo, which met under the presidency of the Catholicos of all Armenians Vazken I. They stressed that the consecration was contrary to the provision of Mashdots (ordination book) as it was done by two Armenian Bishops, a non-Armenian bishop being unacceptable. As a result they did not recognize the authority of Zareh I (1956-1963).

² For further details see Hornus, Jean Michel, La Crise du Catholicosate de Cilicie, Beirut, 1956 and Kuyumjian, Dikran, The Recent Crisis in the Armenian Church, Beirut 1961.

Catholicos¹ and had to leave the Catholicosate led by Archbishop Khat Atchabahian, former Locum Tenens of the See of Cilicia. Attempts of Archbishop Khat, his followers and the anti-Tashnag groups to create an independent community failed due to government refusal. After these attempts Archbishop Khat and his followers were officially expelled from the Religious Brotherhood of Cilicia in 1957. Meanwhile Zareh I had restored all community constitutional bodies. After his untimely death in February 1963, Archbishop Khoren Paroyan was first elected Locum Tenens and on May 5, 1963 Catholicos.²

¹ Zartok, 19th year, March 8, 1956, No. 139 (5449).; Le Matin Magazine, August 3, 1956, No. 969, p. 10; Ararad, 19th year, September 2, 1956, No. 4401 (384).

² At present the situation remains the same. The majority of the 17 Armenian Orthodox churches run by the local councils recognize the authority of the Catholicos. The churches of Camp Hadjin, Rmeil (closed since 1957 by the government upon the request of the Armenian Orthodox Prelate), and Zahle, though keeping all legal ties with the Armenian Orthodox Prelacy for Lebanon, the Communal Council, and the bodies derived from it accept the spiritual authority of Archbishop Khat, who is recognized by the Catholicos of all Armenians and the clergyman loyal to him, as Locum Tenens of the See of Cilicia, though he holds no official position as far as the Lebanese government is concerned.

Members of the opposition groups still boycotting all community elections and refusing either to pay their national dues (or accept the authority of the Catholicos) have to go to the prelacy for all matters of personal status and thus are legally of the flock of the See of Cilicia.

The official publication of the Cilician See is a monthly periodical Hask (chaff) published since 1932. The Catholicossate also owns a printing press located on the grounds of the monastery at Antelias. There the Gulbenkian Museum, the chapel devoted to the Armenian Martyrs, and the Cathedral of St. Gregory the Illuminator are found.

The Catholicossate of Cilicia has its own Theological seminary in the Bikfaya monastery grounds where is located the summer residence of the Catholicossate established in 1953.

There are two Sunday school organizations, one administered by the Catholicossate of Cilicia and the other by the clergymen loyal to Archbishop Khat.

The Armenian Orthodox prelacy of Lebanon has a network of 23 elementary and intermediate schools under its authority in Beirut, its suburbs, Bourj-Hammoud, Jounieh, Tripoli, Zahle, Anjar, Shtora, Aley, Sidon and Rayak.

The Armenian Orthodox community at present is administered according to the stipulations of the Constitution of 1863 and the 1941 Constitution of the Cilician See.

The male members of the Armenian Orthodox community who are over 21 and who have paid their dues to the community, elect the Communal

Council (Kavaragan Joghov)¹ composed of 42 members, 6 of whom are clericals and 36 lay, from various districts in Lebanon, according to the density of the community in that particular district.² The Communal Council in its turn elects the Religious (Gronagan) and Civil (Kaghakagan) Councils each composed of seven members. The Civil Council elects the Prelate of the Diocese usually a bishop, and the Educational and Economic Committees,³ and the personal status Courts of the First Instance and of Appeals, which are all presided over by the Prelate. Since 1929, the Armenian Orthodox of Lebanon are under the jurisdiction of the Catholicossate of Cilicia. The Communal Council and the Prelate of the Diocese are responsible to the Catholicos of Cilicia, who administers the Cilician Dioceses with the help of Religious and Civil Central Councils.

¹ The distribution of the 36 lay seats in the Communal Council is as follows:

St. Nishan - Mazraa - Aley	8
Eshrefieh - Rmeil - Karm el Zeitoun	5
Karantina - Nor Hadjin	4
Bourj Hammoud (Nor Marash, Nor Sis Nor Adana, Tiro)	13
Anjar	2
Tripoli	2
Zahle	2

The six clerical members are elected by the General Assembly of all the community priests serving in Lebanon.

² Interview with Archbishop Khoren Paroyan, July 1961.

³ Both Educational and Economic committees are formed by the Civil Council, each composed of seven members. The Committees are renewed every two years. The Educational Committee supervises the schools under the jurisdiction of the Armenian Orthodox community. The Economic Committee collects the national dues, which forms part of the budget of the prelacy and the schools under its jurisdiction.

The churches are locally governed by Local Councils elected for a period of four years by the male congregation of age of the particular church. The legality of the elections of the Local Councils are approved by the Civil Council of the Diocese. The Local Council elects a five member board to administer the local school.¹

The Religious Brotherhood of the Cilician See is administered by the Executive Council elected by the General Assembly of the Brotherhood² which has also the right to elect the Locum Tenens of the See.³

The Armenian Catholic Community

The Armenian Catholic and Armenian Protestant communities unlike the Armenian Orthodox community act as a body and most of the activities of their congregation are within their respective communities. But this fact does not prevent many Armenian Catholics and Protestants to be members of various Armenian political parties.

¹Azkayin Sahmanutrutium Hayots (National Constitution of Armenians) Beirut 1931, Articles 52-56, pp. 24-26.

²Ganonakrutium Gatoghigosoutian Hayots Medzi Dann Giligio. Antelias 1941, articles 29-30, p. 10.

³Ibid., article 28, p. 10.

The Armenian Catholic Patriarchate of the See of Cilicia was established in 1742 at Bzommar by Catholic Patriarch Apraham Bedros I Ardzivian.¹ In 1749 the monastery, in 1771 the Church, in 1810 the Theological seminary, in 1905 the tower, in 1910 the patriarchal residence and in 1940 a chapel and a hall were built on the grounds of the patriarchate at Bzommar. The Patriarchate had good relations with the Maronite and other Catholic Patriarchates of Lebanon since 1742, which was helpful in arranging the settlement of Armenians in Lebanon in 1921-2. During winter the Armenian Catholic Patriarch resides in the Patriarchate at Eshrefieh. In 1937 Krikor Bedros XV Agagianian, later made Cardinal and now Prefect of the Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith at the Vatican succeeded Avedis Bedros XIV Arpiarian (1931-1937) as Catholicos - Patriarch. In 1962 after his resignation he was succeeded by Iknadios Bedros XVI Batanian. The Patriarch of the Armenian Catholic rite, who at present has jurisdiction over Armenian Catholic Dioceses all over the world, is elected by the Synod of Bishops of the Armenian Catholic church and his election is approved by the Pope.

¹The first Armenian Catholic foothold in Lebanon dates back to 1720 when the Andonian religious Brotherhood was established near Ghosta in Kesrwan by the Mouradian brothers of Aleppo. The Mouradians founded there a monastery called Kreim. For more details see Varjabedian, Sissag, op. cit., pp. 267-279.

The Armenian Catholic community and its officially recognized personal status courts are administered by ecclesiasts. Each church has a priest responsible for it who is free to appoint laymen to help him to direct religious or educational needs of the particular church. The Patriarchate in turn controls the priests who are responsible for their actions to the Patriarch. Only in the Commission of Wakfs there is lay membership.¹

The Armenian Catholic Patriarchate publishes Avedik, its official monthly organ.

The Patriarch appoints his Vicar General who, besides the regular administrative functions of the Patriarchate, presides at the theological meetings of Armenian Catholic priests. The Patriarch also appoints the vicar generals for Catholic Dioceses everywhere including Lebanon.²

The Patriarchate exercises control over three Catholic charitable organizations in Beirut and Bourj Hammoud and over the Union of Armenian Catholic Youth. The Union has three branches in Lebanon and has cultural activity within the Armenian Catholic community. The community has the Cilician Chorus, and Massis, an Armenian Catholic weekly published in Beirut.

¹ Hovivian, Simon, op. cit., Yeridassart Hayouhi, June 1953, No. 6, pp. 23-25.

² Ibid.

The Patriarchate also has a seminary in Bzommar and directs Sunday schools in Beirut.

There are three other Armenian Catholic institutions which have close links with the Armenian Catholic Patriarchate but are responsible for their actions to their abbots in Vienna, Venice and Priorese in Rome. These are: the Vienna Mekhitarians who have a College and chapel at Hazmieh, the Venice Mekhitarians who have an educational institution in Bikfaya, and the Congregation of the Immaculate Conception of Armenian Sisters of Beirut which conducts four schools in Beirut, Bourj Hammoud, Zahle, and Anjar and an orphanage in Bzommar.

The Armenian Protestant Community

All Protestant communities including the Armenian Evangelical community¹ are considered as one community by the Lebanese Government. The Protestant community of Lebanon is composed of 13 parishes or churches and is represented by the Supreme Council of the Lebanese and Syrian Evangelical Communities. This body represents the Protestant Community and protects its rights before the government. It does not

¹ Interviews with the Reverends H. Aharonian, Chairman of the Central Executive Council of the Armenians Evangelical Union, G. Tilkian, Pastor of the First Armenian Evangelical Church of Beirut, and D. Kherlopian, Beirut, August 1961.

interfere in the internal affairs of its member churches. The Armenian Evangelical communities of Lebanon and Syria are each represented in it by four delegates.

The Armenian Evangelical Church established in 1847 is democratic in its polity, and emphasizes the evangelical movement rather than the denominational or sectarian policy. The Armenian Evangelical Church is a member of the World Council of Churches. All the Armenian Evangelical churches of the Near East are members to the Union of Armenian Evangelical churches in the Near East. Delegates elected by active members¹ of the member churches of the Union assemble every year in General Assembly. The Assembly in turn elects a Central Council composed of twelve members, six lay and six ecclesiast from Lebanon and Syria, for a term of three years, on condition that 1/3 of its members are renewed every year. This central body, is the Executive Council of the Armenian Evangelical Communities of the Near East and supervises all member churches and organizations. The union

¹ Within the Armenian Evangelical community every church has active and auxiliary membership. The active membership, though limited in number by the organic law of the Armenian Evangelical Union, controls the community. Active members are those who sign a pledge of membership accepting the creed of the church and promising to work "for the glory of God". The auxiliary members are above the age of seventeen and pay dues to the church.

In church problems only the active members vote, in general community problems all the members vote.

is governed by its own constitution which stipulates that the supreme authority resides in the General Assembly.¹

The Central Executive Council of the Union appoints the judges for matters of personal status of the Armenian Evangelical Community of Lebanon.

There is a community council of the Armenian Evangelical Community in Lebanon whose ex-officio president is the Chairman of the Central Executive Council of the Armenian Evangelical Union. The council is elected by the member churches of the Union in Lebanon and concerns itself with general community issues.

The Armenian Evangelical Union has a church constitution which is binding upon all its member churches. Within the framework of this constitution the local church has the right of self government. Each church meets every year in a general session of the church membership to elect the Church Committee, the Trustees Committee responsible for the financial and the temporal matters and the church school board. Church members above the age of seventeen pay annual membership dues to the church.

Within the community works the Union of Christian Endeavour Societies whose center is in Beirut. This Union operates a summer

¹Orinakirk Mertsavor Arevelki Hay Avedaranagan Yegeghetsinerou Mioutian (Organic Law of the Union of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of the Near East), Beirut, 1959, article 5, page 2.

camp near Beit-Mery. The Society aims at the preparation of the youth for Church membership and Christian service. The Christian Endeavour Union publishes Tchanasser, a bi-weekly, Badanegan Artsakank, a monthly for the youth, both the property of the Evangelical Union and Louys a periodical for daily personal devotions and for worship in the family.

The community has seven organized churches and a few places of worship in Lebanon. A seminary, the Near East School of Theology, is owned and administered by five bodies among which is the Armenian Evangelical Union.

The community owns and administers in Beirut the Haigazian College¹ (established 1955), the Armenian Evangelical College of Beirut (established 1923), the Nor Marash Evangelical High-School, (established 1934), the Central High-School at Eshrefieh, (established 1922), and Junior High Schools in Anjar, Tripoli, Zahle and the suburbs of Beirut. Within the Community every church has its own Sunday school and elementary school. There is a Teachers Association of Armenian Evangelical schools, founded in 1939.

These institutions have alumni associations of which the Alumni Association of the Armenian Evangelical College, established in 1932, has a theatrical group.

¹ The Haigazian College admits not only Armenian students but also other nationals. The college, which grants Bachelor of Arts degrees, has a Rocket Society which launched the first Lebanese rockets in 1961.

The Armenian Political Parties

Most of the community administrative bodies, churches, schools, cultural organizations, press etc., particularly of the Armenian Orthodox community are under the domination or influence of either Huntchag, Tashnag or Ramgavar Azadagan Armenian political parties.

The Armenian political parties were formed from 1885 to 1890 with the aim of liberating Armenia from foreign rule.¹

When the Armenians settled in Lebanon they brought with them their political parties. These parties are not de jure recognized by the Lebanese Government but have only de facto recognition. Their activities are rather centered around the Armenian church and cultural societies.

All of these parties have branches nearly in all Armenian communities all over the world, excluding the Communist countries

¹ According to D.G. Kherlopian (Middle East Forum, March 1961, Vol. XXXVII, No. 3, p. 15) the Armenian political parties "differ mainly in their attitude towards Soviet Armenia. Although all of them regard her as the only basis of hope for the Armenian people, yet they disagree on one major point. The Dashnakist party thinks that Armenia must be completely independent and freed from the present Soviet rule, while the other two (Huntchag and Ramgavar parties) are more interested in the safety and security of Armenia under strong protection. The latter think that the dream of complete independence can be realized only by internal revolution in the Soviet Union or by a third world war. In either case, they say, the outcome may be a new unprecedented catastrophe for Armenia and the Armenian people."

and Turkey. Most of these parties have their central committees in countries outside Lebanon and operate in Lebanon under the direction of district committees. All of these committees have declared loyalty to the Republic of Lebanon.

The Present writer interviewed responsible people from every one of the afore-mentioned parties. In the following pages, a brief picture of each party with its affiliate organizations as they exist in Lebanon is presented.

The Huntchag Party

Sotsial Temograd Huntchagian (Social Democrat Huntchagian) party¹ was formed in 1887 at Geneva, with the aim of liberating the Armenian people and the restoration of Armenian statehood on the basis of a socialist regime. To achieve these goals the organic law of the party prescribed two stages: the first and immediate goal was to achieve autonomy for Armenia by the reforms the Ottoman Empire had agreed to carry out in the six Armenian villayets by Article 61 of the Congress of Berlin; the second and ultimate goal was the

¹ Interview with Jirair Nayiri, editor of Ararad, with the permission of the Huntchag party Secretary General Haroutune Jerejian, Beirut July 1961.

reunification of the Armenian people and territories¹ then under the domination of the Ottoman Empire, Russia and Persia when the necessary economic basis for the establishment of a socialist regime had been created.

At present the Huntchag party considers the maintenance of the existence of Soviet Armenia a national necessity above all ideological considerations, because without the maintenance of the territory of present day Armenia it won't be able to realise the reunification of the Armenian people and its territories.

Although according to its organic law the Huntchag party is supposed to be Marxist, conditions within the Armenian diaspora have forced it to act differently adapting itself to prevailing conditions. In the diaspora the Huntchag party works hard to keep the Armenians attached to their Fatherland and national ideals, defending them from the danger of integration with the people of their adopted countries. Within limits it tries to have close contacts with the

¹ To this end, the Huntchag party was among the first of the Armenian political parties in 1959 to claim from the U.S.S.R. the territories of Gharabagh (92% Armenian population) and Nakhichevan (both annexed to Soviet Azerbaijan as autonomous region and republic) also Akhaltskha (annexed to Soviet Georgia) to be ceded to Soviet Armenia. They have constantly demanded U.S.S.R. to claim for Armenians the provinces of Kars and Ardahan from Turkey.

people of the various adopted countries and to assist those countries in the realization of their national and political aims. They support any government so long as it remains the exponent of the national, political and economic interests of its own people.

The Social Democrat Huntchagian party does not participate in an international organization or bloc. The Huntchag party finds all peoples and states equal to each other, condemns racial segregation, the exploitation of men by different human groupings, it is against wars of conquest, and supports the creation of relationships and interaid between great and small states alike, on the basis of mutual respect and equality, it wishes every people to have the necessary conditions which make possible their free and mansided development. The Huntchag party supports any movement or bloc which aims at the realization of these aims.

Based on geopolitics, the Huntchag party is an advocate of pro-Russianism in Armenian political life, regardless of the regime Russia may assume, since they reason, Armenia needs the protection of a strong friendly neighbor against its arch-enemy the Turks. With the exception of the Soviet Union and Turkey, the Huntchag party exists nearly in all Armenian settlements.

The Central Administrative Body of the Social Democrat Huntchagian party¹ is in the United States of America. In New York, it issues an official publication called Yeridassart Hayasdan (Young Armenia.)

The party in Lebanon² is administered by a District Committee headed by its Secretary General. The organ of the party in Lebanon is Ararad, a daily newspaper, published since 1937 by Onnig Djambouliau.

Though the location and names of the party branches in Lebanon were not disclosed to the present writer, it is apparent that they have branches in Beirut, Tripoli, Jounieh and Zahle. Some of the names of their branches, called chapters are named after their revolutionary leaders or heroes, such as Paramaz, Sabahkul, Pokr Hayk, Aghasi, Nazarpek, Maro, Shake, Vanig, Jirayr Murad etc. In addition there are three student chapters: Dkhrouni, Aghazarian and Eljanian.

¹The local chapters of the Huntchag party in Lebanon elect according to their number delegates to the Huntchag Representative Assembly of Lebanon. The Representative Assembly in turn elects its members to the General Representative Assembly of the Huntchag party. This latter body in turn elects the Central Administrative Body, whose members elect the Secretary General of the party. The Lebanon District Committee receives its orders from the Central body except for local matters and is responsible for its activities to the same body.

²The existence of a Huntchag party in Lebanon is traced to 1912.

The Huntchag party does not recognize the authority of the Cilician See as it considers it to be a tool in the hands of the Tashnag party but accepts the supremacy of Etchmiadzin as the spiritual center of all Armenians.

Though ideologically different from the Ramgavar Azadagan party, which neglects class struggle, favors private enterprise, is against revolutions and hopes to create a democratic regime by reforms, the Huntchag party temporarily collaborates with the Ramgavar Azadagan Party in national and political matters about which they have similar attitudes.

The Huntchagian Party has moral influence and authority over the following cultural and sport associations and educational institutions:

The Homenmen (Armenian Sporting Union) founded in 1921, with branches in Beirut, Zahle and Jounieh.

The Nor Serount (New Generation) Cultural Movement, whose members contribute to Ararad Kragan (Literary Ararad), a monthly of culture and arts.

The Sahagian intermediate school, the New High School, and the elementary school of Nor Hadjin and Rmeil, though the latter two are legally connected to the Armenian Orthodox Prelacy of Beirut.

The influence of the Huntchag party is strong in Hadjin, Khalil Bedaoui, Charchabouk quarters in the eastern entrance of Beirut.

The Tashnag Party

Hay Heghapokhagan Tashnagtsutioun (Armenian Revolutionary Federation), for the sake of convenience called Tashnag party¹, was formed in 1890 at Tiflis. The only and ultimate aim of the Tashnag party has been the political independence of the Armenian people within the Armenian Fatherland.² The Tashnag party is a socialist but an anti-Marxist party. For the Tashnag party socialism is one of the more elaborate forms of democracy. The party believes that socialism can only be realized within an independent state and in an atmosphere of political freedom on condition that it be suited to the national framework. The party is anti-Communist as it considers Communism to be an international movement which considers nations as historical aspects; Communism is therefore opposed to independence and aims at assimilating all nations into one nation with one language and one culture.

The Tashnag party considers the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic as a colony which is ruled by the All Union Communist Party

¹Interview with Dr. Yervant Khatanasian, one of the most responsible leaders of the Tashnag party, July 1961.

²Towards this end the Tashnag party claims from the Turks and Soviets, territories under their rule which are considered by the Armenians as their own. It believes only with the return of these lands can the reunion of all Armenians in one country be achieved as the present Soviet Armenia is too small.

Central Committee of Moscow. The party believes it has evidence that the Armenian people within Soviet Armenia think and act for their independence through their national culture, with which the Armenian people had kept their national integrity when they, in A.D. 1375, lost their political independence. The party claims also that the Communists try to sovietize the national culture, by russification and by the Communist ideology. It struggles therefore against Communism as represented in Soviet Armenia by the Armenian Communist party and its bureaucracy. The Tashnag party at present "aims towards the liberation of Armenia from the Soviet yoke, though not militarily, nor by encouraging a rebellion but by the powerful idea of independence and maintenance of national culture within present day Armenia."

The Tashnag party is a non-active member of the Second (Socialist) International without any commitments. It is also an active member of the League of Liberating Nations from Communism known as the Paris Bloc.¹

The party also claims that it tries to be of help to the states of those nations who have given shelter to the Armenians, and without

¹ According to the Tashnag party the Bloc has 11 members from all the constituent nations of the U.S.S.R. "all of which strive at national independence". Its members are Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Khazakhstanis, Tartars of Kazan, peoples of Northern Caucasus, Georgians, Armenians, Azerbayjanis, Kozaks and peoples of Middle Central Asia. They aim to spread the idea of independence by publications and radio. The organ of the Bloc is a periodical Problems of the Peoples of the U.S.S.R.

considering their internal political problems it has made its policy to stand by the Authorities, unless they are Communist, and be faithful and loyal to their respective governments.

The party has branches in twelve countries outside of the Communist world and Turkey. Its Central Administrative body is called the Bureau (Puro)¹, which has no definite center.

The party in Lebanon is administered by a district Central Executive Committee elected by the two-thirds majority of the yearly convention of the Tashnag party in Lebanon. The organ of the party² in Lebanon is Aztag, a daily newspaper owned and published since 1927 by Haig Balian. Its branches in Lebanon³ (called committees) are in Beirut, Bourj Hammoud, Tripoli, Zahle, Anjar and Shtora. They are called after historical names, Tashnag heroes or symbols, such as Hrwantan Central Committee (Cape Central Committee) meaning Beirut, Pertakaghak (city of Castles) meaning Tripoli, Nigol Touman,

¹The Tashnag party conventions of the twelve countries elect representatives to the World Convention of the Tashnag Party, every four years. The Convention re-examines all problems, criticises the Bureau and gives new decisions "about theoretical and practical problems which help towards the achievement of national independence". The World Convention elects the members of the Bureau by a two-thirds majority for a term of four years. As the members of the Bureau are not from one country, the center always shifts.

²Formerly the organ of the party was Punig published in 1924 and then Nor Punig published from 1925 to 1927 as bi-daily newspapers.

³The existence of the first Tashnag party committee in Lebanon can be traced to 1901-1902.

Krisdapor, Arghoutian, Sardarabad, Rosdom, Dzamhour, Haratch, Azadamard etc. A Special branch for students known as the Zavarian Association, and three others for adolescent youth known as the Papken Suni, Zavarian, Haratch Youth association exist.

The Tashnag party counts members from all classes, the great majority of which are workers, artisans and peasants. Most of them are young people.

The Tashnag party considers religion an integral part of culture and the Armenian church as one of the most important factors in the preservation of the integrity of Armenians in the diaspora. It considers the Holy See of Etchmiadzin as the historical center of the Armenian church but claims that Etchmiadzin is not independent and is used by the Communists as a political tool. It assists the Catholicossate of Antelias as an independent church organization in a free country. The Tashnag party believes that by supporting the See of Antelias it strengthens the idea of independence within the Armenian people and improves the religious and educational condition within Diaspora.

Their antagonism to the Huntchag party rests on the claim that the Huntchags have no definite policy. Though the Huntchags are Marxists they are also nationalists and consequently cannot reconcile the two ideologies.

Tashnag antipathy towards the Ramgavar Azadagan party is on the grounds that the Ramgavar Azadagan party does not support the idea of Armenian independence, and believes that the Armenian people can not afford to be independent in the face of the Turks, without the supervision and protection of Russia, irrespective of Russian political beliefs. The Tashnag party claims that the Ramgavars, by defending this view, are unconsciously and indirectly helpful to the Communists.

The Tashnag party strongly criticises the Armenian General Benevolent Union because being a non-political and non-denominational, benevolent organization it should not have interfered in the affairs of one particular community (such as the election of the Catholicos of Cilicia in 1956) and for its antagonism towards the community administrative bodies dominated by Tashnag majorities.

It also accuses the Armenian Communists not only of weakening the Republic of Armenia by uprisings in May 1920 (which were also condemned by the Huntchag and Ramgavar parties) and of collaborating with the Red Army for the Sovietization of Armenia in December 1920, but also for being the cause for the division among the ranks of the Armenians. They claim that the Armenian Communists are members of the Communist parties of their adopted countries and receive orders from Moscow. According to the Tashnag party the Armenian Communists have divided the Armenians into two antagonistic and irreconcilable groups: the proletariat and the capitalists.

The party has moral effect and indirectly controls, through its members or through people who support its views on national independence, the Cilician See, Armenian Orthodox Community administration, the Hamazkain Cultural Association, the Homenenetmen Sports organization and the Lebanese Armenian Assistance Cross.

The Hamazkain Cultural Association founded at Cairo in 1928 has opened a college at Beirut in 1929, now called Nshan Palanjian Djemaran.

The Association publishes a literary periodical, Pakin, has a permanent Dramatic Society the Gaspar Ipekian Theatrical Group, a Dancing and Singing Folkloric Team called Knar, and the recently formed Levon Shant Theatrical Group.

The influence of the Tashnag party is strong in Eshrefieh, Karantina, the various quarters of Bourj-Hammoud, except Sanjak Camp, and Anjar in the Bekaa.

Against the Tashnag party leadership there had been opposition by some influential Tashnags who were gradually expelled from the party. The party in Lebanon was under the command of the District Committee of the Tashnag Party in Syria until 1937 when it formed a District Committee for Lebanon. The Lebanon District Committee faced the opposition of the Puro of the party and struggled during 1937 and 1938 against it. The Puro with some local support came victorious out of the struggles and expelled some of its opponents.¹

¹ Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian, July 1961.

In September 1953, Aztarar, a weekly published by Onnig Topouzian from 1944 to 1953 which had been supporting the official Tashnag party, turned into a daily newspaper, with a policy opposed to that of the official Tashnag party. From 1953 to 1955 Aztarar, edited by Khosrov Tutundjian claimed to be the organ of the so called True Tashnags. Their views can be summarised as follows:

"The True Tashnag must view political problems having as aim only Armenian national interests. We are not concerned with the struggle of Western capitalism and the Communist world, from both of which we have no expectations. We can not be with the imperialist West nor with the Communist bloc the principles of which we oppose. We are in favor of peaceful coexistence of the world powers, in which we find the interest of Armenia. The weakening of Russia is not only the collapse of the Communist regime but the destruction of the mighty Russian state under whose protection is the Armenian state."¹

Now these views are defended by Nayiri, an independent weekly published by poet Antranig Dzarougian, a former Tashnag. The weekly has gathered around itself amongst others a group of former Tashnags in a literary circle of intellectuals.

In 1953 a group of Tashnags, led by Souren Azirian, opposed the party leadership and organized an independent club called Djagadamard. The club is now defunct.

¹ Tutundjian, Khosrov, op. cit., pp. 103-104.

At times the anti-puro Tashnags have cooperated with the Lebanese Armenian National Rally.

The Ramgavar Azadagan Party

The Ramgavar Azadagan party (Liberal Democrat) can be said to have its roots in the nationalist Armenagan party founded in 1885. It also has its roots in the Veragazmial Huntchagian (Reformed Huntchag) party¹ also known as the Azadagan (Liberal) party, and the Sahmanatragan Ramgavar (Constitutional Democrat) party founded in 1908 by members of the Armenagan party and a dissident group of the Veragazmial Huntchagian party. The Ramgavar Azadagan party assumed its name by the unification of the Sahmanatragan Ramgavar and Azadagan parties at Istanbul on October 1, 1921.

The organ of the Ramgavar Azadagan party in Boston, Baykar, wrote the following about the ideology and aims of their party.²

¹ A few years after the formation of the Huntchag party a split occurred within it. The left wing of the party decided to maintain its Social Democratic aims. The right wing of the party which had purely nationalistic tendencies separated and formed the Veragazmial Huntchagian party.

² Zartok, 24th year, June 2, 1961, No. 207 (7026), quoted from Baykar.

"The Ramgavar Azadagan party is not a secret political organization. It is known to all that our party being essentially a national political organization, throws outside its path any activity that bears international aspect."

It continued,

"The Ramgavar Azadagan party for forty years has been the faithful exponent of the powerful and invincible desire of the survival of the Armenian nation. This strong desire and faithful expression naturally aims at the restoration of the historical boundaries of Armenia. As an ideology the Ramgavar Azadagan party believes in the sovereignty of popular will and defends the free and bondless expressions of that will. As essentially a national organization the Ramgavar Azadagan party cannot but be interested in the idea and prosperity of the Fatherland. It believes that this interest is the outcome of the sincere and pure patriotism of the true Armenian and the true Ramgavar Azadagan. This friendly behaviour towards the eternal Fatherland, is in no way a show of sympathy towards the present regime of Armenia."

The present writer interviewed some of the Ramgavar Azadagan leaders¹ of Lebanon about the aims, ideology, and organization of their party. Their statements can be summarised as follows.

The Ramgavar Azadagan party is a national party patterned after the Western Liberal Democrat parties, it is ideologically anti-Marxist according to the very principles of its fundamental laws, but wants to remain outside of international politics as it claims this endangers

¹ Interviews with Hratchia Setrakian, leader of the Ramgavar Azadagan party of Lebanon, and Kersam Aharonian, editor in chief of Zartonk, July 1961.

the existence of the Armenian communities scattered all over the world. At present the major aim of the Ramgavar Azadagan party is the preservation of the Armenian heritage, culture, church and traditions. By the preservation of Armenian communities it hopes to reach a successful solution of the Armenian territorial question when the international conditions permit it. They also stress the necessity of being loyal citizens of their adopted countries. As to the "liberation of Armenia from the Soviet yoke", the party regards this as an internal problem of Soviet Armenia and holds that the Armenians of the Diaspora are powerless to play any role in this matter.

The party considers the existence of an Armenia a blessing, since after the loss of its political independence in A.D. 1375 Armenia was only a geographical term and for centuries Armenians have dreamt of a Fatherland. Now Armenia exists though a Soviet Socialist Republic. For this reason the Ramgavar Azadagan party cherishes Armenia, although it does not approve of the present regime there.

The leaders of the party in Lebanon did not disclose to the present writer the whereabouts of the Central Council of the party.¹

¹ Every three years a General Convention of the Ramgavar Azadagan party takes place to which participate the delegates elected by the district party conventions. They elect the Central Council of the party for a three years term.

The present writer has reason to believe that Prof. Parounag Tovmassian and Kersam Aharonian are influential leaders of the party.

The party has branches nearly in all Armenian communities all over the world outside the Communist countries and Turkey. In Lebanon it has branches named after Ramgavar Azadagan heroes, leaders and mottos. The branches are Zartonk, Baykar, M. Damadian, M. Wosgian, F. Hovnanian, A. Yegarian, Shoushanig (for ladies), M. Portoukalian (for students), Merjanian (in Zahle), Avedissian (in Tripoli) and a branch in Aley.

The Ramgavar Azadagan party is governed in Lebanon¹ by its District Committee. The District Committee is elected by the annual party convention for a term of one year. The party has a network of newspapers wherever it has branches. The organ of the party in Lebanon is Zartonk, a daily newspaper published in Beirut since 1937.

The membership of the Ramgavar Azadagan party is mainly drawn from intellectuals and members of the middle class. The party has close relations with a number of people constituting the Armenian elite. Most of the latter group are rich businessmen, capitalists, industrialists and members of the professions.

The Ramgavar Azadagan party struggles against the Tashnag party "because of ideological differences, Tashnag methods of using

¹The Ramgavar Azadagan party organization in Lebanon is traced to 1923.

terror, violence and corrupt elections". They assest that the Tashnag party has joined the Paris Bloc, the Munich pact, and is collaborating with international secret organizations, setting up the Armenians of the Diaspora against their Fatherland. They further claim that the Tashnag party has cut off religious relations with the See of Etchmiadzin and is trying to turn the See of Cilicia into the center of political and religious life of the Armenians of the Diaspora, which See they claim is under complete Tashnag domination and a political tool in their hands.

The Ramgavar Azadagan party has always defended the existence of the Catholicossate of Antelias and had sacrificed a great deal to strengthen it. The party has always defended the independence of the Cilician See over the rest of the Sees including Etchmiadzin as regards administrative and internal matters. Only in ecclesiastic and doctrinal matters it accepts the supremacy of the Holy See of Etchmiadzin and considers it as the religious center of the Armenian church. The party believes that the church must not be under the domination of political parties. It, therefore does not recognize the present authorities of the See of Antelias, because it holds that the present leaders of Antelias are subject to the domination of the Tashnag party and have broken the centuries old spiritual ties with Etchmiadzin.

The party in major national issues and in its antagonism against the Tashnag party has allied itself with the Huntchag party and a group of so called independents as they have similar views about Armenia and the Armenian church.

The Ramgavar Azadagan party exercises control, or influences, through its members or District Committee, the following cultural and educational institutions: 1) the Tekeyan Cultural Association and 2) the Lebanon branch of the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

The Tekeyan Cultural Association was founded in 1946. It owns a club, in which is also its printing press where Zartok is published. The Tekeyan Association, has cultural activities, for both men and women and for students of both sexes. It publishes a literary monthly Shirag which has a literary circle of intellectuals around it. The Association owns and controls a school in Bourj Hammoud, the Vahan Tekeyan School, with more than 500 students.

The influence of the Ramgavar party is rather strong in various parts of Beirut specially Ras Beirut, the Medawar and Rmeil quarters, camp Sandjak in Bourj Hammoud and Zahle.

The Armenian General Benevolent Union

The internationally organized Armenian General Benevolent Union¹ has a District Committee in Lebanon and 37 branches with 3000 members in Beirut, its suburbs, Tripoli, Zahle, and Aley. Though officially the A.G.B.U. of Lebanon is not a member of the Lebanese Armenian National Rally of the anti-Tashnags, and though the union is non-political according to its constitution, with few exceptions the Lebanon leaders of the A.G.B.U. are either leading members of the Rally or leaders of the Ramgavar Azadagan party. So their opponents consider the A.G.B.U. and its various organizations and educational institutions as anti-Tashnag and pro-Ramgavar Azadagan.

¹ The A.G.B.U. was founded in Cairo, in 1906 by a group of wealthy Armenians led by Boghos Nubar Pasha. Its aim is to help Armenians all over the world for their educational, medical, and, if they are poor, financial needs. Its present center is at New York; it has 17,981 members of all denominations. Its capital, in 1960, was \$9,567,754.09. The Union is governed by a Board of Directors elected by a General Assembly where all voting members are represented. Its present president is Alex Manougian of Detroit. At present the president of the Lebanon District Committee is Yervant Demirjian, the vice president Dr. Antranig Manougian, and the secretary Prof. Parounag Tovmassian. The A.G.B.U. Beirut branch was established in 1910. For further details see Magarian A. "Hopenetmiutian Gyankn ou Kordze Vertchin Ges Tarou Entatskin" Zartok, Special 25th anniversary issue, September 1962, pp. 324-335.

The A.G.B.U. is the proprietor of clubs, the Calouste Gulbenkian Hall, five educational Institutions; the Tarouhi Hagopian Secondary School for Girls, established in 1939, the Hovagimian Manougian Secondary School for Boys, established in 1947, the Demirjian Elementary School established in 1957, and the Antelias Elementary School, established in 1956, and the Levon Nazarian School in Sin-el-Fil, established in 1962; as well as infirmaries in Beirut and Zahle.

It also controls the Armenian Youth Association founded in 1931 at Beirut. The Association has branches and affiliated organizations all over the Middle East. The A.G.B.U. and the Youth Association jointly publish a periodical: Khosnag.

The Youth Association whose center is in Beirut, is governed by a Central Committee, has four clubs in Lebanon. Two are in Beirut, Zareh Nubar and Antranik, one each in Tripoli and Zahle. The Youth Association has under its control the Union of Armenian University Students, founded in 1940, a dramatic society the Vahram Papazian Theatrical Group, a singing and folk dancing team, scouts and guides chapters affiliated with the Federation of the Lebanese Christian Scouts, and sports teams.

The Armenian Communists

The Armenian Communists are not organized in an Armenian Communist party but belong to the Lebanese Communist party, founded in 1930.¹ Hovhanness Aghbashian published Joghovourti Tsayn as a Communist weekly newspaper during 1938 and 1939. In 1942 it was published as a daily, until 1948 when it was suppressed by the government. Since 1957 they publish a weekly called Ilal amam - Haratch. They had a cultural and sports organization the Pagramian Sports Union, which was closed by a government decree in 1960. At present they have a literary circle and publish a literary monthly Haratch Kragan. In 1963 one of their influential leaders Artin Madoyan, was arrested and imprisoned.

The Armenian Communists are fervent anti-Tashnags. The reasons for this are many, first there are ideological differences, then they claim that Tashnags, during their rule of Armenia from 1918 to 1920, persecuted the Armenian Communists, devastated the country, and signed the shameful treaty of Alexandrapole with Turkey by which they gave up Kars. They blame the Tashnags for having joined the Nazis on the Caucasian front during World War II by organizing the Armband led by

¹ Communist cells dominated by Armenians were formed between 1925 and 1930.

a famous Tashnag leader Tro. At present they condemn the Tashnag party for its adherence to the West and her organizations especially since the declaration of the Truman doctrine in 1947, for propagandizing and conspiring against the Government of Soviet Armenia, for acting as agents and spies for the Western powers, and for working against the national liberation movements of the Arab people.¹

The Armenian section of the Lebanese Communist party is not a member of the Lebanese Armenian National Rally anti-Tashnag grouping. The only point they have in common with the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag parties and affiliate groups is their bitter antagonism towards the Tashnags.

The Independents

The majority of Armenians are not members of any party but support one or the other of the Armenian political parties. These people are called Independents; some of them are grouped in organizations and usually side with the political party nearest to their heart; others are entirely independent. As to neutrals in the true sense of the word, as the present writer has been assured by all the

¹ Interview with Yeprem Elezian, an Armenian Communist leader, July 1961.

Armenian leaders interviewed, that they are few in number and belong to the part of the community that is usually accused of being indifferent to community problems.¹

The Lebanese Armenian Veraznount (Renaissance) Association which intends to bring together the Armenian and Arab cultures, is an independent anti-Tashnag organization. It has a club in Beirut, and a sports organization "Sevan" and a chorus of Armenian singers.

In 1956 after the election of the Catholicos of Cilicia a group of anti-Tashnag independents led by Dr. Yervant Jidejian, Abro Abroyan, Pakarat Bakalian, Yervant Demirjian, etc. formed the "Rally of Armenian Orthodox Independents for the Defence of the Cilician See". They contested the legality of the election of the Catholicos and struggled to this end. This body, now called Rally of Independents has as its leaders wealthy capitalists or men of high professional distinction.

The so called independent organizations or groups which have been anti-Tashnag, since 1956 constitute with the Ramgavar Azadagan and the Huntchag parties the Lebanese Armenian National Rally and act as one front in case of major community issues.

¹The Armenian words for Independent (Angakh) and neutral (chezok) are sometimes wrongly used by Armenians as synonyms. The confusion is due to the fact that both words denote that an individual is not a member of any party. However a distinction is found in the fact that while the independents may support a political party, the neutrals are completely impartial or indifferent.

There are, of course, many so called pro-Tashnag independents, but they are not organized into a body. They collaborate with the Tashnag party in running the community administrative machine.

There is the Haig Club, established in 1957, which is closely linked with Ayk an Armenian daily published by Lucy Tosbath. The members of this club, though calling themselves independents, usually have followed the Tashnag line in community issues.

Spurk is an independent weekly published since 1958 by Simon Simonian who owns the Sevan Publishing house. He collaborated with the Veraznount Association for a while in 1960 and 1961.

There are many regional associations of Armenians, such as those of Aintab, Hadjin, Marash, Konia, Gesaria, Erzerum, Kharpert, Sis, Tchomakhlu, Palou, Adana, Vasbouragan, Daron, Dikranagert etc. Some of them maintain charitable organizations. These associations are non-political organizations, but some of them are dominated by Armenian political parties.

Economic Life

The majority of Armenians in Lebanon are craftsmen, tailors, goldsmiths, shoe-makers, photographers, skilled laborers, foremen, watchmakers, and hand workers (embroidery, tapestry etc.). Many are active in industry and commerce. A dozen large and hundreds of small

Armenian enterprises contribute to the national economy of Lebanon. Some Armenians are among the ranks of the great industrialists of Lebanon.

Besides those in the medical profession, there are more than seventy engineers, more than thousand teachers, about twenty agronomists, and many building contractors. Many officials in airlines, banks, trading corporations, and government administration are Armenians.¹

Medicine and Public Health

The Armenian community now counts about 90 physicians, 85 dentists, 40 pharmacists, 10 chemists, about 225 nurses, and 10 midwives.

The Armenian Orthodox and Protestant communities operate the Azounieh Armenian Sanatorium, through a board nominated by them. It has 175 to 200 beds and accepts patients from all parts of the Near East.

There are four hospitals of which the Christian Medical Center is especially noteworthy; two maternities; ten infirmaries; and numerous private clinics, owned by Armenians.

¹Chami, Jean, op. cit.

There is an Armenian Medical Association which organizes scientific lectures and conferences every year. Pejishk, a popular medical and health monthly, in Armenian, is published by three doctors in Beirut. The work of the Armenian Assistance Cross and the Polyclinique Arménien de la Faculté Française de Médecine is to be noted as well. The Lebanese Armenian Assistance Cross and the A.G.B.U. both maintain free infirmaries for the Armenian community.¹

Educational Life

The Armenian communities have established a network of educational institutions in Lebanon.

The Armenian Orthodox Community has three intermediate, fourteen elementary, and seven primary schools. In October 1963, two secondary schools will function.

The Armenian Catholic community has two secondary schools, three intermediate, three elementary, and four primary schools.

The Armenian Evangelical community has one college, four secondary schools, two junior high schools, seven elementary schools, and three primary schools.

¹ Messerlian, Zaven, "What You Should Know About the Armenians", Beirut Weekly, 2nd year, No. 75, p. 3.

There are also private schools owned by organizations or individuals, such as the Armenian General Benevolent Organization, Hamazkayin Cultural Association etc., which include three secondary schools, four intermediate schools and four elementary schools.¹

The school for the Armenian Blind and Deaf administered by the Swiss Armenophile Organization which publishes a special periodical for the blind in braille, and the Danish Birds Nest for Armenian Orphans in Byblos are included in the private and Evangelical Armenian school groups.

A general picture is given below of the educational institutions of the Armenian communities in 1960 and 1961.²

¹ Magarian, Assadour, "Spurki Hay Kaghutnere Yev Anonts Gradagan Kordze" (The Armenian Colonies of the Diaspora and Their Educational Work), Zartonk, 25th anniversary special issue, September 1962, Beirut, pp. 351-354.

² Ibid.

<u>Kind of Schools</u>	<u>Number of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>	<u>No. of Teachers</u>
Orthodox ¹	24	4952	200
Catholic	13	3034	206
Evangelical ²	17	3679	250
Private	11	3039	200
<hr/>			
Total ³	65	14704	856

According to certain statistics, an average of 75 Armenian students are graduated every year, two-thirds from the American University of Beirut and one-third from St. Joseph University. One-tenth of the

¹ The Secretariat of the Armenian Orthodox prelacy of Lebanon informed the present writer in July 1961, that it had jurisdiction over 23 schools with 4545 students and 199 teachers. In this list the Seminary of the Catholicosate of Antelias was not included.

² Out of the 17 Evangelical schools 14 belong to the Union of Armenian Evangelical churches with 2665 students and 183 teachers as told to the present writer by the Rev. Hovhanness Aharonian during an interview in August, 1961.

³ During 1951-52 the educational institutions of the Armenian Communities presented the following picture. (See Hovivian, Simon, *op. cit.*, November-December, 1953, No. 11-12, p. 29)

<u>Kind of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Schools</u>	<u>No. of Students</u>	<u>No. of Teachers</u>
Orthodox & Private	27 + 4	6374	349
Catholic	9	2633	138
Evangelical	15	2116	130
<hr/>			
Total	55	11123	617

students and one-eighth of the graduates of A.U.B. are Armenians. The A.U.B. has about forty Armenian professors and a dozen the St. Joseph University. The latter has a chair of Armenian studies at the Institute of Oriental Letters directed by Jesuit priest Hovhanness Messerlian.¹

Most of the high schools follow the Lebanese Baccalaureate program. Some of the major schools have student publications and alumni associations. The main problem of most of these schools is their annual budget which is balanced by the donations of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation of Lisbon which has a branch in Beirut; the Armenian General Benevolent Union; the Armenian Educational Foundation of the U.S.A.; the Armenian Evangelical Association of U.S.A.; etc.²

Cultural Life

The cultural work within the Armenian community of Lebanon is done through the various community cultural organizations such as the A.G.B.U. and its Youth Organization with its affiliate the

¹Chami, Jean, op. cit.

²Messerlian, Zaven, "Lipananahay Kaghoute", Badanegan Artsakank, 25th anniversary special issue, October - December 1961, No. 10-12, p. 362.

Union of Armenian University Students, the Hamazkayin Cultural Association, the Tekeyan Cultural Association, the Nor Serount Cultural Movement, the Veraznount Association, the Union of Armenian Catholic Youth, the Haig Club, the Christian Endeavour Union, etc.

In 1961, there were fifty Armenian musicians graduated from conservatories. There were also about fifteen famed painters who had studied in Europe. There were also individuals sculptors, caricaturists, ballet instructors, etc.

The Armenian daily newspapers, weeklies, and periodicals amount to twenty-five in Lebanon. Among them is Yeridassart Hayouhi, a periodical for ladies published by Mrs. Seza. There are also forty Armenian printing presses and five publishing houses.¹

There are a number of Armenian poets in Lebanon.

¹
Ibid.

CHAPTER II

THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS 1934-1960

Introduction

On the whole, Christian elements in Lebanon welcomed the Armenians ushered in by the Mandatory power but some Moslem leaders did not look with favor on the increase of the number of Christians in Lebanon.¹ Armenians were a frequent topic of discussion in the Representative Council of Greater Lebanon elected in April 1922.² According to the stipulations of the Treaty of Lausanne, Armenians were to have Lebanese citizenship. Through the efforts of native Christian ecclesiasts and political leaders, Armenians were granted Lebanese citizenship by decision of the French High Commissioner on August 31, 1924. Armenian spirited participation³ in the elections for a new Representative Council, in late June 1925, aroused a complaint

¹ Rondot, Pierre, op. cit., p. 55, quoted by Oriente Moderno 1926, p. 203.

² Longrigg, Stephen Hemsley, Syria and Lebanon Under French Mandate, London 1958, pp. 146-147.

³ In an interview in January 1962 Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, a second degree elector in 1925, told the present writer that in the 1925 elections the Armenians in Mudawar quarter had eighteen electors of second degree. These second degree electors chose the members of the Lebanese Representative Council. The eighteen votes were cast in favor of Emile Eddé.

on the part of some natives.¹ They were even suspected of trying to establish a national home in Lebanon and of competing with the natives in the economic field.² Emir Fouad Arslan in an interpellation in Parliament in March 1927 called the entry of Armenians to Lebanon "shocking" when natives were emigrating.³ However Christian leaders like Emile Eddé and Ayub Tabet defended the Armenians. In 1929 Abdallah Ishak, an Armenian Catholic, was elected a member of Parliament as the Minorities representative.

During the 1932 census, Armenians were systematically omitted.⁴ Incidents in which the Armenians were involved after the signature of the Franco-Lebanese Treaty of 1936 aroused the suspicion of the Moslems.⁵ However the Armenians who were adapting to a new environment, gradually inspired confidence by loyalty to their adopted country. In 1934 the Armenian Orthodox were given a seat in the

¹ Rondot, Pierre, op. cit., p. 55, quoted from Oriente Moderno 1925, p. 407.

² Rondot, Pierre, op. cit., p. 55, quoted by Moqattam of October 9, 1926.

³ Rondot, Pierre, op. cit., p. 37-38, quoted by Ahram of March 24, 1927.

⁴ Rondot, Pierre, op. cit., p. 55.

⁵ Ibid.

Lebanese Parliament and immediately demanded the teaching of Arabic in their schools.¹ In 1951 the Armenian Catholics also were allotted a seat in Parliament.

In 1937 Armenians opened subscriptions for the defense of Lebanon.² During the difficult days of the Second World War and in May 1945 the Armenians supported the Arab movement.³ During the Palestine War in 1948-1949 Armenian volunteers in the Lebanese army served their adopted country with loyalty. During the troubles of Lebanon, in September 1958, the Huntchag, Tashnag and Ramgavar Azadagan parties declared their support to the rule of President Fuad Chehab stressing their belief in the integrity and independence of Lebanon.

Although Armenians from all denominations are to be found in the Administration, Army, and Foreign Service of the Republic of Lebanon, some claim that the community is deprived of its rights as far as the sectarian distribution of posts is concerned, but they do not make a great issue out of it. Armenians had demanded a ministerial

¹ Ibid.

² Rondot, Pierre, op. cit., p. 55, quoted from Le Jour of January 12, 1937 and L'Orient of February 7, 1937.

³ Rondot, Pierre, op. cit., p. 55.

seat in 1939¹, this request was realized in 1958 and 1960, when an Armenian Catholic and an Orthodox Armenian respectively became ministers.

Armenians are represented also in the Municipal Councils of Beirut and Bourj Hammoud. So far Elie Khayat, Dr. Vahram Potoukian, Puzant Kehiayan, Hratchia Chamlian, Dr. Karekin Tabourian, Hagop Ashdjian, Dr. Yervant Jidejian, Khosrov Yeramian, and Jirayr Khatchadourian have served in the Municipality of Beirut as councilors.

The majority of the members of the Municipality of Bourj Hammoud, established in 1952 are Armenians. Its successive presidents have been Father Boghos Ariss, Loutfik Narkizian, and Hagop Ashdjian.

The distribution of parliamentary seats to the Armenians according to the successive electoral laws is as follows:

	<u>1934</u>	<u>1937</u>	<u>1943</u>	<u>1947</u>	<u>1951</u>	<u>1953</u>	<u>1957</u>	<u>1960</u>
Orthodox	1	2	2	2	3	2	3	4
Catholic	-	-	-	-	1	-	1	1

In the following pages the legislative elections, in Beirut (1934-1960) and Metn (1951-1960), are presented with a description of each electoral campaign.

¹ Journal Officiel de la Republique Libanaise Chambre des Députés, Quatrieme Legislature, 1938-1939, p. 94.

The Elections of 1934

On October 12, 1933 Le Comte de Martel arrived to Beirut replacing Henri Ponsot as French High Commissioner. On January 2, 1934 De Martel issued arrêtés accepting the resignation of the President of the Republic Charles Debbas, delegating his functions to a French official M. Aubouard until the appointment of a new President, promulgation of an amended constitution, and a new electoral law. The decree issued on January 31, 1934, also appointed for a period of one year, Habib Pasha Saad as President of the Republic. The amended constitution of 1926 remained in force for all items not mentioned in the High Commissioner's decree. These new amendments assured representation of the professions and further limited the authority of the Parliament.¹

The President of the Republic was to exercise the executive power with the assistance of a Secretary of State who had to counter-sign every act of the President.²

The legislative power of Lebanon was to be exercised, according to these amendments, by a single chamber composed of twenty-five members, eighteen elected and seven appointed. Elections were to be on the basis of universal male suffrage, the remaining seven appointed by the President of the Republic on the suggestion of the Council

¹ Longrigg, Stephen Hemsley, op. cit., pp. 204-205.

² Ibid.

of Government.¹

On December 26, 1933 Catholicos Sahag II and coadjutor Catholicos Papken I had a meeting with Comte de Martel about problems concerning the Armenian community.²

According to the decree of January 2, 1934, the Armenian Orthodox community was for the first time given the right to have a deputy in Parliament. The elections were to be held on January 21, 1934.³

The capital of Lebanon, Beirut, had 33,803 voters of which 9,403 were Armenians. The seats were distributed as follows:

Sunnites	1	
Armenian Orthodox	1	
Minorities	1	4

The situation within the Armenian community was very tense. In retaliation for the murder of Tashnag Vahan Vartabedian, Huntchag leader Mihran Aghazarian had been shot dead by Tashnag gunmen on

¹ The Council of Government was composed by the Secretary of State, directors of the main government services together with the two highest judges in the Republic.

² Aztag, 7th year, January 17, 1934, No. 218 (1056).

³ Aztag, 7th year, January 4, 1934, No. 210 (1048).

⁴ Aztag, 7th year, January 5, 1934, No. 211 (1049).

October 11, 1933. The situation within the Armenian quarters of Beirut, especially in the Nahr area, was unstable.¹ The situation within the Armenian colonies of the Diaspora was also strained. In France, an anti-Tashnag, Ohanes Keyedjian, was killed in 1933, and in New York, on December 24, 1933, the prelate of Armenians in North America, Archbishop Ghevont Tourian, was butchered by nine Tashnags.²

Within the Armenian community, people started to speculate who would be a suitable Armenian candidate. In an editorial the pro-Tashnag Armenian daily Aztag suggested:

"Our candidate must be a disinterested Lebanese Armenian who enjoys the confidence of all popular circles and has political maturity and at least knows how to speak Arabic. If we want to maintain our national prestige and not to appear ridiculous in front of the local people, we must present ourselves in one list."³

On January 10, 1934, in an editorial entitled "Who Must be the Armenian Deputy" Aztag wrote that the Armenian candidate "must be someone who enjoys the confidence of the mandatory power." The Armenian deputy "must be the echo of the loyal and sincere feelings of the Armenian community to the local and mandatory authorities, whose benefits and care the Armenian community is enjoying. He will

¹Vahan Vartabedian was killed on September 28, 1926. In retaliation the Tashnags had already killed a Huntchag leader Sarkis Dkhrouni on January 17, 1929. See Tutundjian, Khosrov, op. cit., p. 74.

²Lipanan, (French Edition), 4th year, January 13, 1934, No. 111.

³Aztag, 7th year, January 6, 1934, No. 212 (1050).

be the person who will defend our rights and will teach us our obligations. The people who have great sympathy for France, must show its feelings by voting for the government candidates."¹

On the same day the probable government list was published in newspapers. The list was composed of the following: Dr. Halim Kaddura (Sunnite), Vahram Leilekian (Armenian Orthodox) and Dr. Nejib Aboussouan (Minorities).² But when the list was officially announced, Dr. Ayub Tabet had replaced Dr. Aboussouan.³

The Armenian candidates on the scene were Vahram Leilekian, Missak Vehouni, Zakarian Bzdigian, Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, Dr. Antranik Tchavoushian, and Dr. Dikran Bezirdjian. Former Deputy Abdallah Ishak, an Armenian Catholic, was a candidate for the Minorities seat.⁴

According to information received from the Ministry of Interior the newspapers published the names of all officially registered candidates. The list included the following Armenian candidates: Vahram Leilekian, Dr. Tchavoushian, Dr. Hairabedian, Zakaria Bzdigian, Dr. Henri Arslanian, and Artin Madoyan.⁵

¹ Aztag, 7th year, January 10, 1934, No. 213 (1051).

² Aztag, 7th year, January 11, 1934, No. 214 (1052).

³ Lipanan, (French edition), 4th year, January 20, 1934, No. 113 and Aztag, 7th year, January 20, 1934, No. 221 (1059).

⁴ Aztag, 7th year, January 12, 1934, No. 215 (1053).

⁵ Aztag, 7th year, January 13, 1934, No. 216 (1054).

Meanwhile, efforts were made by the community leaders to have one Armenian candidate. So on January 14, 1934 a meeting of the representatives of the Armenian candidates took place in the Armenian Orthodox prelacy. Aztag reported that after long discussions the representatives had come to the conclusion that out of five, three (Leilekian, Arslanian and Bzdigian) should resign, as they had but few acquaintances in Beirut.¹ If this plan was carried out, Doctors Tchavoushian and Hairabedian only would remain. Later, on January 17, 1934 a clarification was published in Aztag signed by H. Abadjian, E. Vichabian, and M. Kehiayan, representatives of Dr. Arslanian in the prelacy meeting, declaring that the meeting had no right to give decisions; it was only to report on the standing of the candidates, but as this had been impossible the meeting had ended without a decision.²

In a public declaration published in the anti-Tashnag bi-weekly, Lipanan, dated January 16, 1934, Vahram Leilekian announced his candidacy giving his political, communal, and economic plan.

"I put my candidacy not in favor nor against any Armenian faction but for all without any exception. I will endeavour to satisfy all demands which correspond to the general and supreme interest of Lebanon and Armenians of Lebanon."

¹ Aztag, 7th year, January 16, 1934, No. 217 (1055).

² Aztag, 7th year, January 17, 1934, No. 218 (1056).

"In the political field my unshakeable principle will be to follow a policy which will be one that will reconcile and harmonize the respective interests and rights of the saviour Mandatory state and Lebanon."¹

Vahram Leilekian entered his candidature, urged on by the relatives of his wife, the Haddad family, and upon the suggestion of Vahram Varjabedian. The latter was a high official in the Banque de Syrie et du Liban and former president of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox community of Lebanon in 1928. Leilekian conferred many times with the President of the Beirut Local Council of the Armenian General Benevolent Union and Armenian national hero Mihran Damadian and the Secretary of the same organization Dr. Hagop Topdjian, and then announced his decision to run for elections.² The Ramgavars led by Damadian, the Huntchags led by Yenovk Dardaghanian, and the anti-Tashnag independents declared their support for Leilekian.

The Tashnag party³ adopted the candidacy of independent Dr. Antranig Tchavoushian. Dr. Tchavoushian had served the Armenians in Cilicia in the field of public health and in Lebanon as member of

¹ Lipanan, (Armenian edition), 8th year, January 17, 1934, No. 716 (35).

² Correspondence with Vahram Leilekian, November 1961.

³ Khosrov Tutundjian, during an interview in March 1962, told the present writer that he was going to be the Tashnag candidate for the elections of 1934 but the Central Committee of the party for Syria and Lebanon, opposed his candidature and decided to support a "neutral" candidate.

the Communal Council of the Armenian Orthodox Community.¹

The Armenian Communists had their separate candidate, Artin Madoyan, whose work was hampered and on January 13, 1934, three Armenian Communists were arrested for distributing illegal pamphlets.²

Dr. Melkon Hairabedian was a neutral candidate. The other Armenian candidates withdrew from the competition.

The lists were formed as follows:³

List I - Dr. Halim Kaddura, Vahram Leilekian, Ayub Tabet.

List II - Abdallah Yafi, Dr. Antranik Tchavoushian, Abdallah Ishak.

List III - Khaireddin Ahdab, Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, Nejib Aboussouan.

List IV - Saadedin Moumne, Artin Madoyan, Ibrahim Haddad.

Aztag urged its readers "to vote for the list that contains two Armenians."⁴ Lipanan urged its readers to vote for Leilekian and his friends and wrote that "the criminal Armenian group which is disguised by the mask of neutralism will be crushingly defeated."⁵

¹ Aztag, 7th year, January 19, 1934, No. 220 (1058).

² Aztag, 7th year, January 17, 1934, No. 218 (1056).

³ Aztag, 7th year, January 20, 1934, No. 221 (1059).

⁴ Aztag, 7th year, January 21, 1934, No. 222 (1060).

⁵ Lipanan, (Armenian edition), 8th year, January 20, 1934, No. 717 (36).

Leilekian after declaring his candidature visited Catholicos Papken I of Antelias, who like him, was from Aintab and requested his encouragement. Catholicos Papken I accompanied by Leilekian visited the newly appointed President Saad to congratulate him. According to Leilekian this had great effect. He claims that Catholicos Papken I could not present him to the French as the Catholicos "was accused by the Tashnags as a Communist". He could enter the first list because of the friendship and relationship his family had with Dr. Ayub Tabet. He alleges that his adversaries tried to neutralize him by hinting that he could not present himself as a candidate as he had only recently settled in Beirut. On this matter the High Commissioner's office officially inquired of the Armenian Refugee Office. Due to favourable certificate by Kherlakian, secretary of Monsieur Bruiné, that Leilekian settled in Beirut in 1920, no obstacle was therefore put on his candidature.¹

Vahram Leilekian invited the important personalities from every faction and proposed that Tchavoushian and he resign, and only one Armenian candidate be appointed. He then informed Tashnag leaders Levon Shant and Nigol Aghpalian, and Monsieur Bruiné about his idea.

¹ Correspondence with Vahram Leilekian, November 1961.

which he says was turned down by the Tashnags because they were sure of the support of the French authorities for their candidate.¹

During 1930-1933 when Leilekian was building the first asphalt roads of Lebanon he had come to know the Director General of Shell for Lebanon and Syria, Monsieur Fovel, an influential Frenchman, to whom he applied to intervene with the High Commissioner's office and to recommend him as a suitable candidate. Leilekian concludes:

"It seems that the letter reached the necessary place rather late, so in the first election they were against me, and the officials of the sureté caused difficulties to my supporters. But in the second election the result of the intervention was obvious, the French kept absolute neutrality."²

The elections took place on January 21 and 22 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.³

There was a fierce struggle, especially in Mudawar. Out of 32,811 voters, 11,758 voted, of which more than 2000 were from Mudawar.

The results were the following:⁴

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ In August 1961 in an interview Missak Jerejian of the Electoral Executive Committee of Leilekian, told the present writer that on the eve of the elections from 2 a.m. until 6 a.m. some voters of Leilekian toured the quarters of Hadjin, Khalil Bedewi, Eshrefieh, Karantina, and had a feud with the Tashnags at Eshrefieh and waited in front of the polling center.

⁴ Aztaq, 7th year, January 24, 1934, No. 223 (1061), La Syrie (37th year, January 24, 1934, No. 18) gave the same results but it gave Ishak 5184, Ahdab 3940 and Hairabedian 2484 votes.

Antranik Tchavoushian	5184
Abdallah Ishak	5148
Abdallah Yafi	5043
Khairaddin Ahdab	3980
Ayub Tabet	3877
Vahram Leilekian	3092
Halim Kaddura	2959
Melkon Hairabedian	2482
Najib Aboussouan	1972
Artin Madoyan	565
Ibrahim Haddad	534
Saadedin Mounné	412
Bahige Baroudi	50
Selih Hadari	14

Some of the results per quarter represented the following picture:¹

<u>Mudawar</u>	<u>Zokakei Blat</u>	<u>Mazraa</u>
Yafi 880	Yafi 733	Yafi 960
Ishak 892	Ishak 721	Ishak 935
Tchavoushian 1079	Tchavoushian 772	Tchavoushian 940
Ahdab 504	Ahdab 110	Ahdab 578

¹
Aztaq, 7th year, January 14, 1934, No. 223 (1061).

<u>Mudawar</u>	<u>Zokak el Blat</u>	<u>Mazraa</u>
Kaddoura 466	Kaddoura 87	
Leilekian 621	Leilekian 107	Leilekian 481
Hairabedian 325	Hairabedian 84	Hairabedian 535
Madoyan 264		
Aboussouan 226		Aboussouan 436
Tabet 690	Tabet 111	Tabet 669
<u>Marfaa</u>	<u>Museitbe</u>	
Yafi 208	Yafi 496	
Ishak 209	Ishak 524	
Tchavoushian 210	Tchavoushian 481	
Tabet 69	Tabet 666	
Ahdab 21	Ahdab 770	
Leilekian 66	Leilekian 481	
Hairabedian 19	Hairabedian 537	
Kaddoura 64	Kaddoura 371	

5879 votes were needed for anyone to be considered elected. As no candidate had received the required number of votes, a second ballot was to be held on January 27, 1934.

Aztag wrote that Tchavoushian had received more than 2000 votes as compared to his opponent who, it claimed, was placed on both lists at the last minute.

After the first ballot Ahdab had a mild heart attack. While Kaddoura and Aboussouan withdrew from the competition,¹ Dr. Melkon Hairabedian withdrew his candidature upon the advice of Catholicos Sahag II.² Abdallah Yafi retired from the competition in favor of Ahdab upon the request of the Mufti of the Republic.³

According to Vahram Leilekian Dr. Kaddoura had promised them 80% of the votes of Basta but all they had received was 20-25 votes. So Leilekian had informed Dr. Tabet that if Kaddoura was not replaced he would withdraw. Dr. Tabet agreed and on Thursday night, three days before the elections the new list was published which included Khaireddin Ahdab, Leilekian and Tabet.

Meanwhile twenty meetings took place. During a meeting in Sahagian School Leilekian announced that if he was elected he was going to serve all Armenians without party distinction. Leilekian was sure of his success by Saturday night.⁴

Aztag also announced a list composed by Khaireddin Ahdab, Tchavoushian and Ishak.⁵

¹ Aztag, 7th year, January 26, 1934, No. 226 (1064).

² Interview with Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, December 1961.

³ La Syrie, 17th year, January 27, 1934, No. 21.

⁴ Correspondence with Vahram Leilekian, November 1961.

⁵ Aztag, 7th year, January 26, 1934, No. 226 (1064).

Madoyan, accompanied by Moumné and Haddad, maintained their candidature.

According to Aztag, on election day, every thing was normal in the Armenian quarters until 10 o'clock. At 11 o'clock events took place that disturbed the freedom of the election.¹ At 1 p.m. Abdallah Ishak ordered his men to withdraw from the polling centers. Tchavoushian did likewise². At 1 p.m. Ishak and Tchavoushian issued a pamphlet which said:

"We participated in the electoral campaign basing ourselves upon the promise of impartiality of the government and the confidence shown us by the people. With regret we see that the liberty of last Sunday and Monday elections and the impartiality of the police is changed. The police followed a completely different policy, which is the opposite of their former attitude. They openly acted and worked against us and made our participation impossible in the election until its conclusion. We announce that we have protested to the High Commissioner because while these lines are being written the police are not allowing those of our voters to approach the ballot boxes."³

Leilekian claims that by noon the result of the elections were already clear and their opponents withdrew "to save money as they had hired many cars."⁴

¹ Aztag reported on January 31, 1934 quoted from Nahar that incidents had taken place in the Nahr area and weapons were captured and a few arrests were done.

² Aztag, 7th year, January 30, 1934, No. 228 (1066).

³ Ibid.

⁴ Correspondence with Vahram Leilekian, November 1961.

The results were proclaimed at 9 p.m.¹ The official results were the following:²

Ahdab	9333
Tabet	7521
Leilekian	7545
Tchavoushian	2323
Ishak	2082
Madoyan	180
Moumné	134
Haddad	74

With the exception of the Nahr quarter the elections were peaceful. In Nahr fifteen policemen were wounded during incidents.

The Nahr results were the following:³

Ahdab	1412
Tabet	968
Leilekian	959
Tchavoushian	446
Ishak	446
Madoyan	34

¹ Lipanan, (French edition), 4th year, February 3, 1934, No. 115.

² Aztaq, 7th year, January 30, 1934, No. 228 (1066) and Lipanan, (Armenian edition) 8th year, February 3, 1934, No. 720 (39); La Syrie (17th year, January 30, 1934, No. 23) gives a completely different result where Ahdab has 9341 votes, Tabet 7520, Leilekian 6766, Tchavoushian 2305, Ishak 2110, Madoyan 171, Moumné 125 and Haddad 73.

³ La Syrie, 17th year, January 30, 1934, No. 23.

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³ La Syrie, 17th year, January 30, 1934, No. 23.

The victory of Vahram Leilekian was acclaimed by the anti-Tashnags as a great one. Lipanan announced the election of Leilekian with the following title "The Fascist Tashnagsutium crushingly defeated, the glorious victory of the anti-Tashnag current."¹

Aztag wrote that the reason they had not defended the candidature of Leilekian was because he was not known by them, but, that during his mandate they would know him better and mark his achievements.² In an editorial the same newspaper appealed to the people to stop all controversies which had come forth as a result of the electoral campaign not only for the maintenance of the authority of the elected deputy but in the interest of the Armenian people. The editorial concluded with the hope that Leilekian would justify the hopes put in him.³

The Prelate of the Armenian Orthodox community, Archbishop Yeghishé Garoyan, accompanied by the Chairman of the Communal Council Hagop Der Melkonian, the President of the Civil Council Dr. Topdjian, Dr. Bezirdjian, and Bzdigian on February 2, 1934 visited President

¹ Lipanan, (Armenian edition), 8th year, January 30, 1934, No. 719 (38).

² Aztag, 7th year, January 30, 1934, No. 228 (1066).

³ Aztag, 7th year, February 2, 1934, No. 231 (1069).

Habib Saad and the newly elected deputies including Leilekian. Leilekian expressed his desire to do his best to help his community in agreement with the community authorities.¹

Leilekian also visited the Armenian press, Lipanan, and Aztag, and expressed his wish to see the community in concord.²

¹ Aztag, 7th year, February 3, 1934, No. 232 (1070).

² Aztag, 7th year, February 6, 1934, No. 233 (1071).

The Elections of 1937

As the cry for the restoration of the 1926 Constitution was as strong as ever and to avoid charges of obstructionism, De Martel reinstated the Constitution of 1926 on January 4, 1937, with the further provision of a President with a four year term and a Chamber of Deputies with a three year term. On January 4, 1937 Khaireddin Ahdab was entrusted with the task of forming the new Cabinet.¹ On July 29, 1937 the High Commissioner Le Comte de Martel decreed that the Chamber should consist of forty elected and twenty appointed members.² On October 7, 1937, he again increased the number of deputies by two elected and an appointed one. The elections were to be held on October 24, 1937.³

The Armenian Orthodox community was to have two deputies one elected and one appointed.

The situation within the Armenian community was comparatively calm and no major disturbances had occurred after the previous Parliamentary elections.

On September 15, 1937 several possible Armenian candidates were mentioned by L'Orient. The list included Vahram Leilekian, Dr. Karekin

¹ Longrigg, Stephen Hemsley, op. cit., p. 251.

² Arrêté No. 119/LR of July 29, 1937 Recueil des Lois et Decrets de la Republique Libanaise, Vol. X, 1937, Beirut 1938, p. 24-25.

³ Arrêté No. 135/LR of October 7, 1937. op. cit., p. 26-27.

Tabourian, Missak Vehouni, Khosrov Tutundjian, Hratchia Chamlian, and Puzant Kehiayan.¹

On September 17, 1937 the Armenian Prelacy in an official communiqué declared that no person was authorized to negotiate with the authorities in its name and that the Prelacy had no preference for any candidate who had presented or would present himself.²

On September 26, 1937 the Ramgavar Azadagan Party started publishing Zartonk, its daily newspaper. On October 6, 1937, in an editorial it proposed that one and the same Armenian candidate should appear on all lists.

Meanwhile negotiations were taking place for an agreement between the government and the opposition to divide the seats under the supervision of the Mandatory power. Zartonk wrote

"we are not giving our opinion as to how constitutional these decisions and agreement are, but by these agreements Vahram Leilekian, the most highly qualified candidate for one of the two seats of the Armenian Orthodox community will regain his seat in the next Parliament. We want the second candidate, possibly Hratchia Chamlian to be announced. In this way both government and opposition will satisfy the desires of our community."³

¹ Aztag, 10th year, September 16, 1937, No. 159 (2098), as quoted from L'Orient.

² Aztag, 10th year, September 18, 1937, No. 161 (2100).

³ Zartonk, 1st year, October 9, 1937, No. 10.

At the Palais de Pins in the presence of Premier Khaireddin Ahdab, opposition leader Sheikh Bshara Khoury, and Captain Francois Dejoue, an agreement was signed between the government and the opposition and announced to the High Commissioner who was in Damascus.¹

Accordingly Premier Ahdab informed his cabinet about the agreement, the terms were that Mount Lebanon was to be left to the opposition, in southern Lebanon the opposition was to have only two candidates, in northern Lebanon and Bekaa the opposition was to have one candidate in each mohafazat, and for Beirut it was left for the government to decide.²

It was thought that the following would be appointed; Bshara Khoury (Maronite) Petro Trad (Greek Orthodox), Khalil Kseib (Greek Orthodox), Jibrán Tuéni (Greek Orthodox), Gabriel Khabbaz (Greek Catholic), Vahram Leilekian (Armenian Orthodox), Elie Khayat (Minorities). It was similarly thought that the government list for Beirut would be composed of Khaireddine Ahdab (Sunnite), Abdallah Yafi (Sunnite), Kamal Jabr (Sunnite), George Tabet (Maronite), Habib Abi Chahla (Greek Orthodox), Hratchia Chamlian (Armenian Orthodox), and Anis Heneykati (Minorities).³

¹ Zartouk, 1st year, October 10, 1937, No. 11.

² Zartouk, 1st year, October 10, 1937, No. 11.

³ Aztag, 10th year, October 9, 1937, No. 179 (2118). L'Orient, 14th year, October 8, 1937, No. 75. Zartouk, 1st year, October 10, 1937, No. 11.

Beirut was to have two Sunnite, one Maronite one Greek Orthodox, one Armenian Orthodox and one Minorities, elected deputies.¹ The number of Armenian Orthodox registered voters in Beirut was 9179 and the number of Armenian Catholic voters 2048.²

The Tashnag party three months before the elections had decided to participate in the elections with a separate candidate; Khosrov Tutundjian who was the chairman of the party Central Committee in Lebanon. But a group of Tashnags led by Haig Balian, Movses Der Kaloustian,³ Ghazar Tcharek and Mihran Tourigian and gathered around the daily Aztag, were against the candidature of Tutundjian because of internal party conflicts. Tutundjian had the support of the former Tashnag rulers of the Republic of Armenia and had the reputation for being an able lawyer.⁴

The Huntchag party had allied with the Armenian faction of the Communist party and formed a United Front and had picked as its candidate a young business man, Mardiros Emile Iskenderian, born in 1910 who had recently arrived from Baghdad and was proficient in Arabic.⁵

¹ Zartouk, 1st year, October 10, 1937, No. 11, L'Orient, 14th year, October 10, 1937, No. 77.

² Rondot, Pierre, op. cit., p. 85.

³ During an interview in January 1962 Der Kaloustian denied this. He said he was not in Beirut at that time.

⁴ Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian, March 1962.

⁵ Interview with Mardiros Iskenderian, January 1962.

The Ramgavar Azadagan party supported the candidacy of Hratchia Chamlian, a young lawyer who knew both spoken and written Arabic, and was also the candidate of the moderate neutrals who were generally anti-Tashnag.¹

There were twenty-three Armenian Orthodox candidates and two Armenians among the Minority candidates.²

Meanwhile the Armenian political parties and candidates organized meetings.

On Sunday, October 10, 1937 at 10 a.m., in the cinema Majestique, the 47th anniversary of the Tashnag party was celebrated in the presence of 600 persons.³ During the meeting Kaspar Ipekian (in Armenian and French), Garo Sasouni, Nigol Aghpalian and Khosrov

¹ Interview with Hratchia Chamlian, November-December 1961.

² According to Le Jour, (4th year, October 16, 1937, No. 890, p. 5.). The Orthodox candidates were Hratchia Chamlian, Dr. Karekin Tabourian, Dr. Nerses Kupelian, Puzant Kehyayan, Mardiros Iskenderian, Khosrov Tutundjian, Misak Kojayan, Leon Altounian, Missak Vehouni, Nouri Nercissian, Avedis Najjarian, L. Atakian, Arsen Krikorian, Garabet Bagossian, Bedros Norossian, Buzant Balkajian, Wahan Nakachian, Melkon Hazaradjian, Khatchadour Chamlian, Leon Yardonian, Mardiros Bolian, and Onik Bojian. The Minority candidates were Karkour Zayakashian, Ohannes Chadarian.

³ Khosrov Tutundjian, during an interview in March 1962, put the number of those present as 3000. The number quoted above is from Horizon (Armenian edition), 2nd year, October 16, 1937, No. 74.

Tutundjian (in Armenian and French) spoke. Tutundjian spoke about his electoral plan and the reasons that forced the Central Committee of his party to participate in the election.¹

On the same day the United Front of Huntchags and Communists held a meeting on Sahagian Stadium under the presidency of K. Surmelian. On behalf of the Huntchag Party Mihran Najarian and Mihran Seferian spoke, on behalf of the Communist party, Artine Madoyan and Sissag Tellalian, and the candidate of the Front Mardiros Iskenderian.² Puzant Kehiayan their candidate for the nominated seat of the Armenian Orthodox was also present.³ According to L'Orient 5000 people were present⁴ and according⁵ to Le Jour 8000.

In Beirut the situation was critical. The "new" opposition or the nationalists led by Riad Solh with wide Moslem support threatened the success of the government candidates who had generally Christian support. The Armenian candidate was thus to be selected.

¹ Zartonk, 1st year, October 13, 1937, No. 13, Le Jour, 4th year, October 12, 1937, No. 886, La Syrie, 19th year, October 13, 1937, No. 217.

² Horizon, (Armenian edition), 2nd year, October 16, 1937, No. 74.

³ Le Jour, 4th year, October 12, 1937, No. 886.

⁴ L'Orient, as quoted by Zartonk, October 13, 1937, No. 13.

⁵ Le Jour, 4th year, October 12, 1937, No. 886.

carefully and be someone who could assure a great number of votes for the government list.

Zartonk in an editorial entitled "The Legislative Elections and the Armenian Candidate of Beirut" wrote that agreement between the government and opposition did not mean that the people accepted it without discontent, but as the appointed deputy would be Leilekian and the candidate on the government list would be Chamlian it was untimely for the Armenian political parties to present their candidates. It was necessary that all Armenian parties and individuals, without any reserve, vote for the mixed list of Beirut, on which were the names of two ministers Abi Chahla and George Tabet.¹

Aztag in an editorial entitled "Our Attitude" wrote that as there was a coalition list composed of the National Bloc of Eddé and the Destouris of Khoury, the Lebanese Armenian voters must without any reserve vote for the government list. The Tashnag organ added that the voter must be convinced that he was carrying out his national duty as the High Commissioner's Office was also interested in the success of the government list for it had helped the people concerned to reach agreement. Aztag continued:

"the Armenians of Lebanon cannot follow a path which will hurt the Mandatory Power for whom they feel sympathy and gratitude."

¹Zartonk, 1st year, October 15, 1937, No. 15.

It concluded that "without exception, all Lebanese Armenians must vote on the 24th of the month in favor of the government list."¹

The so called "Moslem list" led by Riad Solh and Omar Beyhum was composed and included Jean Tian, Jean Tueni, Ramiz Sarkis, and Mardiros Iskenderian. Later Habib Rbeiz replaced Jean Tueni who had retired.²

On October 15, 1937, Premier Ahdab, Interior Minister Abi Chahla, and Finance Minister George Tabet met with the High Commissioner and later announced the lists.³

The coalition list was formed as follows: Abdallah Yafi (Sunnite), Dr. Selim Lababidi (Sunnite), George Tabet (Maronite), Habib Abi Chahla (Greek Orthodox), Hratchia Chamlian (Armenian Orthodox) and Chafik Nassif (Minorities).⁴

Zartok and Aztag simultaneously announced Hratchia Chamlian as the Armenian Orthodox candidate on the coalition list.⁵ Horizon the anti-Tashnag weekly of Joseph Adjemian also declared its support

¹ Aztag, 10th year, October 16, 1937, No. 185 (2124).

² Aztag, 10th year, October 17, 1937, No. 186 (2125).

³ Aztag, 10th year, October 16, 1937, No. 185 (2124).

⁴ Aztag, 10th year, October 17, 1937, No. 186 (2125).

⁵ Zartok, 1st year, October 15, 1937, No. 16; Aztag, 10th year, October 16, 1937, No. 185 (2124).

for Chamlian who "can better represent the people."¹

Hratchia Chamlian did not belong to any Armenian political party and was recognized as a neutral person and was well known as a young lawyer in the mixed courts. The French judges of the mixed courts, commandant de Maurepas, Duaibis Murr, and Monsieur Fregate, who was later chef de la bureau de la presse, intervened in his favor. Thus through the intervention of the French Authorities, he was accepted on the government list. The Prime Minister Ahdab informed him that he had been accepted on the list and told him after he had applied to be put on the list to "pay 1500 LL to George Tabet as your share of the electoral campaign". The idea of presenting his candidature had come from his friends.²

Meanwhile the situation was critical for the government. Al Bashir wrote:

"The situation in Beirut is uncertain. The Government list seems to be weak because of the new opposition. Despite the Prime Minister's insistence George Tabet and Habib Abi Chahla are afraid they will lose, because of their Moslem colleagues who are struggling against Riad Solh and Omar Beyhum. But it is said that the candidature of the latter will not be assured by the High Commissioner's office."³

Le Jour also reported that Abi Chahla had complained about the weakness of the coalition list.⁴

¹ Horizon, (Armenian edition), 2nd year, October 16, 1937, No. 74.

² Interview with Hratchia Chamlian, November-December 1961.

³ Al Bashir as quoted by Zartonk, 1st year, October 16, 1937, No. 16.

⁴ Le Jour, 4th year, October 17, 1937, No. 891.

When Haig Balian's Aztag, recognized by the people as a Tashnag newspaper started publishing propaganda on behalf of the government list on which was Chamlian, the Central Committee of the Tashnag party in Lebanon declared in a pamphlet issued on October 16, 1937:

"Lately, the newspaper Aztag has been trying hard to present the electoral campaign of Lebanon as a struggle between Christianity and Islam.

We consider this interpretation not only wrong, as there are Moslems and Christians on both lists, but as being detrimental to the interest of the Armenians.

On the occasion of these irresponsible and harmful declarations, the Lebanon Central Committee of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation declares, to Armenians that the newspaper Aztag, its editor and his opinions have no relation whatsoever with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation."¹

By Sunday, October 17, 1937 there were 131 candidates in Beirut; 55 Sunnite, 20 Greek Orthodox, 12 Maronite, 22 Armenian Orthodox, and 21 Minorities.²

Meetings succeeded each other. On October 17, 1937 Ramgavar Azadagan leader Mihran Damadian left for Cairo; A farewell reception was held at the Antranik Club where the presence of Leilekian and Chamlian were specially noted.³ On October 17, and October 18, 1937

¹ Pamphlet No. 2 of Tashnag party Central Committee for Lebanon, October 16, 1937.

² Zartonk, 1st year, October 17, 1937, No. 17.

³ Zartonk, 1st year, October 20, 1937, No. 19, p. 2.

meetings were held in the Christian quarters of Beirut for the government list in the presence of the candidates including Chamlian.¹ The opposition held meetings in the Moslem quarters and a great one at Zeydani quarter.²

Zartonk in an editorial wrote:

"we are compelled to declare that the current elections in no way represent the desired practical example which would increase the love of free constitutional regime and democracy."

"But loyalty obliges us to obey the laws set by the government. We should also take precautions not to do anything that would hurt any of the elements of this country and not to give the suspicion that the newly established Armenian community prefers one element to another or is with one against another."

The Ramgavar Azadagan newspaper appealed to the Armenian voters to vote for the coalition list, which included Hratchia Chamlian.³

A public meeting organized by the friends of government candidate Chamlian which was announced both in Zartonk and Aztag⁴ took place at Amanos Camp on Wednesday October 20, 1937 at 7:30 p.m. The meeting

¹ L'Orient, 14th year, October 20, 1937, No. 85.

² Aztag, 10th year, October 20, 1937, No. 188 (2127).

³ Zartonk, 1st year, October 20, 1937, No. 19.

⁴ Aztag, 10th year, October 21, 1937, No. 189 (2128), Zartonk, 1st year, October 21, 1937, No. 20.

took place after another meeting of the government candidates at Karantina; all candidates were present and Interior Minister Abi Chahla made a speech.¹ Chamlian issued his plan which included the following points:

First, to work hand in hand with all patriotic deputies and groups for the prosperity of Lebanon.

Second, to represent the rightful interest of the Armenian community when the need arises.

Third, to get state help for the settlement of poor Armenian refugees.

Fourth, to propose laws and a budget to solve the crisis of unemployment and high cost of living, to defend the interests of the workers and provide jobs for the unemployed.²

On Thursday afternoon October 21, the news spread and was confirmed on Friday October 22, that Chamlian was left out of the coalition list and replaced by the Tashnag candidate Tutundjian.³ On Friday evening at the Tashnag Club a great meeting took place in the presence

¹ Zartok, 1st year, October 22, 1937, No. 21; Aztag, 10th year, October 22, 1937, No. 190 (2129).

² Zartok, 1st year, October 21, 1937, No. 20.

³ Le Jour, 4th year, October 23, 1937, No. 896. Zartok, 1st year, October 23, 1937, No. 22. Aztag, 10th year, October 23, 1937, No. 191 (2130). L'Orient, 14th year, October 23, 1937, No. 88.

of George Tabet and Habib Abi Chahla. Aztag reported that "Mr. Tutundjian and comrades Garo Sassuni and Kaspar Ipekian spoke."¹

The leaders of the government list, Abi Chahla and Tabet, were worried about the new opposition, for the Armenian votes were to be decisive.² As Chamlian was not a member of a political party and his followers lacked the disciplined organism of a party, the unsuccessful meeting by the friends of Chamlian caused them to doubt Chamlian's electoral power.³ At first they tried to dissuade Tutundjian to present himself as a candidate, offering him a position in the courts as a judge.⁴ But as Tutundjian, whose party claimed to possess 3000 votes, refused and as the anti-Tashnag votes were to be divided between Mardiros Iskenderian and Chamlian, the government decided to replace Chamlian by Tutundjian.⁵

According to Tutundjian the government approached the Tashnags. Previously they had asked the opinion of the Armenian Catholic Patriarchate and Archbishops Nazlian and Kedikian had recommended

¹ Aztag, 10th year, October 23, 1937, No. 191 (2130).

² L'Orient, (14th year, October 23, 1937, No. 88) wrote that the success of the government list depended upon the voters of the Christian quarters who with the Armenians represented two-thirds of the registered voters.

³ Interview with Missak Jerejian, of the Electoral Executive Committee for Chamlian, August, 1961.

⁴ Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian, March 1962.

⁵ Ibid.

Tutundjian. Then the High Commissioner's office called Garo Sassuni and Kaspar Ipekian and suggested that they come to an agreement with the Government which was waiting in the Petit Serail; and thus agreement was reached.¹

Other obstacles in the way of the success of the government were removed. The first Huntchag candidate Mardiros Iskenderian was deprived of the right to present himself as a candidate² after speaking at the Ras Beirut meeting of the opposition, as he did not have proper Lebanese identity papers.³ The second candidate, Puzant Kehiayan, was appointed as member of the Beirut Municipal Council replacing the late Dr. Potoukian.⁴ All the other Armenian candidates withdrew with the exception of Hratchia Chamlian who joined Riad Solh's list upon the invitation of the colleagues of Riad Solh and upon the advice of his friends. He holds that he had no hopes of success when he joined the opposition list.⁵

¹ Ibid.

² Mardiros Iskenderian in an interview in January 1962, said the Prime Minister at first tried to convince him to withdraw, then offered 5000 LL and then a government post. But he refused all saying he intended to respect his signature. The High Commissioner's office had even threatened to arrest him.

³ La Syrie, 19th year, October 23, 1937, No. 224.

⁴ Aztaq, 10th year, October 24, 1937, No. 192 (2131).

⁵ Interview with Hratchia Chamlian, November-December 1961.

On the election day Zartok in an editorial suggested that the Armenian deputy should be the representative of all Armenians and not the representative of a party. It advised Armenians to vote for "the independent Armenian candidate Chamlian."¹ Aztag urged its readers to vote for the government list without making propaganda for Tutundjian.² The Armenian edition of Horizon asked its readers to vote for the government list but instead of Tutundjian for Chamlian.³ The French edition of Horizon strongly suggested to its readers to vote for the government list including Tutundjian.⁴

Some Tashnags, (only a hundred according to Tutundjian) were discontented with Tutundjian's candidature.⁵ Some of them (Haig Balian, Ghazar Tcharek, and Movses Der Kaloustian, according to Chamlian) encouraged Chamlian's candidature against Tutundjian, but later Der Kaloustian had said to Chamlian "we cannot vote for you as Zartok is defending you and writing propaganda on your behalf."⁶

¹ Zartok, 1st year, October 24, 1937, No. 23.

² Aztag, 10th year, October 24, 1937, No. 192 (2131).

³ Horizon (Armenian edition), 2nd year, October 23, 1937, No. 76.

⁴ Horizon, (French edition), October 24, 1937, No. 75.

⁵ Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian, March 1962.

⁶ Interview with Hratchia Chamlian, November-December 1961.

The elections¹ were held on October 24, 1937 and were marked by corruption.²

La Syrie wrote,

"Les partisans de Me Chamlian venu en masse au bureau de Fleuve se heurterent aux dashnaks et auraient declenché une violente bataille sans l'intervention des chasseurs libanais deux armeniens Aram et Agop furent grievement blessés dans la melée. Peu après arrivaient sur les lieux pour protester M. Jean Tyan, Fayez Ahdab, Ramez Sarkis, et Negib Mossaouar. Une bagarre eclate a ce moment les candidats de l'opposition durent se retirer pour empecher de plus grave desordres."³

Le Jour mentioned that in certain quarters there had been a serious movement of intervention in favour of the greater part of the government candidates.⁴

At 11 a.m. on Sunday, at a meeting held at the residence of Selim Ali Salam, President of the Moslem National Council, the candidates of the Riad Solh list decided to withdraw because of the pressure and vexation of the government and their care to avoid any new effusion of blood.⁵

¹ Hourani, Albert, Syria and Lebanon, London, 1946, p. 204.

² Khosrov Tutundjian, who was elected as deputy in 1937, during an interview in March 1962 stated that in his opinion the elections of 1937 were not free and were corrupt. He said to the present writer "how could they be free when we pushed our opponents back from the polling centers at Zokak el Blat and Karantina?"

³ La Syrie, 19th year, October 26, 1937, No. 227.

⁴ Le Jour, 4th year, October 26, 1937, No. 898.

⁵ La Syrie, op. cit.

The opposition candidates sent people to Haifa, Palestine to send cables of protest to the Egyptian and international press, and official protests to the High Commissioner, the French Government and League of Nations.¹ The official results were the following:²

George Tabet	22763
Habib Abi Chahla	22688
Abdallah Yafi	22709
Salim Lababidi	22671
Khosrov Tutundjian	22642
Chafik Nassif	22545

and here is what the opposition candidates obtained until 11 a.m.:

Ramiz Sarkis	1729
Omar Beyhum	1636
Hratchia Chamlian	1634
Riad Solh	1595
Jean Tian	1557
Habib Rebeiz	1500
Gabriel Menassa	122
Saadetine Mounné	10

¹ Zartok, 1st year, October 27, 1937, No. 24.

² Aztag, 10th year, October 27, 1937, No. 193 (2132). Zartok, 1st year, October 27, 1937, No. 24. Le Jour, 4th year, October 26, 1937, No. 898.

Nikola Shaoui	10
Benoit Aboussouan	10
Rafiq Baraj	1
Kazem Solh	1

Zartouk commenting on the elections in an editorial entitled "The Electoral Results - The Armenian Point of View" wrote about the "moral black-mail" that made the government change Chamlian for Tutundjian, as they feared that the majority of Armenians would not vote for their list. It concluded "the seat of a deputy should be given to an Armenian for whom the majority of Armenians have voted, and not only to an Armenian party."¹

Aztag congratulated "Tashnag candidate comrade Khosrov Tutundjian for his success" and announced a reception in the Tashnag Club on Monday evening.²

The High Commissioner in a decree No. 133/LR of October 6, 1937, had prolonged Eddé's presidential term of office from three to six years with no re-election except after an interval of six years. President Eddé on October 25, 1937 in Decree No. 1368/EC, counter-signed by Premier Khairreddine Ahdab nominated 21 deputies.³

¹ Zartouk, 1st year, October 27, 1937, No. 24.

² Aztag, 10th year, October 27, 1937, No. 183 (2132).

³ Le Jour, 4th year, October 27, 1937, No. 899.

One of the appointed deputies was Vahram Leilekian for the Armenian Orthodox seat. His appointment was welcomed by all Armenian groups. Leilekian had been with the Khoury group in Parliament and he was preparing to run for election when Sheikh Bshara el Khoury informed him that his name would be in the list of appointed deputies saying that "we do not forget friends". Leilekian also thought that the High Commissioner's office did not object to him.¹ On November 8, Leilekian visited the press of Zartok.² A reception was given in honour of Leilekian at the Antranik Club, on December 5, 1937.³ The members of the Validating Committee elected were: Mohammad Abboud, Hekmet Djomblat, Abdallah Yafi, Rukoz Abounader and Nejib Nakad. In half an hour the committee gave its opinion that the elections were normally held and validated all elected deputies. The Parliament, in its turn, by 57 votes and four abstentions validated the deputies.⁴

¹ Correspondence with Vahram Leilekian, November 1961.

² Zartok, 1st year, November 9, 1937, No. 34.

³ Horizon, (Armenian edition), 2nd year, December 11, 1937, No. 83.

⁴ Le Jour, 4th year, October 30, 1937, No. 902; L'Orient, 14th year, October 30, 1937, No. 94.

The Elections of 1943

On November 20, 1942 the independence of Lebanon as proclaimed on November 26, 1941 was confirmed by the Free French for the second time and the Head of State Alfred Naccache was appointed President of the Republic. Meanwhile on July 21, 1942 the Government of Premier Ahmed Daouk resigned. On July 27 a new Ministry led by Sami Solh was formed which remained in office until March 18, 1943.

A marked change in the war situation in the autumn of 1942 led the Free French Authorities to change their attitude. The National Committee at Algiers gave permission to General Catroux, General and Plenipotentiary Delegate of the Free French in the Levant, to restore the constitution of 1926 and procede to general elections in 1943.¹ By a series of decrees issued on March 18, 1943 General Catroux reintroduced the constitution of 1926. The decree provided for the setting up of a provisional government.

The Head of State was to be appointed by the General Delegate of France, and would exercise executive power. He was to be assisted by two ministers of State appointed by him and responsible to him only.²

Thus on March 18, 1943 both President Naccache and Prime Minister Solh resigned. Dr. Ayub Tabet was appointed Head of State with Emir

¹ Longrigg, Stephen Hemsley, op. cit., p. 328.

² Arreté No. 129/FC of March 18, 1943 Bulletin Officiel des Actes Administratives de la Delegation, 1943, pp. 74-76.

Khaled Chehab and Jawad Bulos as Secretaries of State. Article 24 of the constitution of 1926 was amended by decree so that all deputies would be elected and none appointed.¹

The question of the distribution of seats among the denominations in the new Chamber of Deputies arose. Dr. Tabet began enfranchising by Decree all Lebanese emigrants who had not yet adopted any nationality and intended to increase the number of Christian deputies in the new Parliament.² By legislative decree No. 50/ET the number of deputies was fixed at 54 of which 34 were to be Christians.³ The Armenian Orthodox community which numbered 58073 souls was to have three seats, two in Beirut one in Mount Lebanon.⁴ Beirut was to have eight deputies with the following distribution: three for the Sunnites, two for the Armenian Orthodox, one for the Maronites, one for the Greek Orthodox, one for the Minorities.⁵

Dr. Tabet's firm intentions met strong opposition from the Moslems who threatened to boycott the elections. Jean Helleu, who

¹ Ibid.

² Longrigg, Stephen Hemsley, op. cit., p. 328-9.

³ Le Jour, 9th year, June 18, 1943, No. 2716.

⁴ Ararad, 6th year, June 25, 1943, No. 467 (336).

⁵ Zartonk, 6th year, June 22, 1943, No. 1615.

had succeeded General Catroux as Delegate General on June 9, 1943, was compelled to replace Dr. Tabet by Petro Trad, on July 21, 1943. Trad appointed as his Secretary of State Abdallah Beyhum, and Under Secretary Sheikh Toufic Aouad.¹ On July 31, 1943, by decree No. 312/FC Helleu fixed the number of deputies in the Chamber, and by decree No. 323/FC of August 7, completed article 3 of the July 31 decree. The Christian denominations were to have 30 seats and the Moslems 25.² The number of seats reserved for the Armenian Orthodox community was reduced from three to two. Both seats now were for Beirut.³

After the German surrender at Stalingrad on February 2, 1943 a marked change was noticed in the Tashnag policy in the mandates which so far had been on the whole pro-Axis. The Tashnag leaders not only became pro-allies but became conciliatory with other Armenian factions and started to cooperate in community matters.⁴ This was shown in the election of the Catholicos of the Cilician See and the community elections.

¹ Longrigg, Stephen Hemsley, op. cit.

² Le Jour, 9th year, August 1-2, 1943, No. 2754.

³ Aztag, 17th year, August 3, 1943, No. 3821-107.

⁴ In fact the Tashnag party became pro-Soviet from 1943 to 1946 until the declaration of the Truman doctrine, hoping that U.S.S.R. will acquire for Armenia its territorial demands. (See Tutundjian Khosrov, op. cit., p. 79).

Upon the proposal of Meguerditch Messerlian, Ramgavar Azadagan leader and delegate of the Armenians of Cyprus in the Conclave for the election of the Catholicos of Cilicia, Archbishop Karekin Hovsepiants primate of the Armenians of North America was elected on May 10, 1943 as Catholicos of the See of Cilicia, though the Tashnags dominated the majority of delegates.¹ Through intensive efforts the dominating party the Tashnags and the Ramgavars had come to an agreement whereby the Tashnags had to give up their candidate, Archbishop Karekin Khatchadourian, in favor of national concord.² The Huntchags and the Independents gave their consent to the agreement also.

As the distribution of seats by Dr. Ayub Tabet provided for three Armenian seats, the Armenian political parties decided to participate in the elections with their own candidates.

The Huntchags proposed a United Front for Armenians, as there were three seats allotted³, under the leadership of the three Armenian political parties. The party declared that it would participate in

¹ Aztag, 17th year, May 12, 1943, No. 3692-48.

² Tutundjian, Khosrov, op. cit., p. 75-6.

³ During an interview in September 1962 Dr. Melkon Hairabedian told the present writer that upon the request of Emile Lahoud and Khalil Abi Jaoudé he was the Armenian Orthodox candidate, running as an independent, on the Destouri list of Metn, until the seat reserved for the Armenians was omitted.

the elections with its own candidate who was to be announced later.¹
Their choice was Mardiros Emile Iskenderian their candidate in 1937.²

The Armenian Communists had announced the candidature of one of their leaders Artin Madeyan. (It should be noted that he used the name Madoyan during the 1934 elections.)³

The Ramgavar Azadagan party after declaring that a deputy must have as his motto a liberal and democratic spirit⁴ on June 25, 1943 in an editorial in Zartonk officially announced that its candidate was Meguerditch Messerlian.⁵ Messerlian was the Plenipotentiary Delegate of the Ramgavar Azadagan party Central Committee⁶, treasurer of the Central Civil Council of the Cilician See since 1941, member

¹ Ararad, 6th year, June 22, 1943, No. 467-334.

² Ararad, 6th year, August 26, 1943, No. 467-380.

³ Ararad, 6th year, June 22, 1943, No. 467-334.

⁴ Zartonk, 6th year, June 25, 1943, No. 1617.

⁵ Meguerditch Messerlian was born at Elmalu in 1898. He had settled in Lebanon in 1922, after working as an employee had established an independent firm of timber trading in 1934 with offices in Beirut, Tripoli and Haifa, and had become rich. He was proficient in Arabic, Armenian, and Turkish. He had established literary prizes. He was one of the founders of the Armenian National Foundation of Egypt, and the newspaper Zartonk. He had entered public life in 1937. During 1941 - 1942 he was the chairman of the Lebanon District Committee of the Ramgavar Azadagan party.

⁶ Zartonk, 6th year, June 26, 1943, No. 1618.

of the A.G.B.U. Assistance Central Committee, member of the Board of the Armenian Seminary of Antelias, and well known for his generous donations.¹

On August 6, the anti-Tashnag independent Armenians formed the "Lebanese Armenian Citizens Bloc" having as their aim to bring forth a United Front and to present the best and most useful candidates to defend the rights of the Armenian community.² Their candidate was Hratchia Chamlian who had been the anti-Tashnag candidate in 1937 and had been appointed in 1940 as member of the Beirut Municipal Council in which capacity he had served until 1942.³

Meanwhile the Tashnag party refrained from any official declaration on the elections.

By July 31, and August 7, 1943 decrees of the Delegate General, The Armenian Orthodox community was to have two instead of the three seats. This put an entirely different face on the electoral campaign within the Armenian community.

The French brought pressure to bear and used all available means of their influence to create one powerful pro-French list. To

¹ From 1942 to August 1943 according to lists published in Zartok, (6th year, August 7, 1943, No. 1648) Messerlian had donated 13050LL to community needs.

² Azatarar, 1st year August 7, 1943, No. 41. Zartok, 6th year, August 7, 1943, No. 1648.

³ Interview with Hratchia Chamlian, November-December 1961.

this effect they tried to create a united Huntchag-Tashnag Front.¹ Pressure was brought upon the Huntchags to accept their proposal by promises and threats. The acceptance of their proposal was going to be considered as a proof of the loyalty of the Huntchags to the Mandatory power.² In the offices of L'Orient in the presence of Gabriel Khabbaz and Dikran Tosbath a Tashnag leader Kaspar Ipekian and Huntchag leaders came to an agreement³ on cooperation in the elections.⁴ The French then asked George Tabet to include in his list pro-French elements Sami Solh and Dr. Ayub Tabet, but George Tabet refused.⁵

On August 12, 1943 the first list was formed officially and composed of George Tabet (Maronite), Habib Abi Chahla (Greek Orthodox), Abdallah Yafi (Sunnite), Saeb Salam (Sunnite), Ibrahim Ahdab (Sunnite), Mohsen Slim (Shiite), Movses Der Kaloustian (Armenian Orthodox),

¹ Meguerditch Messerlian in an interview on April 1961 told the present writer that the Tashnags in the person of one of their leaders Garo Sassuni had asked him to run for the elections with their candidate but he had refused, and then the Tashnags had cooperated with the Huntchags.

² Interview with Mardiros Iskenderian, January 1962.

³ Movses Der Kaloustian, in an interview in January 1962 denied that a meeting was held in the offices of L'Orient to bring forth the Huntchag-Tashnag Front. He told the present writer that the Huntchags had entered George Tabet's list first and then the Tashnag had followed them.

⁴ Le Soir, 7th year, June 20, 1953, No. 2001. The same was confirmed in an interview with Dikran Tosbath, December 1961.

⁵ Interview with Mardiros Iskenderian, January 1962.

Mardiros Iskenderian (Armenian Orthodox)¹ and Moussa de Freige (Minorities).²

The Ramgavar Azadagan candidate Messerlian wanted a national concord to be reached and two candidates to be presented by the Armenian Orthodox Prelacy as the only Armenian candidates.³ Catholicossal Vicar General and President of the Civil Council, Archbishop Ardavazt Surmeyan, invited representatives of the four Armenian political parties,⁴ the National Bloc of Independents, the community civil and economic council representatives to a consultation to form a United Front and to decide upon the Armenian candidates.⁵ The meeting was held on Monday August 16, 1943 at 4 p.m. in the Prelacy presided over by Archbishop Ardavazt Surmeyan. The Civil Council was represented by H. Abadjian, the Economic Council by P. Bakalian, the National Bloc by Dr. Altounian and H. Porsoukian,

¹ Mardiros Iskenderian in an interview told the present writer that after he heard about the creation of the Huntchag-Tashnag United Front he refused to be the candidate of the Huntchags, as the Tashnags had killed his father, Setrag Iskenderian, and his uncle Hapet Iskenderian. But after two days of meetings with his relatives, he was persuaded to participate to the election.

² Ararad, 6th year, August 14, 1943, No. 475-372.

³ During an interview in April 1961 Meguerditch Messerlian told the present writer he was ready to resign from candidature if it was necessary to bring about an agreement.

⁴ The Lebanon District Committee of the Huntchag party on August 22 officially declared that it had not received any invitation to participate to the Prelacy meeting of August 16. (Ararad, 6th year, August 22, 1943 No. 378).

⁵ Zartonk, 6th year, August 20, 1943, No. 1657.

the Communists by A. Madeyan and H. Aghbashian and the Ramgavar Azadagans by Gh. Der Bedrossian and B. Darakjian. Representatives of the Tashnag and Huntchag parties were absent. Those present in the prelacry were in favour of the creation of a United National Front, but due to the negative attitude of the Tashnag and Huntchag parties the meeting was fruitless.¹ After the failure of a united list, the National Bloc of Independents cooperated with the Ramgavar Azadagan party. On August 18, the Tashnag party declared its intention of participating in the elections with a candidate of its own. The Tashnags considered it would be inadvisable to preach to the people that it would be possible to participate in the elections by one Front and one list, as this would mean that the people are devoid of organized parties and political ideals.² On August 22, the Tashnags announced that by mutual agreement the Tashnag and Huntchag parties were going to participate in the elections together.³ On August 25, the Tashnag candidate was officially announced in Aztag to be Movses Der Kaloustian, former officer of the French Army, and former deputy of Armenians of the Sandjak of Alexandretta in the

¹ Ibid.

² Aztag, 17th year, August 18, 1943, No. 3832-118.

³ Aztag, 17th year, August 22, 1943, No. 3835-121.

Syrian Parliament for twelve years.¹

Meanwhile Sami Solh was working to bring forth a new list. His adversaries tried to prevent his candidature under the pretext that he had not resigned from the Magistracy in time, but he had overcome that obstacle. Discouraged by his cousin Riad Solh, and handicapped by taking on his list Dr. Ayub Tabet against whom the Moslem voters had hostility² Sami Solh nevertheless succeeded in forming a list headed by himself and composed of Alfred Naccache (Maronite), Jebran Tueni (Greek Orthodox), Ayub Tabet (Minorities), Mohammed Beydoun (Shiite) Mohieddine Nsouli (Sunnite), Kamal Jabr (Sunnite), Hratchia Chamlian (Armenian Orthodox) and Meguerditch Messerlian (Armenian Orthodox).³

Sami Solh was not so sure of his list. About his adversaries he had written "they enjoyed great prestige without forgetting that they had taken the Armenian community⁴ on their side which Dr. Tabet had promised to win to our list."⁵ After the two lists were formed

¹ Aztag, 17th year, August 25, 1943, No. 3837-123.

² Solh, Sami, Muzakarat, Vol. I (1890-1943), Beirut, 1960, Chapter X, p. 72.

³ Although Sami Solh's list including the Armenian candidates was announced in Zartok, (6th year, August 20, 1943, No. 1657), the pro-Solh daily ad-Diyar announced it on August 27, 1943 (No. 454).

⁴ Hratchia Chamlian in an interview in November-December 1961 said this is partly true as 60% of the Armenians were members or supporters of the Tashnag and Huntchag parties.

⁵ Solh, Sami, Muzakarat, Vol. I (1893-1943), Beirut 1960, Chapter X, p. 71.

the French asked Iskenderian and Der Kaloustian to withdraw from George Tabet's list and join Sami Solh's list. Der Kaloustian obeyed the wish of the mandatory power¹ while Iskenderian refused on the grounds that he could not abuse the trust George Tabet had in him, as he had signed a pledge. For 30-35 hours Der Kaloustian's position was undetermined. Sami Solh sent Dr. Michel Abboud and a relative to Iskenderian offering him 25,000 LL if he accepted to be on his list. The pro-Solh ad-Diyar even announced that Der Kaloustian and Iskenderian had separated from the Chahla-Yafi list and joined Sami Solh's list.²

Der Kaloustian returned to George Tabet's list upon the intransigence of Iskenderian³. On August 25, 1943, Le Jour, which favored the George Tabet list, wrote:

"d'etranges rumeurs avaient couru ces deux derniers jours sur l'attitude des deux candidats armeniens representant respectivement le parti Tachnak et le parti Hentchak. On peut considerer que toute equivoque a ce sujet est dissipée. M. Movses Der Kaloustian du parti Tachnak et M. Iskandarian du parti Hentchak ont fait officiellement savoir qu'ils demeuraient solidaires de leur amis et colistiers de la premiere heures."⁴

¹ Chamlian confirms the fact that Sami Solh and Tabet worked to get Der Kaloustian in their list after they had promised him a place on their list.

² ad-Diyar, August 25-26, 1943, No. 453.

³ Interview with Mardiros Iskenderian, January 1962.

⁴ Le Jour, 9th year, August 25, 1943, No. 2773, p. 2.

On August 25, 1943 during a meeting at which 10,000 people were present Sami Solh declared:

"we delayed choosing the Armenian candidates, as we wanted to find amongst them the purest, the healthiest and the most suitable. We found them¹, Meguerditch Messerlian and Hratchia Chamlian, who were praised everywhere."²

The George Tabet-Abdallah Yafi list was considered by public opinion as the "French list" while the Sami Solh list as the "English List." As Dr. Ayub Tabet and other pro-French elements were on the second list, the Mandatory power brought all available means of influence to bear upon the electorate so as to give success to supporters of the French in Beirut, regardless of the list on which they were found.³

The Tashnag and Huntchag candidates were in favor of former President Emile Eddé.

A period of keen electioneering began, parties campaigned for their candidates and held meetings. The majority of the Huntchags approved the decision of their leaders to cooperate with the Tashnags

¹In an interview on April 1961, Meguerditch Messerlian told the present writer that he paid 20,000 LL so that he and Chamlian could be admitted in the Solh list.

²Zartok, 6th year, August 26, 1943, No. 1662.

³Longrigg, op. cit., p. 329.

considering the attitude of Ramgavar in the Syrian legislative elections in Damascus¹ and the change of Tashnag policy in favour of Soviet Armenia. A further point to be taken into consideration was their ideological differences with the Ramgavar Azadagans whom they considered to be bourgeois capitalists and conservatives, while both Huntchag and Tashnag Parties were revolutionary Socialist parties.² The younger generation of the Huntchags reproached the Ramgavars for their bitter attacks in Zartonk on Homenmen, their sports organization.³ The Huntchags in their turn criticised the Armenian Youth Association⁴ and a tension was created between the youth organizations of both parties. The Ramgavar party declared that

¹ In Syria, parliamentary elections had taken place in July. In Damascus and Aleppo Armenians had participated. In Aleppo the Tashnag candidate Hratch Papazian and anti-Tashnag Movses Salatian were nominated and elected from the same list. (Aztag, 17th year, July 28, 1943, No. 3817-103). In Damascus there were two candidates for one seat. Nazareth Yacoubian, an independent person generally known as anti-Tashnag, obtained the support of the Ramgavar Azadagan and Tashnag parties while Boghos Beshirian obtained the support of the Huntchag and Communist parties. Nazareth Yacoubian was elected as the Armenian deputy of Damascus. (Aztag, 17th year, July 30, 1943, No. 3819-105). The Huntchags congratulated him, although this did not stop them from criticising Aztag and Zartonk, and the parties they represented. (Ararad, 6th year, July 23, 1943, No. 467-356.)

² Interview with Jirayr Nayiri, July 1961.

³ Zartonk, 6th year, July 18, 1943, No. 1632.

⁴ Ararad, 6th year, July 25, 1943, No. 358.

the god-fathers of the Tashnag and Huntchag agreement were from outside the Armenian community.¹ In an editorial, the Ramgavar organ wrote that although the Tashnags have lessened their attacks on the U.S.S.R. and a change being noticed in their policy yet the Ramgavars will continue to struggle against their dangerous path, methods and autocratic spirit. Zartok, concluded "Armenia is our only hope of salvation, the regime is secondary."² Some Huntchags also disagreed with the leaders of their party. An appeal was published in Zartok signed by "a group of neutrals and Huntchags" in which the signatories declared that they were against the Huntchag-Tashnag cooperation and resented the idea of two militant parties dividing the seats reserved for the Armenian community among themselves.³ On August 26, 1943 Melkon Dkhrouni, the brother of the murdered Huntchag leader, Sarkis Dkhrouni, in an appeal addressed to Huntchags declared:

"Huntchags are now associating with the killers of my brother. He was a martyr of Huntchag ideology. Uniting now with the Tashnags means the bankruptcy of our ideology. Noble Huntchags do not participate in this organized treachery. Refuse to vote for the Huntchag-Tashnag alliance."⁴

¹ Zartok, 6th year, August 25, 1943, No. 1661.

² Zartok, 6th year, August 27, 1943, No. 1662.

³ Zartok, 6th year, August 26, 1943, No. 1662.

⁴ Zartok, 6th year, August 18, 1943, No. 1665.

The Huntchag party organized meetings in the Armenian quarters of Beirut and Bourj Hammoud. On August 13 in Adana camp,¹ on August 15 at Hadjin camp,² Yözgat-Tomarza quarters³, at Sis camp,⁴ on August 18 Marash camp,⁵ on August 19 Rmeil-Khalil Bedewi quarter,⁶ on August 20, Tiro-Sandjak camp,⁷ on August 24 at Sin-el-Fil.⁸ At those meetings Mardiros Iskenderian, Huntchag leader M. Mardouni, A. Eloyan, Missak Tchavoush spoke, and occasionally the Tashnag representative to these meetings Kh. Fenerdjian. On August 18, a meeting took place at the Adana-Trad quarter in the presence of more than 1500 people including the Huntchag District Committee members, candidate Iskenderian, Catholic priest Father Boghos Ariss⁹ and the

¹ Ararad, 6th year, August 18, 1943, No. 375.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ararad, 6th year, August 18, 1943, No. 375.

⁵ Ararad, 6th year, August 20, 1943, No. 377.

⁶ Ararad, 6th year, August 22, 1943, No. 378.

⁷ Ararad, 6th year, August 26, 1943, No. 380.

⁸ Ararad, 6th year, August 29, 1943, No. 383.

⁹ Zartonk, (6th year, August 27, 1943, No. 1663) criticised Father Ariss for attending Huntchag meetings with Tashnag groups and his followers, adding that this was not fit for a clergyman. The Ramgavar daily concluded that perhaps this way was shown to him by Mgr. Agagianian.

priest of the quarter the Rev. Krikor Sahagian. Huntchag leaders, Iskenderian, and Father Boghos Ariss spoke. Iskenderian declared that as their deputy in the Parliament, if he was elected,¹ he would like a soldier obey the instructions and orders of the Huntchag party.

The Huntchags and Tashnags organized joint meetings. The first one was held at the Tashnag Club in Zokak el-Blat on Wednesday August 25, at 8:30 p.m. in the presence of Yafi, Salam, Ahdab, and Abi Chahla. During the meeting Tashnag leaders Kaspar Ipekian, Garo Sassuni, Aram Sahagian and their candidate Der Kaloustian and the Huntchag representative Arsen Gidour spoke. The meeting was closed with the Tashnag and Huntchag anthems.² On August 27, at 6 p.m. a meeting of the Huntchags was held on Sahagian Stadium under the presidency of Huntchag Yenovk Dardaghanian and Tashnag Kaspar Ipekian. The speakers were Huntchag leader P. Sunnik, Tashnag leaders Garo Sassuni, and Kaspar Ipekian, Huntchag candidate Iskenderian and Tashnag candidate Der Kaloustian. 15,000 people³ were present at this meeting.⁴ On this occasion the Huntchag organ wrote that the

¹ Ararad, 6th year, August 22, 1943, No. 378.

² Aztag, 17th year, August 27, 1943, No. 125 (3839); Ararad, 6th year, August 27, 1943, No. 381.

³ Le Jour, (9th year, August 29-30, 1943, No. 2777) considered the number of those present "as more than 10,000," stating also that the meeting proved that the list had the support of the immense majority of the voters of Beirut.

⁴ Ararad, 6th year, August 28, 1943, No. 382.

Huntchag and Tashnag ranks showed that ideals and unity will win.¹
George Tabet's list also organized a meeting in Mazraa at which
15,000 people were present.²

The Huntchags through their daily organ Ararad campaigned for Iskenderian and asked their followers to vote for him having in mind the interest of the working class for the progress of Lebanon and the victory of the Democratic Front.³ Aztag campaigned for Tashnag candidate Der Kaloustian writing that he was ready to sacrifice his life for his people.⁴ As both Iskenderian and Der Kaloustian were from the Sandjak of Alexandretta a former police officer of that region G. Dzaghgouni, made an appeal to all former inhabitants of Sandjak to vote for them. He wrote that Der Kaloustian will defend the rights of the proletarian class upon a socialist basis and will follow the Tashnag policy "for the prosperity of our community, hand in hand with our other militant party the Huntchags."⁵

¹ Ibid.

² Ararad, 6th year, August 28, 1943, No. 382.

³ Ararad, 6th year, August 27, 1943, No. 381.

⁴ Aztag, 17th year, August 25, 1943, No. 123. (3837).

⁵ Aztag, 17th year, August 28, 1943, No. 126 (3840).

Another appeal in favour of Der Kaloustian was made by former Armenian Legionnaires.¹ Der Kaloustian allegedly enjoyed the support of the Mandatory power.²

The Ramgavar Azadagan party campaigned for its candidate Meguerditch Messerlian, and ally Hratchia Chamlian in Zartok. Outside the Armenian community, Messerlian, because of his business relations, was well known to Moslems and Jews in Beirut and Tripoli, and received their support. Leaders of the Armenian Protestant community had also promised to support him. He claims he did not have the support of the French, but that the English wished his success.³ Upon the invitation of Destouri leader Sheikh Bshara Khoury, he had visited him accompanied by a business acquaintance George Karam.⁴ Khoury gave him to understand that he was in favour of his election.⁵

Meguerditch Messerlian, on August 6, 1943 donated 3000 LL to the Armenian seminary of Antelias.⁶ On July 4 he had presided over

¹ Aztag, 17th year, August 29, 1943, No. 127 (3841).

² Interview with Mardiros Iskenderian, January 1962.

³ Interview with Meguerditch Messerlian, April 1961.

⁴ George Karam, was many times elected deputy from Kesrouan and had been Finance Minister during the early part of the Chamoun regime.

⁵ Interview with Meguerditch Messerlian, April 1961.

⁶ Zartok, 6th year, August 6, 1943, No. 1647.

the commencement of Mesrobian school of Amanos in the Araradian Hall of Eshrefieh. A similar meeting had been presided over by Mrs. Satenik Messerlian at Nör Marash. On both occasions the Messerlians had made donations.¹ On August 25, a meeting for Sami Solh's list was held in the presence of 10,000 people at Tarik Jedide for the first time.² The Armenian candidates on his list were also present. On August 28, a meeting took place opposite camp Hadjin in Djami Khedr quarter in the presence of all candidates of Solh's list.³ Chamlian claims he was not opposed by the French or the English, and had many friends amongst the first.⁴ He was propagandized in Zartonk as well as by Arabic newspapers.⁵ Ararad, a daily newspaper published by a former Tashnag, Hrant Devedjian, on August 26, presented both Messerlian and Chamlian as "our candidates."⁶

¹ Interview with Meguerditch Messerlian, April 1961.

² Zartonk, 6th year, August 27, 1943, No. 1663.

³ Zartonk, 6th year, August 29, 1943, No. 1665.

⁴ Interview with Hratchia Chamlian, November-December 1961.

⁵ Aztarar, 1st year, August 21, 1943, No. 43.

⁶ Zartonk, 6th year, August 27, 1943, No. 1663.

Zartonk wrote that impartiality, love of concord, putting public interest above personal interest, unbending in front of difficulties to maintain national sovereignty were the important traits of Meguerditch Messerlian's character. The paper claimed that their candidate donated for charitable purposes without party distinction.¹

The Ramgavar Azadagan daily wrote that although Messerlian was a Ramgavar the party considered him as a popular national candidate with Chamlian. The editorial stated that Messerlian was already a national deputy in the Central Council of the Cilician Catholicossate and had helped to solve the boycott of Armenian teachers in 1941 by helping them financially and morally,² he himself having been a teacher for a year in 1914.³ The paper concluded that if they were defeated they would not be in despair in defending their democratic principles and views "which are that of Lebanon, France and the United Nations", and if they win they would not boast.⁴ About Chamlian, the neutral Azatarar wrote he is "known as a person of character respected for his moderation, energy and honesty".⁵ Zartonk declared

¹ Zartonk, 6th year, June 26, 1943, No. 1618.

² Zartonk, 6th year, August 29, 1943, No. 1665.

³ Interview with Meguerditch Messerlian, April 1961.

⁴ Zartonk, 6th year, August 29, 1943, No. 1665.

⁵ Azatarar, 1st year, August 11, 1943, No. 42.

that both Messerlian and Chamlian hated Nazism and Fascism and supported the Allies.¹

On August 27, 1943 Joghovourti Tsain (the voice of the people) the Communist daily, announced that its candidate Harutium (Artin) Madeyan had withdrawn his candidature "to ease and strengthen the realization of the unity of Armenians of Lebanon", suggesting his followers to vote for whom they prefer.²

Meanwhile the French Delegate General Jean Helleu declared "La France, par la voix de ses representants les plus qualifiés, a sollemnellement déclaré que les elections seraient libres. Cette assurance, je tiens a la reiterer aujourd'hui."³

The elections were held on Sunday August 29, 1943 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. with Colonel Naufal in charge of the Security forces. Public opinion then held that during the elections the forced restraint of the Mandatory power from interference was accompanied by "the spending of large amounts of money by Britain and France to secure the success of their partisans."⁴

¹Zartouk, 6th year, August 22, 1943, No. 1659.

²Zartouk, 6th year, August 28, 1943, No. 1664; Ararad, 6th year, August 29, 1943, No. 383.

³Le Jour, 9th year, August 26, 1943, No. 2774.

⁴Ziadeh, Nicolas, Syria and Lebanon, London 1957, p. 72.

Out of 43,781 voters in Beirut the Armenians had 12,181 voters distributed as follows: Mazraa 87, Ras Beirut 98, Marfa 184, Dar al Mreysé 194, Masseitbé 233, Minet el Hosn 205, Bashura 438, Zokak el Blat 631, Eshrefieh 1346, Remeil 1530, Khan Seifi 327, Mudawar 6868.¹

Of 43,781 registered voters 11,433 had participated.² Twenty four votes were disqualified. The number needed³ for being considered elected was 5700.⁴ Participation had been 26% with numerous abstentions.

Meguerditch Messerlian told the present writer the following which was confirmed by Hratchia Chamlian.

"When the voting stopped at 4 p.m. we went to the Municipality for counting the votes which was not done in the presence of the candidates, but in secret. At 2:30 a.m. on August 30, the Armenian member of the returning board, municipal councilor Dr. Karekin Ta-bourian coming out of the room where the counting was taking place congratulated me and Chamlian as elected deputies by embracing us. I had 126 votes above average, while Chamlian 151 votes. This confirmed the number we

¹ Ararad, 6th year, August 28, 1943, No. 382.

² Le Jour (9th year, August 31, 1943, No. 2778) puts the number of those who voted at 11429.

³ The Armenian newspapers put 5699 as the vote necessary to be elected. (See Azatarar, 1st year, September 4, 1943, No. 45).

⁴ Al-Bashir, 73d year, August 31, 1943, No. 6933.

had obtained from the different electoral districts. Dr. Tabourian himself phoned to the residence of Zawzawatjian, the leader of the Bloc of Independents, where the independents and Ramgavar leaders were assembled informing them of our victory. The Armenian candidates of George Tabet's list had not come to the Municipality, probably because they were aware of their defeat by adding the number of votes of the different electoral districts. Abdallah Yafi, a personal friend of ours, congratulated us, followed by the Muhafiz Amin Bey Halabi. The Muhafiz after phoning the French delegate responsible for the elections, Monsieur David, informed us of our victory. So we learned from him that Mohammed Beydoun was elected by 115 votes above the average, that Jebran Tueni had to undergo a second ballot and that Mohieddine Nsouli and Kamal Jabr were defeated. Sami Solh sat silently in the office of the Muhafiz, he was not sure of the elections of Chamlian, Beydoun and me. He advised us to sit with him and the Muhafiz. Chamlian stayed. I left at 3:30 a.m. as I was very tired and hungry. I returned home at 6 a.m. My wife told me that Chamlian had come and informed her that my election as a deputy was not certain but Chamlian's was.¹ I immediately returned to the municipality, the people who had congratulated me a few hours ago could not look at my face. After investigations we found out that at 5:15 a.m. they had brought to the municipality, members of the electoral committee of the Upper Basta district in their pyjamas and had them change the written report by omitting 264 votes cast in our favor. Half of it is 132, I had 126 votes above average, so I failed.² by 6 votes and Beydoun by 17 votes while Chamlian was elected with a safe majority.

¹ Chamlian during an interview in November-December 1961 said that Messerlian left between 3:30 and 4 a.m. and 20 minutes later Dr. Tabourian returned saying that the election of Messerlian was not certain as a few votes were illegible. He informed Mrs. Satenik Messerlian about this at 5 a.m.

² Khosrov Tutundjian in an article in Nayiri of May 29, 1960 as quoted by Ararad (23d year, June 1, 1960, No. 5538 (170) wrote that Messerlian would have been considered elected with a majority of 100 votes, had it not been for the intervention of the French delegate in the last minute by cancelling some of his votes, so that he had to run for second ballot with Der Kaloustian.

I immediately went to see Ibrahim Ahdab of the opposing list who by this arrangement was also losing. There I met many Moslem friends who were on their way to come and congratulate me having heard of my victory from Abdallah Yafi. When Ahdab left I hurried to see Mohammed Beydoun at his Eshrefieh residence, who, after having heard about his victory, had celebrated from 2:30 to 5:30 a.m. When I went in Mohammed Beydoun congratulated me. Doing likewise I informed him of what had happened. He became pale and sent his sons to the Municipality. At 8 a.m. they returned confirming what I had said. They went to see Petro Trad, the Head of the State, but it was of no use because the illegal action had been legalised and officially announced. At 8:30 a.m. I returned to my summer residence of Bhamdoun to rest.¹

The official results were the following:²

Sami Solh	5967
Alfred Naccache	5880
Hratchia Chamlian	5813
Abdallah Yafi	5795
Ayub Tabet	5740
Meguerditch Messerlian	5692
Mohammed Beydoun	5680
Moussa Freige	5561
Mardiros Iskenderian	5554
Movses Der Kaloustian	5540

¹ Interview with Meguerditch Messerlian, April 1961, Beirut.

² Le Jour, 9th year, August 31, 1943, No. 2778.

Mohsen Slim	5527
Ibrahim Ahdab	5511
George Tabet	5440
Habib Abi Chahla	5205
Saeb Salam	5193
Jebran Tueni	5157
Kamal Jabr	4663
Mohieddine Nsouli	4510
Omar Fakhoury	2046
Habib Rbeiz	985
Mohammed el Baker	37
Toufik El Natour	36
Joseph Harmouche	14
Chemli Haidar	9
Paul Fayad	5
Louis Baccasheh	3
Anis Kaddourah	2

Solh, Naccache, Chamlian,¹ Yafi and A. Tabet were declared elected,

¹ Aztag and Ararad reported that Chamlian obtained 5837 votes.

while Messerlian,¹ Iskenderian, and Der Kaloustian, Beydoun, and Slim, Salam and Jabr, Abi Chahla and Tueni were to have a second ballot to determine the deputies of the Armenian Orthodox, Shiite, Sunnite and Greek Orthodox seats respectively.

Newspapers also published the results obtained by candidates in various quarters. These were incomplete as they did not give the results obtained in all quarters. Below are the results in the quarters of Saifi, Zokak el Blat, Mazraa and Rmeil.² The votes received by the Armenian candidates were not given.³

¹ Zartonk, Ararad and Azatarar reported that Messerlian received 5694 votes. Beydoun was reported elected with 5704 votes but the ministry of Interior denied it the next day (see Azatarar, 1st year, September 4, 1943, No. 45 as quoted from La Syrie-L'Orient). These erroneous results were as follows Solh 5991, Naccache 5904, Chamlian 5837, Yafi 5819, Tabet 5764, Beydoun 5704, Messerlian 5694 (see Zartonk, 6th year, September 1, 1943, No. 1667).

The pro-Sami Solh Ad-Diyar (August 31, 1943, No. 457) wrote,

" وكان الفرق بين عدد الاصوات التي احزها كل من السيدان الحاج محمد بيضون ومكرديج مصرليان وبين النصاب تسعة اصوات فقط ولولا الغاء الاربعة العشرين صوتا التي قدمنا الكلام عنها لكان الحاج محمد بيضون والسيد مكرديج مصرليان في عداد الفائزين بالنيابة عن بيروت ."

² Al-Bashir, 73d year, August 31, 1943, No. 6933.

³ Al-Bashir wrote as explanation

" ولم تصل الينا الارقام الخاصة لمرشحين الارمن "

	<u>Saifi</u>	<u>Zokak el Blat</u>	<u>Mazraa</u>	<u>Rmeil</u>
Alfred Naccache	260	505	1068	327
Ayub Tabet	283	496	1007	365
Habib Abi Chahla	252	395	664	416
Abdallah Yafi	324	414	699	465
Ibrahim Ahdab	300	411	679	461
Mohieddine Nsouli	111	447	1114	140
Sami Solh	256	509	1080	352
Mohsen Slim	269	418	648	430
Kamal Jabr	169	454	968	221
Mohammed Beydoun	241	250	148	322
Saeb Salam	234	400	590	352
George Tabet	258	396	676	434
Jebran Tueni	208	480	1055	313
Moussa Freige	236	466	?	398

The Huntchag daily gave the following results obtained by the Armenian candidates in Mudawar, Eshrefieh and Rmeil out of 9744 registered voters.¹

Movses Der Kaloustian	1520
Mardiros Iskenderian	1496
Hratchia Chamlian	765
Meguerditch Messerlian	625

¹ Ararad, 6th year, September 5, 1943, No. 388, p. 2.

After the results were published Zartonk wrote that although Meguerditch Messerlian had received 132 votes more than Der Kaloustian and 138 votes more than Iskenderian he still lacked 7 votes to be considered elected, so he would run for second ballot.¹ The Ramgavar Azadagan organ added that 20 votes cast in favour of Messerlian were not accepted because they were crumpled.² The Ramgavar daily wrote that on election day a statement was distributed to the public signed by Communist leader Madeyan urging Armenian voters to vote for Der Kaloustian. Zartonk added that the Communist daily Joghovourti Tsayn denied it and called this act a "moral fraud".³

The Huntchag daily Ararad⁴ and the Tashnag daily Aztag⁵ complained that in the Armenian electoral districts 25% of the Armenian voters could not find their names registered and hence could not vote. Aztag added, this irregularity caused the defeat of the list which included the candidates who enjoyed the majority of Armenian votes.⁶

¹ Zartonk, 6th year, August 31, 1943, No. 1666.

² Zartonk, 6th year, September 1, 1943, 1667.

³ Zartonk, 6th year, September 3, 1943, No. 1668.

⁴ Ararad, 6th year, September 2, 1943, No. 385.

⁵ Aztag, 17th year, August 31, 1943, No. 128 (3842).

⁶ Ibid.

The second ballot was going to take place on Sunday September 5, from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

On Monday evening August 30, the members of Sami Solh's list, with the exception of Alfred Naccache and Ayub Tabet, met at the residence of Jibrán Tuéni at Bhamdoun Gare. Then the whole group visited Ayub Tabet at his Bhamdoun home and Alfred Naccache at his Sofar home and made an oath to work for the victory of those on their list who had to run for second ballot.¹

On the evening of September 1st, members of the Solh list gathered at the Grand Hotel of Sofar. At the hotel the presence of members of George Tabet's list, Riad Solh, Tashnag deputy Hratch Papazian of Aleppo and his friend Saadallah Jabri, the brother-in-law of Riad Solh was noted. No agreement was reached and the members of Solh's list dispersed after agreeing to meet the next day at Sami Solh's Beirut residence.² Meanwhile Zartouk announced that their candidate Meguerditch Messerlian would present himself on the same list as before.³

On September 2, at 10:30 a.m. upon the invitation of Archbishop Elie Saleeby a meeting was held at the Greek Orthodox Archbishopric,

¹ Interview with Meguerditch Messerlian, April 1961.

² Ibid.

³ Zartouk, 6th year, September 3, 1943, No. 1668.

of Greek Orthodox notables upon whose request Jebran Tueni¹ withdrew his candidature in favour of Habib Abi Chahla.² Mohsen Slim and Ibrahim Ahdab in turn withdrew their candidature on September 4.³

On Thursday evening September 2, 1943 a meeting took place at Sami Solh's house.⁴ Meguerditch Messerlian told the following to the present writer about the meeting.

"When I went there I saw Der Kaloustian and Tashnag leaders waiting for Riad Solh. Meanwhile Sami Solh who had invited us to his home left for a dinner offered by Mrs. Sursøck. After seeing the Tashnag leaders Riad Solh wanted to see me alone he told me "my friend, you are an independent man and do not need our assistance financially. In reality we want to see you elected as a deputy considering that you can speak and write Arabic fluently, but it is with regret we have to sacrifice you as we are not yet completely independent, and we have many things to arrange with the French, who are obliging us to accept Der Kaloustian. If we do not accept him we will face difficulties in our negotiations with the French. As a good Lebanese citizen help us in obtaining better results for our independence by withdrawing from the second ballot, because whatever you do you will be defeated and Der Kaloustian will be elected as a deputy."⁵

¹Al-Basir, September 2, 1943, No. 845 wrote, just before the withdrawal of Tueni, that Sami Solh supported the list composed by Jebran Tueni, Mohieddine Nsouli and Meguerditch Messerlian for second ballot.

²Le Jour, 9th year, September 3, 1943, No. 2781.

³Ad-Diyar, September 4-5, No. 460.

⁴The pro-Sami Solh Ad-Diyar (September 4-5, 1943, No. 460) wrote that at the meeting were present Messerlian, Sami Solh, Chahla, Beydoun, Jabr and Nsouli. The paper stated that it was not certain who was to be on the list, Messerlian or Der Kaloustian, but the second had more chance.

⁵Interview with Meguerditch Messerlian, April 1961.

Messerlian decided to withdraw,¹ although Zartonk announced on September 4, that he still maintained his candidature.²

Meanwhile Huntchag candidate Mardiros Iskenderian withdrew without any personal declaration. Iskenderian told the present writer the following:

"On the second ballot the French preferred Der Kaloustian. Monsieur Beugner, chief of the political bureau of the High Commissioner,³ called me and told me not to participate in the elections.³ He told me that they had certain obligations towards Der Kaloustian whom they trusted and were disappointed with me as I had refused to go over to Sami Solh's list. They offered me a post in the government administration.⁴ I objected to this direct interventions but I was told clearly that they wanted Der Kaloustian to be the second Armenian deputy. I had no money to run individually so I withdrew with bitter feelings."⁵

The District Committee of the Huntchag party, Lebanon, in an official declaration dated September 4, 1943, withdrew the candidature of Mardiros Iskenderian stating that Der Kaloustian remained as the Tashnag candidate and this could not have any negative reaction upon

¹ Ibid.

² Zartonk, 6th year, September 4, 1943, No. 1669.

³ The Huntchag organ Ararad (6th year September 4, 1943, No. 467 (387) had written that opposing sides want to have their candidate Iskenderian on their list to secure the Huntchag votes.

⁴ In 1944 Mardiros Iskenderian was appointed government inspector of Armenian schools. In 1954 he was appointed Director of Unesco within the ministry of Education.

⁵ Interview with Mardiros Iskenderian, January 1962.

the front of their national unity.¹ In an editorial Ararad wrote that as the Tashnags were not only welcoming the victories of the Allies, but also the successes of the Red Army and were accepting Soviet Armenia as a bright reality. Thus, nothing separated the two parties, hence a cooperation even on a more wider field was justified.²

Aztag announced that a list was formed, composed by candidates of the former two lists and enjoyed the support of Sami Solh, Habib Abi Chahla (Greek Orthodox), Kamal Jabr (Sunnite), Mohammed Beydoun (Shiite) and Movses Der Kaloustian (Armenian Orthodox) formed the new list. The Tashnag paper also announced that the Tashnag and Huntchag parties were going to cooperate in the second ballot, and victory would belong to both and the elected deputy would be the candidate of both parties.³

The Ramgavar Azadagan candidate Meguerditch Messerlian on Saturday September 4, 1943 invited the leading members of his party to a meeting at Zareh Nubar club where he announced his intention of withdrawing his candidature in face of the impossibility of the

¹ Ararad, 6th year, September 6, 1943, No. 389.

² Ararad, 6th year, September 4, 1943, No. 387.

³ Aztag, 17th year, September 5, 1943, No. 132 (3846).

electoral situation in the light of what Riad Solh had told him. They dispersed accepting Messerlian's decision.¹

On Saturday afternoon the Sunnite Moslems had a meeting in the residence of the Mufti, Hajj Mohammed Toufic Khalid and decided to assure the success of their candidate Saeb Salam by all means.² This changed the situation. The Ramgavar leaders seeing a hope of success for their candidate forced Messerlian to participate in the second ballot. Messerlian told the present writer the following about it.

"I was in bed with fever, when the Ramgavar leaders one by one came to my home. At 10 p.m. a good friend of mine Dr. Melih Sinno was sent by Saeb Salam who informed me about the decision of the Moslem meeting and proposed me to join the list. I told him what Riad Solh had told me. He said these were electoral tactics. The Ramgavar leaders led by Parounag Tovmassian, and accompanied by Lawyer George Bittar urged me to participate. I accepted the will of my party leaders. At 1 a.m. on Sunday, the agreement was concluded, in the presence of Abdul Hamid Karamé by George Bittar, Parounag Tovmassian and Baghdassar Darakjian. I was to be on Saeb Salam's list. I paid 5000 LL in cash, and had to pay a further 5000 LL after the election. In the morning at 9 a.m. I went to Saeb Salam's house where I understood that after our representatives had left, at 2:30 a.m. Habib Abi Chahla had come to the residence of Salam and with the assistance of Riad Solh had issued another list with Der Kaloustian's name on it. Although I knew that I was going to be defeated I continued the struggle."³

¹ Interview with Meguerditch Messerlian, April 1961.

² A declaration was issued after the meeting of Moslem leaders signed by Jamil Mekaoui, Ibrahim Ahdab and Saeb Salam approving the latter's candidature for the sake of "Islamic spirit" and "Arab nationalism". (pamphlet preserved in the Nami Jafet Memorial Library of A.U.B.)

³ Interview with Meguerditch Messerlian, April 1961.

On Sunday, September 5, The Ramgavar Azadagan organ appealed to Huntchags, Communists and neutrals to vote for Messerlian if they want to oppose Tashnag autocracy in the community administrative bodies saying that the Tashnags in the last four days tricked the young Huntchag candidate Iskenderian.¹

On Sunday, September 5, 1943 the second ballot took place in a peaceful atmosphere. 10,620 people out of 43,781 registered voters participated. Five votes were nullified.²

The official results were the following:³

Habib Abi Chahla	7935
Mohammed Beydoun	6550
Movses Der Kaloustian	6057
Saeb Salam	5622
Kamal Jabr	3795
Meguerditch Messerlian	2221
Omar Fakhoury	1158
Mohsen Slim	77
Mardiros Iskenderian	6
Hajj Salim	1
Mohammed Baker	1

¹ Zartouk, 6th year, September 5, 1943, No. 1670.

² Azatarar, 1st year, September 11, 1943, No. 46.

³ Azatarar, 1st year, September 11, 1943, No. 46; Le Jour, 9th year, September 7, 1943, No. 2786.

Abi Chahla, Beydoun,¹ Der Kaloustian and Saeb Salam were considered as elected. After the elections were over it was obvious that supporters of the French were victorious in Beirut.²

Commenting on the election the Tashnag organ wrote that during election day, pamphlets were circulated that Iskenderian had withdrawn his candidature in favour of Messerlian, but this had been denied by other pamphlets.³ The Tashnag daily stated that during the election "our Huntchag comrades by their correct and honest attitude gave a good answer to those who wanted to see the destruction of this union."⁴ Later in an editorial Aztag wrote that Der Kaloustian received the votes of not only Tashnags but of Huntchags, Communists⁵ and specially of the neutral mass.⁶ The Tashnag organ

¹ According to Al-Bashir (74th year, September 8, 1943, No. 6937) Beydoun had received 6655, Jabr 3790 and Fakhoury 1400 votes.

² Longrigg, op. cit., p. 329.

³ Mardiros Iskenderian, during an interview in January 1962, confirmed this fact reaffirming that he had withdrawn without any declaration.

⁴ Aztag, 17th year, September 7, 1943, No. 133 (3847).

⁵ Tutundjian, Khosrov, op. cit., p. 81, writes that Der Kaloustian was elected a deputy "by the votes of Communists".

⁶ Aztag, 17th year, September 11, 1943, No. 135 (3849).

wrote that Messerlian had received the votes of few Armenians, as the majority with the exception of Ramgavars had voted for Der Kaloustian.¹

The Huntchag organ after congratulating all elected deputies wrote that the greatest victory for them was "the defeat of the gold".²

The Ramgavar Azadagan organ congratulated all deputies, friend or opponent, and wished that the Armenian deputies, strengthened by patriotism, serve Lebanon.³

The Ramgavar Azadagan candidate Meguerditch Messerlian congratulated Der Kaloustian in the Municipality on Sunday evening and on Monday evening September 6, 1943 went to the Tashnag club and offered his congratulations officially.⁴

¹ To support this Aztag (17th year, September 7, 1943, No. 133, (3847)) wrote that the Armenian candidates received the following number of votes in the Armenian quarters. In Mudawar 641 votes in favour of Der Kaloustian, 193 votes in favour of Messerlian, in Rmeil 500 votes in favour of Der Kaloustian, 32 votes in favour of Messerlian, in Minet el Hosn 328 votes in favour of Der Kaloustian, 91 votes in favour of Messerlian, in Ain Mreyse 358 votes in favour of Der Kaloustian, 18 votes in favour of Messerlian, and the paper added "nearly the same in all quarters". However, according to Ararad (6th year, August 28, 1943, No. 467 (382)) the total number of Armenian registered voters in Minet el Hosn was 205 and in Ain Mreyse 194.

² Ararad, 6th year, September 14, 1943, No. 394, p. 2.

³ Zartonk, 6th year, September 8, 1943, No. 1671.

⁴ Interview with Meguerditch Messerlian, April 1961.

Before the second ballot Armenian Orthodox Vicar General, Archbishop Ardavazt Surmeyan, accompanied by members of the Civil Council, had visited and congratulated all elected deputies including Hratchia Chamlian.¹

¹Zartonk, 6th year, September 1, 1943, No. 1667.

The Elections of 1947

On April 8, 1947 the 1943 Parliament having terminated its mandate was dissolved. Elections for the new legislative assembly were to take place on May 25, 1947 on the basis of the electoral law as amended in 1943. The number of seats reserved for the Armenian Orthodox community was not changed.

The end of the Second World War offered hope to the Armenians for the successful treatment of the Armenian territorial demands from Turkey. On June 22, 1945 the Soviet Ambassador to Turkey, Vinogradov had informed the Turkish government that the U.S.S.R. was ready to conclude a new treaty of friendship in place of the former Soviet-Turkish Treaty of Friendship, denounced by the U.S.S.R. on March 19, 1945, if Turkey agreed on the retrocession to the Soviet Union of the Turkish districts of Kars, Artuin and Ardahan on the ground that these territories had belonged to Armenia and Georgia in the past centuries. Several other demands were also made concerning the straits of the Dardanelles.¹

The "Armenian National Council" in Syria and Lebanon, composed of all parties, on January 17, 1946, telegraphed to the President of the United Nations General Assembly demanding "in the name of 200,000

¹ Keesing's Contemporary Archives, February 16-23, 1946, p. 7737a.

Armenian refugees in both countries... the return to Soviet Russia of Armenian territories seized by the Turks".¹

On November 1945 and July 1946, the U.S.S.R. declared that all Armenians who would return to Armenia would get a government loan of 30,000 roubles to buy land for their houses, and would automatically be Soviet citizens. Thousands of Armenians, mostly sympathizers of Soviet Armenia left Lebanon migrating to Armenia during the summer of 1946.²

Turkey refused the Soviet offer. In 1947 President Harry Truman of the United States of America issued a statement which became known as the "Truman Doctrine". Truman declared "it must be the policy of the United States to support peoples who are resisting subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressure." Especially after the Truman Doctrine of March 12, 1947, the Tashnag party resumed its anti-Communist policy and became pro-Western, making bitter attacks on Soviet Armenia.³ All the anti-Tashnag parties and organizations fervently supported repatriation to Armenia, criticised the Tashnag party for adopting a pro-Western policy and hoped that the U.S.S.R.

¹ Ibid., p. 7738.

² Interview with Meguerditch Messerlian, Honorary President of the Repatriation to Armenia Committee in 1946, April 1961. See for details Keesing's Contemporary Archives, November 15-22, 1947, p. 8939.

³ Tutundjian, Khosrov, op. cit., pp. 76-77.

would settle the question of Armenian territorial demands. Such was the situation within the Armenian community when it faced the legislative elections of May 1947.

According to government statistics Beirut had 49,954 male voters of which 11,268 were Armenian Orthodox and 1913 Armenian Catholic.¹

The Destouri group which was in power intended to maintain its power by all available means at its disposal. The majority of the Lebanese newspapers distrusted the intention of the government to carry out honest elections.

On Tuesday April 15, 1947 a meeting took place to form the government list in Beirut in the presence of Sami Solh, Abdallah Yafi, Habib Abi Chahla, Hussein Oweyni, Dr. Raif Abellama, and Tashnag candidate Movses Der Kaloustian. No agreement was reached on the Shiite and the second Armenian Orthodox candidates. For the Minority candidate, the group decided to agree on Kataeb party Secretary General Joseph Chader and in case of failure, Moussa de Freige was to be included in the government list.²

The government list wanted to have all or the greater majority of the Armenian voters on its side. For this purpose the Tashnag

¹ Aztag, 21st year, April 19, 1947, No. 32 (4696).

² Aztag, 21st year, April 16, 1947, No. 30 (4694).

candidate was taken in, and efforts were made to include in the list one candidate of the anti-Tashnags, preferably a Huntchag or a neutral¹, who would have the support of all anti-Tashnag parties and organizations.

The anti-Tashnag organizations sent delegates to Sami Solh and Abdallah Yafi and informed them that they refused to participate in any list with a Tashnag candidate on it.² Aztag in an editorial wrote that the Tashnag candidate was everywhere declaring that the Tashnag party had one candidate and was willing to cooperate with the second candidate whoever he might be, on condition that through his honesty he enjoyed the trust of Armenians.³

On April 23, the Tashnag daily wrote that within a few days the second Armenian candidate⁴ would be announced and that the Huntchags had separated from the so-called United Front to join the first list.⁵

On April 29, Aztag wrote that the second Armenian candidate on the

¹ L'Orient (as quoted by Zartouk, 10th year, April 20, 1947, No. 3023) mentioned an agreement between Solh, Yafi, and Oweyni whereby Abellama, Freige, Abi Chahla, Rashid Beydoun, Der Kaloustian, and another Armenian taken from the neutrals would complete the government list.

² Interview with Hratchia Chamlian, November-December 1961.

³ Aztag, 21st year, April 23, 1947, No. 35 (4699).

⁴ Azatarar (5th year, April 26, 1947, No. 234, p. 5), a pro-Tashnag weekly, announced that the second Armenian candidate on the first list would be Dr. Melkon Hairabedian.

⁵ Aztag, 21st year, April 23, 1947, No. 35 (4699).

government list had not yet been chosen and that the Huntchags had applied to the Solh-Yafi list to admit their candidate Armen Gharib, a Huntchag leader.¹

On April 28, a meeting was held in the residence of Sami Solh where Solh, Yafi, Oweyni, Abi Chahla, Der Kaloustian, Dr. Abellama, and de Freige signed a declaration in which they announced the formation of the "Popular List", which was to be completed with the addition of a second Armenian and one Shiite candidates.²

On April 30, in an appeal to the Armenians, "in the name of the prosperity of independent Lebanon and Armeno-Arab brotherhood", the District Committee of the Huntchag party invited all Armenian organizations not to participate in the elections with partisan candidates but vote for neutrals who enjoyed the confidence of all.³

On May 1, 1947 in an official declaration it was communicated to the press that a Lebanese Armenian Democratic Front⁴ had been constituted by the Social Democrat Huntchag, Ramgavar Azadagan, and Communist parties, Veraznount and also other associations. The Front

¹ Aztag, 21st year, April 29, 1947, No. 39 (4703).

² Le Jour, 13th year, April 30, 1947, No. 3882; Aztag, 21st year, April 29, 1947, No. 39 (4703).

³ Ararad, 10th year, April 30, 1947, No. 1869.

⁴ Zartonk (10th year, June 6, 1947, No. 3053) wrote that the Lebanese Armenian Democratic Front had been formed "six months ago".

in its last meeting "inspired by the common and supreme interests of the Armeno-Arab Lebanese people" had decided, to participate in the forthcoming legislative elections en bloc, to invite the Armenian voters to vote for two neutral Armenian candidates¹ to be appointed by the Democratic Front and to join an electoral list composed by candidates willing to serve democratic Lebanon and the interests of the Lebanese people.²

On May 3, the Tashnag daily organ wrote that the so-called Democratic Front was led by "Armenian Bolsheviki" who were continuing their conspiracies in the hope of finding a place on any list, but were refused by all. The organ added that Eugene Papazian had come from Egypt and was interfering in the internal affairs of Lebanon by visiting government officials and statesmen, and accusing the Tashnags. On May 4, Aztag again wrote that the Huntchags had³ applied to the leaders of the first list and had told them that they were ready to separate from the Front and join their list if they were willing to take them in.⁴

¹ Azatarar (5th year, April 26, 1947, No. 234, p. 5) mentioned as possible anti-Tashnag candidates, Chamlian, Dr. Tabourian, Yerevanian, Zareh Baghdassarian, Missak Vehouni, Iskenderian, and Tovmassian.

² Zartank, 10th year, May 1, 1947, No. 3031; Ararad, 10th year, May 2, 1947, No. 1870 .; Le Soir, 1st year, May 1, 1947, No. 103.

³ Aztag, 21st year, May 3, 1947, No. 42 (4706).

⁴ Aztag, 21st year, May 4, 1947, No. 43 (4707).

Quoting from Mohieddine Nsouli's Beirut, the Ramgavar Azadagan organ wrote that Sami Solh and Abi Chahla had decided to change their list and omit Der Kaloustian. They had decided this after taking into consideration the union of the Armenian political parties and organizations who had refused the candidature of a Tashnag candidate, on the grounds that one candidate opposed to two neutral candidates would neutralise their hopes for success.¹ It should be noted that when on Sunday May 4, the 26th anniversary of the Huntchag sports organization Homenmen was celebrated in Sahagian Stadium it was under the Presidency of Habib Abi Chahla and in the presence of Abdallah Yafi. During the celebration, the anthems of Lebanon and Soviet Armenia were played; then Huntchag leaders Armen Gharib and Yervant Babayan spoke. Noubar Toursarkissian spoke in Arabic. On Monday May 5, Ararad published an official² denial by the Huntchag District Committee of Lebanon declaring that what Aztag had written on May 4th did not correspond to the truth. The committee added in the following official statements that the United Front was not under the patronage of the Bolsheviks, that the Huntchag party was not led by Communist or Tashnag orders but by its sixty years old ideology, that

¹ Zartok, 10th year, May 1, 1947, No. 3031.

² Ararad, 10th year, May 7, 1947, No. 1873.

the Huntchag party had no where applied to have its separate candidate accepted, but had answered to invitations along these lines, clearly expounding its views.¹

The Ramgavar Azadagan party organ, in an editorial, wrote that to select the Armenian candidates, centralised effort and harmonious cooperation among the various Armenian tendencies and organizations was necessary. It denied the charges of Aztag which had accused them of being "Bolsheviks" and stated that

"the Democratic Front is not Communist and is not under their leadership but forms the rallying front of all patriotic elements including the Armenian Communists."²

On May 7, the Armenian Democratic Front announced its candidates former deputy Hratchia Chamlian and Karnig Minassian (a capitalist and former President of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox Community of Lebanon) both of whom were not members of any Armenian political party and knew Arabic.³

The Tashnag daily wrote that on May 8, a delegation composed of Madeyan, Tejirian, Jerejian, and Setrakian, representing the so-called Democratic Front had applied to Sami Solh and "begged" that its

¹ Ararad, 10th year, May 5, 1947, No. 1872.

² Zartonk, 10th year, May 11, 1947, No. 3037.

³ Zartonk, 10th year, May 8, 1947, No. 3035; Ararad, 10th year, May 9, 1947, No. 1875; Le Soir, 1st year, May 9, 1947, No. 110.

"neutral" candidates be included in the Solh-Yafi list but were refused, the Huntchags had separately applied also but in vain.¹ On May 10, the Huntchag daily wrote that the negotiations between the representatives of the Democratic Front and the leaders of the first list had failed as conditions on both sides were not accepted.² On May 11, Ararad answering Aztag wrote that "the Democratic Front is one and unseparable" and that the leaders of the first list were inviting the Huntchags to join their list but they were staying away to maintain national unity.³

On May 10, the second Armenian candidate on the first list was announced to be Dr. Melkon Hairabedian,⁴ who had been councillor of the municipal council of Jedeide since 1941, a member of community bodies and president of the Adana Regional Association. Dr. Hairabedian did not belong to any political party but was pro-Tashnag.⁵

Two independent, well known personalities Dr. Henri Arslanian⁶ and former deputy Vahram Leilekian⁷ presented their candidature individually.

¹ Aztag, 21st year, May 10, 1947, No. 47 (4711).

² Ararad, 10th year, May 10, 1947, No. 1876, p. 4.

³ Ararad, 10th year, May 11, 1947, No. 1877.

⁴ Aztag, 21st year, May 13, 1947, No. 49 (4713). Le Soir, 1st year May 12, 1947, No. 112. Aztarar, 5th year, May 17, 1947, No. 237.

⁵ During an interview, in September 1962, Dr. Melkon Hairabedian confirmed that his electoral expenses were paid by an independent, Kevork Tchatalbashian, like himself originally from Adana.

⁶ Le Soir, 1st year, May 23, 1947, No. 122.

⁷ L'Orient, 23d year, May 8, 1947, No. 6066.

Meanwhile a surprise happened. Independent Moslem candidate Saeb Salam withdrew his candidature due to "various considerations" and according to the opposition due to government pressure.¹ The majority of Moslem voters thus were on the side of the government list and this hindered the formation of complete lists. Aztag wrote:

"It is very clear and obvious that the Sami-Yafi list will be elected by the overwhelming majority of Beirut voters, as the members of the list without any exception enjoy the confidence and sympathy of the people and government of Lebanon."²

On May 11, more than a thousand Tashnags with 240 cars³ toured the city and the Armenian quarters of Bourj Hammoud from 9 a.m. to the early hours of the afternoon, and visited the residences of Pharaon, Freige, Oweyni, Abi Chahla, Premier Riad Solh, Yafi, Dr. Hairabedian, and Sami Solh to assure them of their support.⁴ On the same day in the evening a meeting was held in the Zeydani quarter in the presence of 15,000 voters during which Freige, Yafi, Solh, Abi Chahla who presented the Armenian candidates, Abellama and

¹ Zartouk, 10th year, May 11, 1947, No. 3037. Ararad, 10th year, May 12, 1947, No. 1878.

² Aztag, 21st year, May 13, 1947, No. 49 (4713).

³ According to pro-government Le Jour (13th year, May 13, 1947, No. 3893 the number of the cars was "about 150".

⁴ Aztag, 21st year, May 13, 1947, No. 49 (4713).

Oweyni spoke. During the meeting the Prime Minister Riad Solh declared that, the President of the Republic, he and his government supported the first list as its members had been the loyal guards of the national liberation struggle and regime of Lebanon.¹

On the same day Minassian and Chamlian presided over the athletic games presented by the national Apkarian school at 4 p.m. on Sahagian Stadium. The games were under the high patronage of Karekin I, Catholicos of Cilicia.²

On May 12, at 5:30 p.m. the Democratic Front with 250 cars³ toured the Armenian quarters campaigning for Chamlian and Minassian. As the group was passing from Nor Sis in Bourj Hammoud, people, allegedly Tashnags destroyed the loud-speaker of a car and opened fire on cars from the roofs of houses. Boghos Naterian was seriously wounded, Sissag Tellalian, Joseph Terzian, Garabed Svadjian, an old

¹ Aztag, 21st year, May 13, 1947, No. 49 (4713).

² Ararad, 10th year, May 12, 1947, No. 1878.

³ According to Aztag, (21st year, May 14, 1947, No. 50 (4714)) the number of cars was "exactly 69" and according to Ararad (10th year, May 15, 1947, No. 1880) 200 cars.

lady and a driver were also injured.¹

Despite the rain and the incident, the Democratic Front held a meeting on Sahagian Stadium at 7 p.m. in the presence of Hratchia Chamlian, Karnig Minassian, Amin Beyhum, Mustafa Aris, and Joseph Chader. Gharib, Chamlian, Aris, Madeyan, Ramgavar leader Setrakian, Minassian and others spoke.² At 10 p.m. a procession of 100 cars went in front of the residence of Prime Minister Riad Solh to protest and "demand the arrest of the criminals."³

A terrible atmosphere was created within the Armenian community. On May 10, the distributor of the Huntchag daily Ararad, Yeghia Atchabahian, was beaten by Tashnags at Nor Marash in Bourj Hammoud.⁴ The Tashnags admitted this and declared that the author of the incident would be punished by them.⁵ On May 14, 1947 the Democratic

¹ Zartouk, (10th year, May 14, 1947, No. 3039), Ararad (10th year, May 15, 1947, No. 1880) even gave the list of those who opened gunfire. L'orient (23d year, May 13, 1947, No. 6071) wrote "ses partisan virent provoquer par les Tachnak qui appuient la candidature de M. Der Kaloustian". Aztag (21st year, May 14, 1947, No. 50-4714) wrote that Armenian Bolsheviks cursed the Tashnags and with greater strength in front of the Nor Sis Club of the Tashnags. Then as their provocation had not affected the Tashnag boys they began to fire revolver shots. At that moment Tashnag boys and their opponents came to blows, and as a result there were a few wounded persons.

² Zartouk, 10th year, May 14, 1947, No. 3039. Ararad, 10th year, May 15, 1947, No. 1880.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ararad, 10th year, May 11, 1947, No. 1877.

⁵ Aztag, 21st year, May 11, 1947, No. 48. (4712).

Front announced the death of Boghos Naterian, whose funeral was held on the same day at St. Kevork Church of Nor Hadjin attended by 20,000 people, including Beyhum, Aris, Chader, Minassian and Chamlian.¹ Upon the instructions of Vicar General Archbishop Khat Atchabahian, all Armenian schools were closed and students and teachers participated in the funeral.² At the cemetery on behalf of their parties the following spoke: Armenian Communist leader Hovhanness Aghbashian, Huntchag leader Mihran Seferian, Ramgavar representative Nerses Shirinian, Veraznount representative Attarian, Lebanese Communist leader Farajallah Helou, Syrian Communist leader Khaled Begdash.³ On May 17, at 10 a.m., former Tashnag leader Hrant Devedjian, Chairman of the Repatriation to Armenia Committee and director of the anti-Tashnag Aravod was attacked by four unknown criminals and seriously wounded.⁴ The Tashnags called this "an unhuman crime" and expressed their regrets demanding that the government find the murderers and declaring that the Tashnags had nothing

¹ Zartok, 10th year, May 15-16, 1947, No. 3040-3041. Ararad, 10th year, May 17, 1947, No. 1882.

² Zartok, 10th year, May 16, 1947, No. 3041.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Zartok, 10th year, May 18, 1947, No. 3042.

to do with it.¹ On May 17, some anti-Tashnag women attacked the shop of a Tashnag, Baronian, while some men opened fire on Garabed Dombourian, a Tashnag who was wounded.²

On May 15, students demonstrated in Beirut claiming liberty of elections;³ the same day the isolated opposition candidates Alfred Naccache, Soubhi Mahmassani, Amin Beyhum, Joseph Chader, Philippe Tamer, and Ramiz Sarkis met together and demanded freedom of elections.⁴

At the end of a three day official mourning on May 17, the opposition list was announced. It was composed of Alfred Naccache (Maronite), Amin Beyhum (Sunnite), Mustafa Aris (Sunnite), Hratchia Chamlian (Armenian Orthodox) and Karnig Minassian (Armenian Orthodox) and called itself the Democratic List.⁵ On May 19 at noon a meeting was held at former President Naccache's residence, where members of the Democratic List decided against completing their list on leaving

¹ Aztag, 21st year, May 18, 1947, No. 53 (4717).

² Ibid.

³ Aztag, 21st year, May 18, 1947, No. 53 (4717).

⁴ L'Orient, 23d year, May 16, 1947, No. 6074.

⁵ Zartonk, 10th year, May 20, 1947, No. 3043. Ararad, 10th year, May 17, 1947, No. 6075. Le Jour, 13th year, May 18, 1947, No. 3898

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⁴ L'Orient, 23d year, May 16, 1947, No. 6074.

⁵ Zartouk, 10th year, May 20, 1947, No. 3043. Ararad, 10th year, May 17, 1947, No. 6075. Le Jour, 13th year, May 18, 1947, No. 3898

to the voters the choice of the missing candidates. They informed the public of these decisions in an official declaration.¹

On May 20 a second incomplete opposition list was formed composed of George Tabet (Maronite), Philippe Tamer (Greek Orthodox), Soubhi Mahmassani (Sunnite), Mohsen Slim (Shiite) and Joseph Chader (Minorities), which called itself the Reformist List.²

After the lists were formed meetings succeeded each other. The government list organized a great meeting at Eshrefieh on May 17, at 8 p.m. in the presence of 25,000 voters.³ On May 22, at 8 p.m. in the presence of 5,000 voters a meeting was held on the Homenetmen of Beirut organized by the Tashnag party. Tashnag leaders Garo Sassuni, Aram Sahagian, candidates Der Kaloustian, Solh, Yafi, Oweyni, Abellama, Rashid Beydoun (who had been taken in the government list as the Shiite candidate) Abi Chahla, Freige, and Dr. Hairabedian spoke.⁴

The first opposition list organized a great meeting on May 18 from 5 to 7 p.m. attended by 20,000 people on Sahagian Stadium in the presence of all candidates of the Democratic List. Setrakian,

¹ Le Soir, 1st year, May 21, 1947, No. 120.

² Le Jour, 13th year, May 21, 1947, No. 3900.

³ Le Jour, 13th year, May 20, 1947, No. 3899.

⁴ Aztag, 21st year, May 24, 1947, No. 57 (4721).

Madeyan, Huntchag representative Hovsep Djerian, Aris, Chamlian, and Naccache spoke.¹ The program of the Armenian candidates stated "we will work to have the rights of the Armenians respected, in favour of the laborers, and, for the preservation of the present democratic republican regime of Lebanon."² On May 21 at 7:30 p.m. a public meeting was held at Mazraa in front of the residence of Mustafa Aris, President of the Syndicates, in the presence of 15,000 persons. Beyhum, Naccache, Aris and Chamlian spoke. The Democratic List presented a protest to President Bshara Khoury about the existing terrorism and insecurity.³

On May 21, 1947 Catholicos Karekin I of the See of Cilicia in an official announcement declared that he had spoken to President Khoury and the Speaker of the Parliament Habib Abi Chahla requesting that they "put an end to the disorders, and secure the freedom of the elections for such disturbances did not help the state or the Armenian community". President Khoury promised the Catholicos "to do what was necessary on election day."⁴

¹ Zartok, 10th year, May 20, 1947, No. 3043. Ararad, 10th year, May 20, 1947, No. 1885.

² Zartok, 10th year, May 20, 1947, No. 3043.

³ Zartok, 10th year, May 21, 1947, No. 3046.

⁴ Zartok, 10th year, May 21, 1947, No. 3046. Ararad, 10th year, May 24, 1947, No. 1888.

On election day the Ramgavar Azadagan daily invited its readers to vote for the Democratic List terming Dr. Hairabedian "a great unknown" and Der Kaloustian as "author of two crimes in one week".¹ Meanwhile the Tashnag organ in an editorial entitled "Let's vote for the Popular List" wrote "You must vote for the Popular List in its entirety,² without any reserve, if you want the Lebanese people to continue to accept you and walk hand in hand with you as true brothers."³ The pro-Tashnag weekly Aztarar asked its readers to vote for the government list,⁴ while the majority of the Lebanese press headed by L'Orient⁵ campaigned in favour of the opposition lists.

¹ Zartouk, 10th year, May 25, 1947, No. 3047.

² Aztag, 21st year, May 25, 1947, No. 58 (4722).

³ Zartouk, (10th year, May 25, 1947, No. 3047) wrote that the Tashnags had made an agreement with the P.P.S. whereby in exchange for their votes, the Tashnags would erase the names of Freige and a Moslem candidate and vote for two P.P.S. candidates. These charges were denied by Movses Der Kaloustian during an interview in January 1962 as "untrue".

⁴ Aztarar, 5th year, May 24, 1947, No. 238.

⁵ L'Orient, 23d year, May 25, 1947, No. 6083.

The government used every available means in its power to assure the victory of its partisans.¹ Although in an official communiqué the Council of Internal Security after a meeting at the presidential palace on May 22, with the participation of members of the government, heads of the Army, Constabulary, and the Directors of the Police and Internal Security had announced that it had examined the methods of applying measures already adopted to assure the free and orderly running of the legislative elections.²

On Sunday May 25, 1947 from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. the most notorious elections in the history of Lebanon were held. Although the army had taken control incidents happened.

According to the opposition the following irregularities happened. The Tashnag agents had on their chests red-white badges and were in close cooperation with the police. The police and the Tashnags prevented the entrance to the voting centers of those electors who wanted to vote for the Democratic List.³ Not one of the opposition candidates could get in the voting centers to supervise the elections. Eighty

¹ L'Orient (23d year, May 25, 1947, No. 6083) wrote that "a Beyrouth on signalait notamment que M. Minassian candidat armenien de la liste democratique n'aurait pu obtenir son "récépissé de candidature" sous pretexte qu'il etait "syrien"."

² Le Jour, 13th year, May 23, 1947, No. 3902, p. 2.

³ According to Zartouk (10th year, May 27, 1947, No. 3048) the voters of the Democratic Front were easily recognized as they didn't wear the sign on which the supporters of the government list had agreed.

per cent of the voters who wanted to vote for the Democratic list were not admitted. The police beat the daring of the Democratic voters. At 10 a.m. at St. Michel (Nahr quarter) Hagop Adajian, a Communist from Eshrefieh, was killed by police bullets during a commotion when the Kataebs wanted to vote. Three others Simon Semerdjian, Avedis Apelian and Gaidzag Vanian were wounded. In Bashourah police station Mihran Ohanian was beaten by policemen when he wanted to vote for the Democratic List.¹

At 10 a.m. twenty-three candidates of the opposition Alfred Naccache, Ramiz Sarkis, Hussein Sejaane, Karnig Minassian, Amin Beyhum, Adib Kaddourah, Nassif Majdalani, Soubhi Mahmassani, Philippe Tamer, Anis Saghir, Hratchia Chamlian, Mohsen Slim, Joseph Chader, Adib Maalouf, George Tabet, Abdel Salam Shatila, Ahmed el Ahdab, Abdul Hafiz Mahmassani, Mustafa Aris, Mahmoud el Hajj, Ibrahim Khairallah, Jacques Lizmé and Zouheir Osseiran visited President Khoury. They protested and asked him to take the necessary measures to restore legality. President Khoury declined knowledge of what was reported.²

At 11 a.m. pamphlets signed by the above mentioned twenty-three candidates were distributed to the people which said

¹Zartok, 10th year, May 27, 1947, No. 3048. Ararad, 10th year, May 28, 1947, No. 1891.

²Le Soir, 1st year, May 26, 1947, No. 124.

"You have seen with your own eyes the conspiracy which has been weaved to falsify the legislative elections. The pressure, the aggression, the terrorism, the corruption of the consciences, the interdiction to voters to enter into the voting booths, and the mobilisation of the public forces to stop all opposition; all these have led us to address a protest to the President of the Republic and demand the cancelling of the ballot."¹

The Democratic List cabled to the President of the Republic protesting that the government was openly intervening in favor of the list "that was formed in the presidential palace", and that after falsification, force was used to forbid the voters from voting for any other list than the government one. It demanded the cancelling of the elections as they were anti-constitutional.² After 10:30 a.m. supporters of the Democratic list boycotted the elections.³

The above mentioned twenty-three candidates joined by Moustafa Soltani, Vahram Leilekian and Jean Misk met at Amin Beyhum's house and decided to boycott the elections and informed the public of their decision by signed pamphlets.

At 2 p.m. in the afternoon twenty-four opposition candidates, who had ordered their supporters to stop voting by 11 a.m., again

¹ Ibid.

² Ararad, 10th year, May 28, 1947, No. 1891.

³ Zartouk, 10th year, May 27, 1947, No. 3048.

visited President Khoury who was surrounded by Premier Riad Solh and Henri Pharaon. Ramiz Sarkis and Joseph Chader protested in the name of the opposition. Chader proposed that they go to any office and check to see if the votes were equal to the number of registered voters. If they were the opposition would admit defeat. But the proposal was not accepted.¹

Without any opposition the government victory passed all limits. In Bashourah, Sami Solh's supporters gave him 2000 votes more than the number of voters registered in that area.² an enthusiastic follower of Solh three fifty bunches of votes in a ballot-box.³

The official results were as follows:⁴

Number of registered voters	49953
Number of partakers	21549
Percentage of voters	43.2%
Habib Abi Chahla	17848
Abdallah Yafi	17852
Rashid Beydoun	17556

¹ Zartonk, 10th year, May 27, 1947, No. 3048.

² Ararad, 10th year, May 30, 1947, No. 1894.

³ Dr. Melkon Hairabedian who was elected a deputy in 1947, in an interview in January 1962, confirmed this, saying "Sami Solh's son did a few things; even had he not done it we would have won."

⁴ Aztaq, 21st year, May 29, 1947, No. 4725.

Sami Solh	17084
Hussein Oweyni	16657
Movses Der Kaloustian	16455
Raif Abellama	16373
Melkon Hairabedian	16330
Moussa Freige	15761

The other candidates received from 8 to 10 a.m.¹ the following number of votes.²

Hratchia Chamlian	3752
Karnig Minassian	3409
Mustafa Aris	3294
Joseph Chader	3168
Alfred Naccache	3047
Amin Beyhum	2920
Mohsen Slim	2569
Soubhi Mahmassani	2547
Philippe Tamer	2047
George Tabet	1414
Adib Maalouf	768
Adib Kaddoura	676

¹Le Jour (13th year, May 28, 1947, No. 3907) gave the votes received by 37 candidates excepting Chamlian and Minassian whose results the present writer has obtained from Le Soir (1st year May 27, 1947, No. 125).

²Le Soir wrote "on peut facilement se rendre compte du chiffre qu'ils auraient pu totaliser si tous les électeurs avaient pu voter dans tous les bureaux de vote et si les candidats des liste d'opposition ne s'étaient pas retirés, dans la matinée du 25."

Zouheir Osserian	627
Ibrahim Khairallah	387
Henri Arslanian	250
Rafik Baraj	230
Ramiz Sarkis	212
Ahmed el Ahdab	206
Nassif Majdalani	206
Abdul Salim Shatila	158
Jacques L izmé	153
Moustafa Soltani	139
Jean Misk	118
Vahram Leilekian	112
Hussein Sejaan	150
Anis Saghir	100
Agop Moussalian	56
Mahmoud el Hajj	44
Chafik Nassif	28
Antoine Chalfoun	21
Toufic Mrad Rizk	17
Barounian	7
Farid Jebran	6
Selim Maalouf	5
Boutros Ide el-Dib	4

Hassan Itani	2
Abdel Hafiz Mahmassani	2
Mohammed el Bakr	1
Rafik Bart	1
Dr. Nahassian	1
Jean Hayek	1

Members of the so-called "Popular List" were declared elected as deputies.

After the elections Aztag, Le Jour, El-Shark, El-Nahar, El-Jounhour, and Aztarar, wrote that the elections of May 25 were held "generally in order and calm."¹

The Ramgavar daily wrote in headlines:

"Tyranny and no elections. The government elected its deputies without the votes of the people. What happened was not an election, but the violation of civil rights, individual liberties and democratic principles."²

Le Soir of Dikran Tosbath wrote "les elections ont été truquées. Truquées, affreusement honteusement."³ On Wednesday May 28, 1947 the Minister of the Interior Kamal Jomblat resigned declaring that he had resigned 48 hours before the elections as he knew that there

¹ Aztag, 21st year, May 27, 1947, No. 59 (4723). Le Jour, 13th year, May 26, 1947, No. 3904. Aztarar, 5th year, May 31, 1947, No. 239.

² Zartok, 10th year, May 27, 1947, No. 3048.

³ Le Soir, 1st year, May 27, 1947, No. 125.

would be cheating, but upon the insistence of his colleagues, had kept his decision a secret for a while.¹

Maronite Archbishop Mgr. Moubarak by a pamphlet distributed to the public strongly criticised the President of the Republic and asked him to resign.² The President of the Press Syndicate Takieddine Solh declared that the elections were corrupt.³ A general strike⁴ was held on May 31 which was efficient in Jemayzé and the Jewish quarters.⁵ On June 5, Beirut opposition candidates presented a memorandum to President Khoury demanding the formation of a judicial committee to examine the electoral cheating and its consequences.⁶

¹ Zartouk, 10th year, May 29, 1947, No. 3050.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ The general strike appeal was issued on May 30, 1947 by the afore-mentioned twenty-three opposition candidates joined by Vahram Leilekian, Abdel Hafiz Mahmassani, Chafik Nassif, Rafik Baraj, Hussein Sejaan, Moustafa Soltani, and Dr. Antoine Chalfoun.

⁵ Aztag, 21st year, June 3, 1947, No. 65 (4729).

⁶ Zartouk, 10th year, June 6, 1947, No. 3053.

The government declared that the elections were legal¹ and Prime Minister Riad Solh is reported to have said that the May 25 elections were the best elections held so far.² The editors of the majority of the Lebanese press, twenty-five newspapers and magazines, including Zartok, Ararad, Joghovourti Tsayn, Zouheir Osseiran's Hadaf, Mohsen Slim's El-Jedid, Kataeb's Al-Amal, Communist Sawt al Shaab, Mohieddine Nsouli's Beirut, L'Orient, Le Soir, Al-Diar, Beshir, Sayad, Telegraph, Raouad, El-Yowm, Lissan-ul Hal, Asia, Joumhour, Beirut Massa, Nida, Sawt ul Ahrar, on June 8, by a letter to the President of the Republic, declared that the elections of May 25 were "undeniably fraudulent" and the Parliament did not represent the nation. They demanded its dissolution and made it clear that in the contrary case they would ignore the existence of the Parliament in their newspapers.³

On June 14, the Beirut opposition candidates demanded the cancellation of the Beirut elections in a protest to President Khoury. they further authorized lawyers Mahmassani, Chamlian, Chader and Slim

¹ The Mohafiz of Mount Lebanon (Jabal Lubnan) Hussein Jisr was deposed from his post on charges of corruption when Ministers Kamal Jomlat, Gabriel Murr, and Camille Chamoun threatened to resign (Zartok, 10th year, May 29, 1947, No. 3050) later on Jisr was given a post in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, (Zartok, 10th year, July 1, 1947, No. 3070).

² Aztag, 21st year, May 31, 1947, No. 63 (4727).

³ Zartok, 10th year, June 6, 1947, No. 3053. Keesing's Contemporary Archives, (1946-48) August 2-9, 1947, p. 8758B.

to present the opposition view on the elections which were summarised in twelve points.¹ The main points were:

The ballot boxes were not opened at the set time; they were not examined nor sealed by wax. The non-government candidates and their representatives were not allowed to be present at the counting. By terrorism the opposition was suppressed. Votes were thrown in favor of the government candidates into ballot boxes in bundles. The names of many voters were erased from the lists. All those were going to vote against the government were not admitted to the voting centers.²

Meanwhile the Parliament had elected the members of the Validating Committee; Henri Pharaon, Habib Abi Chahla, Dr. Joseph Hitti, Mohammed Safieddine and Ahmed Berjaoui.³ On June 16, at 5 p.m. a reception for the press was held at the residence of Alfred Naccache in the presence of former Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Karamé, where Soubhi Mahmassani reported that in the morning they had proved to the Validating Committee the points in their written protest. Then he said that they had demanded the resignation of Pharaon from it as he was a member of the government which had organized the election.

¹ Zartouk, 10th year, June 15, 1947, No. 3060.

² Ibid.

³ Le Jour, 13th year, May 28, 1947, No. 3907.

In fact the validity of the Validating Committee was denied as it was derived from an illegal Parliament.¹

Late in June, the twenty-four opposition candidates of Beirut and other influential personalities in a letter addressed to the President of the Republic, demanded the dissolution of the Parliament. Among the signatories were the Supreme Chief of the Kataebs Pierre Gemayel, Communist leader Nicola Shaoui, Syndicates Vice-President Majdalani, and Refugee Union President Emile Odaymi.² In a separate declaration the National Bloc of former President Emile Eddé condemned the elections of May 25 as "corrupt".³ A "Black" book was published by the National Bloc.

On Sunday June 29 at 10 a.m. at the house of Omar Beyhum a meeting of protest was held. Abdul Hamid Karamé, Alfred Naccache, Mohieddine Nsouli, Emir Nouhad Arslan from the National Bloc, Elias Rababi from the Kataebs, and Dr. George Hanna from the Partisans of Peace, criticised the elections of May 25 and demanded the dissolution of the Parliament.⁴

¹Zartouk, 10th year, June 18, 1947, No. 3062.

²Zartouk, 10th year, June 27, 1947, No. 3068.

³Zartouk, 10th year, July 1, 1947, No. 3070.

⁴Zartouk, 10th year, July 2, 1947, No. 3071.

On June 30, in the presence of forty-eight deputies, the Parliament met. Upon the proposal of Bahij Takieddine the report of the Validating Committee was not read "as deputies know its content". The President of the Committee Henri Pharaon declared that their report was not perfect but satisfied their conscience. The Parliament then approved the election of all deputies with the exception of one whose case was to be examined later.¹

The opposition newspapers continued their bitter attacks on the Parliament. The New York Times, the Times, and Al-Ahram were reported to have criticised the elections.² On August 24, at Rashid Jomblat's residence in Sofar,³ and on September 14, at Abdul Hamid Karamé's residence in Tripoli⁴ the last important protest meetings were held.

Within the Armenian community the existing tension, and the frustration of the Democratic Front led to bloodshed. On June 14, two murders were committed, Boghos Margossian,⁵ a Tashnag, and Atam

¹ Aztag, 21st year, July 3, 1947, No. 87 (4751).

² Zartok, 10th year, July 25, 1947, No. 3087.

³ Zartok, 10th year, August 27, 1947, No. 3106.

⁴ Zartok, 10th year, September 17, 1947, No. 3125.

⁵ Aztag, 21st year, June 17, 1947, No. 75 (4739).

Yeghiayan,¹ an anti-Tashnag were killed. On June 15 a Tashnag Harutiun Medzoyan was attacked in his house.²

On July 5, 1947 Catholicos Karekin I of the Cilician See congratulated the Armenian deputies in the Prelacy. Right afterwards he visited Prime Minister Riad Solh accompanied by Archbishop Khat Atchabahian, deputies Der Kaloustian, Dr. Hairabedian, the Rev. Dajad Ourfalian, and Dajad Srabian, President of the National Central Civil Council of the Cilician See, to offer his congratulations on his appointment as Prime Minister.³

¹ Zartonk, 10th year, June 17, 1947, No. 3061.

² Aztag, 21st year, June 17, 1947, No. 75 (4739).

³ Aztag, 21st year, July 8, 1947, No. 89 (4753).

The Elections of 1951

As the term of the Parliament elected in 1947 was coming to an end, the government, headed by Riad Solh resigned and a neutral interim government was appointed by President Bshara Khoury on February 14, 1951, to conduct the general elections. Hussein Oweyni became Prime Minister and Minister of Interior Affairs and the rest of the portfolios were distributed between Ministers Boulos Fayad and Edouard Noun. The elections were to be conducted according to the Law for the Election of Members of the Chamber of Deputies as promulgated on August 10, 1950. According to this law the membership of the Parliament was to be 77. Four seats were provided for the Armenians. The Armenian Orthodox community was to have three seats, two in Beirut and one for the first time in Metn. The Armenian Catholic community for the first time was given a seat in Beirut.

During the summer of 1947, after the previous elections, the repatriation of Armenians from Lebanon to Soviet Armenia had continued¹ though this was to be stopped in 1948. However, as a result of the Arab-Jewish War many Palestinian Armenians had settled in Lebanon, increasing the local Armenian population.

¹Keesing's Contemporary Archives, (Nov. 15-22, 1947, p. 8939) states that in 1947 60,000 Armenians repatriated to Soviet Armenia 15,000 of which from the Levant states.

Two other changes were to be noted within the Armenian community.

First, the Huntchag party had been divided within itself. The so-called right wing was gathered around the Huntchag daily Ararad and had as its leaders Armen Gharib, Kevork Yerevanian, Onnig Djambouljian and others who claimed control of the Huntchag party Lebanon District Committee. While the so-called left wing which had as its leader Haroutune Jerejian, claimed control of the Huntchag party Local Executive Committee of Beirut. Both groups had expelled each other from the party.¹

Second, the Armenian Orthodox community administration had passed into the hands of the Tashnags after the elections of local and communal councils. These elections were considered to be corrupt by the anti-Tashnags.

According to the new electoral law, Beirut was allotted thirteen seats, distributed as follows: four Sunnite, one Shiite, one Greek Orthodox, one Maronite, one Protestant, two Armenian Orthodox, one Armenian Catholic and one Minority. Metn was allotted nine seats, five Maronite, one Druze, one Shiite, one Greek Orthodox and one Armenian Orthodox.

¹ Interview with Jirayr Nayiri, Editor of Ararad, August 1961.

Many important newspapers¹ distrusted the government's promise of free elections after the previous corrupt elections.² But Prime Minister Oweyni calmed all by solemnly declaring "I swear on my honour that the elections will be free".³ The elections were going to take place on April 12, 1951, but the Parliament elected in 1947, would continue its duty until its term of office ended on June 2, 1951.⁴

On February 21, 1951 a meeting took place in the residence of Henri Pharaon where Pharaon, and Abdallah Yafi, Habib Abi Chahla, Saeb Salam, Sami Solh and Rashid Beydoun met to discuss the electoral situation and the formation of an electoral list. It was reported that during the meeting Pharaon insisted on having Amin Beyhum as fourth Sunnite candidate and refused under any circumstances to have Raif Abellama as Maronite candidate. Yafi and Salam however insisted on Mohieddine Nsouli as fourth Sunnite candidate and Raif Abellama as Maronite candidate.⁵ However Henri Pharaon's wish was carried out and the so called "List of Giants"⁶ was formed headed by Pharaon

¹ Al-Amal, Telegraph, As-Sayyad, Diyar, Nidal, Le Soir, and Sawt-ul Ahrar didn't believe that the elections would be free.

² Zartouk, 14th year, February 23, 1951, No. 4014.

³ Zartouk, 14th year, March 2, 1951, No. 4019.

⁴ Aztag, 25th year, April 11, 1951, No. 26 (5716).

⁵ Zartouk, 14th year, February 23, 1951, No. 4014.

⁶ Mohieddine Nsouli's Beirut, and Nahar criticised the "List of Giants". The first considered the members of that list "as responsible for the misery of Lebanon" and the second wrote that the list had no plan, that it relied on money, and this was their only program.

(Greek Catholic), Habib Abi-Chahla (Greek Orthodox), Abdallah Yafi (Sunnite), Sami Solh (Sunnite), Saeb Salam (Sunnite), Rashid Beydoun (Shiite), Amin Beyhum (Sunnite), Charles Helou (Maronite), Ramiz Sarkis (Protestant),¹ Moussa de Freige (Minority), Movses Der Kaloustian (Armenian Orthodox) and Dr. Melkon Hairabedian (Armenian Orthodox).² No agreement was reached on the Armenian Catholic candidate of the list.³

The anti-Tashnag organizations tried to bring forth a united front as they had done in 1947 but failed. The causes of this failure were revealed during and after the electoral campaign.⁴

¹ Ramiz Sarkis enjoyed the official support of the Protestant community. A delegation composed by Dr. Farid Audi, the Rev. Tilkian, the Rev. Salibian, Dr. Tchblakian and others visited Ramiz Sarkis at his home and announced their support (Aztag, 25th year, April 14, 1951, No. 29 (5719)).

² The Armenian candidates of the "List of Giants" were still questionable as the list was not officially published.

³ Aztag, 25th year, March 11, 1951, No. 5 (5695).

⁴ Zartonk, (14th year, April 26, 1951, No. 4058) wrote "someone" tried to separate the anti-Tashnags and succeeded by means of the Huntchags. It further stated that Veraznount was indifferent and the Communists had a candidate of their own.

On February 22, 1951 at 9 p.m. a meeting of Armenian independent notables¹ was held in the house of Boghos Nadjarian². Their intention was to create a United Armenian Front to participate in the legislative elections. They hoped to achieve certain goals such as better living conditions and houses for the inhabitants of the Armenian camps, reform of Armenian schools, better health conditions and the building of streets in the Armenian quarters, a seat for the Armenian Protestants in the Parliament, and to secure posts in the state administration for able Armenians who knew Arabic well. The president of this group was Dr. Yervant Jidejian, and the secretary

¹ According to Zartok (14th year, April 7, 1951, No. 4043) the participants were: Dr. Yervant Jidejian, Dr. Karekin Tabourian, Dr. Hovhanness Srabian, Dr. Harutium Tchblakian, Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, Hratchia Chamlian, Major Boghos Toursarkissian, Puzant Yeghiayan, Kevork Tchatalbashian, Takvor Palandjian, Dikran Zawzawatchian, Levon Nazarian, Dikran Tosbath, Pakarad Bakalian, Hagop Abadjian, Karnig Minassian, Boghos Nadjarian, Dr. Antranik Tchavoushian, Puzant Markarian, Avedis Manougian, Hovhanness Kasserdjian and Yervant Demirjian. In later meetings Armenag Poladian, Dajad Srabian, Krikor Nercessian, Dr. Khatchadour Pilavdjian, Abro Abroyan and other personalities participated.

² The Huntchag daily Ararad (14th year, May 7, 1951, No. 3072-73 and May 8, 1951, No. 3074) wrote that the Ramgavar leaders conspired against the Huntchags to leave them out of any list. In the beginning of February at the residence of Mardiros Iskenderian an agreement was reached between Ramgavar leader Hratchia Setrakian and independent Dikran Zawzawatchian to form a list which would include Setrakian, Dr. Tabourian, Dikran Tosbath and as Armenian Catholic preference was to be given to Joseph Chader then to Noubar Toursarkissian. A committee of independents brought forth on the basis of Setrakian-Zawzawatchian agreement under the guise of general cooperation-composed by Dr. Tchblakian, Dr. Tabourian, Boghos Nadjarian, Zawzawatchian and Major Toursarkissian called for a meeting of independents on February 23, 1951 in the house of B. Nadjarian. Hratchia Setrakian, during an interview in May 1962, denied to have participated to a meeting at Iskenderian's house and to an agreement with Zawzawatchian.

Dr. Hovhanness Srabian. A five member committee was elected to see the community religious heads and party leaders. This committee was formed by Dr. Jidejian, Dr. Tabourian, Dr. Tchblakian, K. Tchatalbashian, and Major Toursarkissian. The spiritual heads of the Armenian communities, Orthodox Vicar General Archbishop Khat Atchabahian, Catholic Patriarch Cardinal Agagianian, and Protestant Pastor the Reverend Garabed Tilkian welcomed the idea. The Tashnag party was approached by Dr. Jidejian, but an answer was delayed. Later Dr. Jidejian was informed that the Tashnag party had already made arrangements in this connection¹ as the party could well represent the Armenian community. The Ramgavars gave their consent. The Huntchags put conditions on their cooperation.²

On March 9, 1951, at 9 p.m. at the house of Dikran Zawzawatchian, Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag delegates were present. The Tashnag refusal to cooperate was announced. Kevork Tchatalbashian, having resigned, was replaced by Zawzawatchian in the Electoral Committee

¹ Movses Der Kaloustian, during an interview in January 1962, confirmed this point.

² Zartok, 14th year, April 7, 1951, No. 4043.

of the Independents.¹ On March 12,² the pictures of Krikor Khacherian³ as Huntchag candidate were posted all over the town.⁴ On March 14, 1953 the Huntchag leaders declared⁵ that they would be willing to participate in the United Front, if one Huntchag candidate was accepted. They further stated that they preferred the "List of Giants", that serious consideration was necessary

¹ Zartok, 14th year, April 7, 1951, No. 4043.

² Ararad (14th year, May 10, 1951, No. 3075) mentioned a meeting held on March 11, 1951 at the house of Zawzawatchian where Onnig Djambouljian, A. Kibarian, Armen Gharib, and Krikor Khacherian declared that the Huntchag party convention had decided to participate in the election with a candidate of its own., A Veraznount leader, Dr. Kh. Pilavdjian, and a few independents supported the Huntchag view. The Ramgavars were reluctant to accept one Huntchag and one Ramgavar candidate as proposed by the Huntchags.

³ Ararad (14th year May 10, 1951, No. 3075) wrote that the Ramgavar leaders attacked the Huntchags for having posted pictures of Khacherian. It claimed that the latter's candidacy was decided by the party on February 13, 1951 and this was no obstacle in reaching an agreement. The Huntchags proposed Hratchia Chamlian, as independent candidate, but their proposal was not accepted.

⁴ Zartok, 14th year, April 22, 1951, No. 4052.

⁵ According to Zartok (14th year, April 25, 1951, No. 4057) the Huntchags would participate in the United Front if an agreement was reached with the "List of Giants". The Huntchags announced that Der Kaloustian was already accepted in the "List of Giants" and that the Armenian Catholic candidate ought not to be the concern of the Front. So there remained one vacancy in the "List of Giants" in Beirut and one in Metn free to present candidates. The other conditions of the Huntchags were that they wanted a Huntchag candidate for one of the two available seats, that they could pay the expenses of their candidate only. These conditions were not accepted.

before joining the opposition list, that they could pay the expenses of their candidate only.¹ As the conditions of the Huntchag party were not accepted they broke away from the Front.²

In Beirut an opposition list was formed and termed as the "Youth List". It was headed by Mohieddine Nsouli.³

On April 1, 1953 the semi-official Le Jour wrote,

"a Beyrouth, les deux listes demeurent incompletes. A la premiere, deux candidats armeniens manquent encore. Il est de meme de la deuxieme liste. Ce fait est du aux divergences de vues qui empechent les groupement armeniens de s'entendre sur la designation de leur candidats."⁴

Although the Tashnag daily had declared on March 11, 1951 that its candidates Movses Der Kaloustian and Dr. Melkon Hairabedian had joined the "List of Giants" in Beirut and that their candidate in Metn was Vahram Papazian, a former member of the Ottoman Parliament from Van and famed revolutionary fighter better known as Goms,⁵

¹ Ararad, 14th year, May 10, 1951, No. 3075.

² Zartok, 14th year, April 25, 1951, No. 4057.

³ Zartok, 14th year, March 10, 1951, No. 4025.

⁴ Le Jour, 17th year, April 1, 1951, No. 5131.

⁵ Aztag, 25th year, March 11, 1951, No. 5 (5695).

nothing was as yet definite.¹ The leaders of the list having accepted Der Kaloustian on their list, tried to secure as the second Armenian Orthodox candidate,² a person who would have the support of all the anti-Tashnag organizations.³ On March 14, 1951 at the funeral of a Huntchag leader Minas Khachikian, President of the Central Committee of Homenmen, the presence of Pharaon, Yafi, Solh, and Dr. Abellama was noted.⁴

After the middle of March, as all the efforts to make the Huntchags join the so-called Armenian Front had failed,⁵ on March 29, 1951 the right wing of the Huntchag party officially announced the candidature of Krikor Khacherian.⁶ The left wing of the Huntchag

¹ Le Jour, 17th year, April 1, 1951, No. 5131.

² Meguerditch Messerlian, during an interview in April 1961, told the present writer that Abdallah Yafi, a close friend of his, through friends asked him to join the "List of Giants", as the second Armenian Orthodox candidate. Messerlian, who had retired from public life early in 1947 and had financial difficulties, due to the Palestine tragedy, politely refused what he termed was "a polite offer".

³ Interview with Hratchia Setrakian, July 1962.

⁴ Ararad, 14th year, March 19, 1951, No. 3034-3035.

⁵ Zartok, (14th year, April 27, 1951, No. 4059) wrote after their separation from the Front the Huntchags wanted to get one candidate first in the "List of Giants" then the opposition list but had failed.

⁶ Ararad, 14th year, March 29, 1951, No. 3042.

party presented the candidature of Vahridj Jerejian.¹ On March 24, Le Soir had written that the "Armenian United Front" had joined the opposition.² This was confirmed by Zartonk only on April 6, 1951 when the Front candidates were declared.³ The candidates were Yetvart Barsoumian⁴ and Hratchia Setrakian⁵ as Armenian Orthodox candidates, and Noubar Toursarkissian⁶ as Armenian Catholic candidate for Beirut.⁷ On April 7, 1951 Dikran Tosbath⁸ was declared the

¹ Zartonk, 14th year, April 7, 1951, No. 4043.

² Le Soir, 5th year, March 24, 1951, No. 1307.

³ Zartonk, 14th year, April 6, 1951, No. 4042.

⁴ Yetvart Barsoumian was a young engineer, a poet, and president of the local council of the Armenian General Benevolent Union at Beirut.

⁵ Setrakian, a young lawyer, was a Ramgavar Azadagan leader, former member of the Civil and Communal Councils of the Armenian Orthodox community of Lebanon, former three-term president of the Association of Armenian University Students, founding member of the Lebanese Scouts Federation and the Tekeyan Cultural Association and member of the Repatriation to Armenia Committee. (Zartonk, 14th year, April 14, 1951, No. 4048).

⁶ Noubar Toursarkissian's candidature was already announced on March 31, 1951, "as the strongest Armenian Catholic candidate" (Zartonk, 14th year, March 31, 1951, No. 4038). Toursarkissian was a 29 years old lawyer, the son of Major Boghos Toursarkissian, originally from Hadjin.

⁷ Zartonk, 14th year, April 6, 1951, No. 4042.

⁸ Dikran Tosbath, was an Armenian Catholic. To be able to run in the elections he turned Armenian Orthodox.

Armenian Orthodox candidate of the Armenian Front in Metn.¹ He had already published this news in his French newspaper on March 30, 1951.²

The opposition list which called itself "The Popular List" was composed of Mohieddine Nsouli (Sunnite), Mohammed Jaroudi (Sunnite), Takieddine Solh (Sunnite), Hussein Sejaan (Sunnite), Zouheir Osseiran (Shiite), Jean Jalkh (Maronite), Nassim Majdalani (Greek Orthodox), Nasri Maalouf (Greek Catholic), Anis Hneykati (Protestant), Benoua Aboussouan (Minorities), Yetvart Barsoumian (Armenian Orthodox), Hratchia Setrakian (Armenian Orthodox) and Noubar Toursarkissian (Armenian Catholic).³

Once the Armenian Front, which was nothing more than a Ramgavar "Independents" alliance, made public its list of candidates, the Armenian Communists announced the candidature of Harutune (Artin) Madeyan for one of the Armenian Orthodox seats in Beirut. Mustafa Aris was also running.

As the failure to create a united anti-Tashnag Front was known, Tashnag candidate Der Kaloustian offered a luncheon in honour of the

¹Zartonk, 14th year, April 7, 1951, No. 4043.

²Le Soir, 5th year, March 30, 1951, No. 1311.

³Zartonk, 14th year, April 11, 1951, No. 4045.

"List of Giants" which he and Dr. Hairabedian had officially joined.¹ Only the question of the Armenian Catholic candidate was unsettled.² There were four Armenian Catholic candidates - Joseph Chader, Elie Khayat,³ Kevork Baghdjian⁴ and an engineer Dikran de Chadarevian - who had not found places on any list.⁵ On April 6, 1951 the "List of Giants" decided to leave temporarily vacant the seat reserved for the Armenian Catholic candidate in their list, as it was impossible to realise unanimity on any one candidate.⁶ But a compromise was in the end reached on the following basis; the official

¹ Le Jour, 17th year, April 3, 1951, No. 5133.

² Aztag, 25th year, April 3, 1951, No. 20 (5710).

³ Elie Khayat born at Beirut in 1903 was the lawyer of the Armenian Catholic community. In 1934 he was a member of the Beirut Municipal Council. In 1937 he was member of the Revolutionary Committee with Camille Chamoun, Henri Pharaon, Majid Arslan and Khalil Abi Jaoudé. In 1938 Secretary General of the Union of Overseas Lebanese. During the crucial days of November 13 to 23, 1943 and afterwards he was the Secretary General of the Lebanese National Congress. In 1944 he was a member of the subscription committee of Sasuntsi Tavit Armored Tanks.

⁴ Kevork Baghdjian is a writer and teacher, better known as Vazken Aykouni. He is the author of a book entitled Arméniens Peuple Tragique, published at Beirut in 1945.

⁵ Zartouk, 14th year, April 7, 1951, No. 5136.

⁶ Le Jour, 17th year, April 7, 1951, No. 5136.

"List of Giants" would not include the name of any Armenian Catholic candidate, but the supporters of Yafi and Solh would vote for Elie Khayat and those of Pharaon for Kataeb party Vice President Joseph Chader.¹ However on April 10, 1951 Chader was present at a meeting of the "List of Giants" at the house of Moustafa Koleilat at Ras el Nabh.²

The Tashnag candidate for the Armenian Orthodox seat in Metn, Vahan Papazian joined the Destouri list on March 21, 1951. The list was composed of Wadih Naim, Dr. Elias Khoury, Khalil Abi Jaoudé, Michel Doumit, Hassan Farhat, Beshir Aouar, Fouad Khoury and Vahan Papazian.³

On April 4, 1951 Dikran Tosbath entered the list of Pierre Eddé.⁴ However on April 5, 1951 Tosbath announced that, after negotiations between the Armenian Front of Independents, Pierre Gemayel and Gabriel Murr/^{he} had withdrawn from the list of the National Bloc, to join the list of Independents headed by Gemayel. The list was composed as follows: Pierre Gemayel, Salah Labaki, Elia Abi

¹ Le Soir, 5th year, April 8, 1951, No. 1318.

² Le Jour, 17th year, April 11, 1951, No. 5140.

³ Aztag, 25th year, March 22, 1951, No. 13 (5703).

⁴ Le Soir, 5th year, April 4, 1951, No. 1315.

Jaoudé, Joseph Khoury, Michel Mouawad (Maronites) Gabriel Murr (Greek Orthodox), Bahige Mezher (Druze), Abdallah Hajj (Shiite) and Dikran Tosbath (Armenian Orthodox).¹

On April 13, 1951, Noubar Nokhoudian, Armenian Orthodox candidate in Metn, who was running independently, withdrew his candidature in favour of Dikran Tosbath "to consolidate the Armenian Union".² On April 15, 1951 Tosbath announced that he was also accepted on the National Bloc list composed by Pierre Eddé, Elia Abi Jaoudé, Habib Akl, Edouard Honein, Nicholas Hayek (Maronites) Albert Moukheiber (Greek Orthodox), Abdallah Hajj (Shiite) Bahige Mezher (Druze) and Dikran Tosbath (Armenian Orthodox).³

The Huntchag daily organ Ararad also announced its support for Dikran Tosbath writing that "he can best represent the Armenian community in Parliament."⁴

The Tashnag daily in an editorial entitled "Useless are the Masks" wrote that the Communists and their fellow travellers have again appeared and that the so-called Armenian Front was the same group that had damaged the Armenian community by exploiting the

¹ Le Soir, 5th year, April 5, 1951, No. 1316. Zartouk, 14th year, April 7, 1951, No. 4043.

² Zartouk, 14th year, April 15, 1951, No. 4049. Le Soir, 5th year, April 15, 1951, No. 1324.

³ Le Soir, 5th year, April 15, 1951, No. 1324.

⁴ Ararad, 14th year, April 13, 1951, No. 3054.

Regional Unions of Daron-Dourouperan, Vasbouragan, and Garin (Erzerum) in whose fatherland he had spent his revolutionary life. Melik Sarhatian and Garo Sassuni spoke.¹

On April 9, 1951 at 8 p.m. a meeting was held in Nor Marash at Bourj Hammoud honouring the Destouri list for Metn. 10,000 people attended. During the meeting amongst others Tashnag leader Haig Balian, Wadih Naim, Elia Abi Jaoudé, and candidate Papazian spoke.²

The "Armenian Front" held a meeting on April 8, 1951 at Zareh Noubar Club honouring the "Popular List". During the meeting Nsouli, and the three Armenian candidates spoke.³ Another meeting was organized by the "Armenian Front" on April 11, 1951 at 8 p.m. opposite the Barraje factory near Nahr bridge attended by 10,000 people.⁴ The "Popular List" held other meetings too in the ensuing days. The first was at Zeydani quarter attended by a crowd of 7000, where, amongst other orators Toursarkissian spoke in Arabic.⁵ The

¹ Ibid.

² Aztag, 25th year, April 11, 1951, No. 26 (5716).

³ Zartonk, 14th year, April 11, 1951, No. 4045.

⁴ Zartonk, 14th year, April 14, 1951, No. 4048.

⁵ Zartonk, 14th year, April 11, 1951, No. 4045.

second one was at Mazraa.¹

The Huntchag party Lebanon District Committee held a public meeting on April 8, 1951 at 3 p.m. at Sahagian Stadium "in the presence of thousands", during the meeting Mihran Seferian, Kevork Yerevanian, Armen Gharib, (in Armenian), Joseph Rezkalla, and Puzant Melkonian (in Arabic) spoke.² The Huntchag candidate Khacherian announced his aims, the most important of which, were the defence of the rights of the Armenian community in the administration of the state, the strengthening of the brotherly ties of the Arab and Armenian peoples, the maintenance of the independence of the sovereignty of Lebanon. They also wanted to increase the standard of living of the workers and the people, and to secure the means for the political and economic independence of Lebanon.³

On April 8, 1951 at 4 p.m. a public meeting of the "Independent List" of Metn headed by Pierre Gemayel was held at Bourj Brajné.⁴

Setrakian had, during an electoral speech claimed to defend the ignored rights and interests of the Armenian community and the rights of the Armenian workers and merchants.⁵ The Ramgavar daily in an

¹ Zartok, 14th year, April 12, 1951, No. 4046.

² Ararad, 14th year, April 11, 1951, No. 3053.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Zartok, 14th year, April 7, 1951, No. 4043.

⁵ Zartok, 14th year, April 11, 1951, No. 4045.

editorial on April 7, 1951 had mentioned these points adding that the Tashnags want to dominate the Catholicosate of Antelias.¹ The Tashnag daily wrote that they had always wanted the Catholicosate to be above party disputes,² and that it was a lie to say that the rights of Armenian workers had not been protected. It alleged that Armenians were not persecuted or ignored as far as the constitutional rights of the community were concerned.³ The next day in an editorial Aztag added that all those who wanted to stir the Armenians into discontent against the leaders of the Lebanese government and wanted to see the Tashnags in the same position were dangerous evil-doers.⁴

On April 13, 1951 the Armenian Orthodox candidate of the left wing of the Huntchag party Vahridj Jerejian, and independent Armenian Catholic candidate Kevork Baghdjian withdrew their candidatures.⁵

After announcing the withdrawal of Jerejian the "Local Executive Committee of the Huntchag party" in a communiqué appealed to its

¹ Zartonk, 14th year, April 17, 1951, No. 4049.

² Aztag, 25th year, April 11, 1951, No. 26 (5716).

³ Ibid.

⁴ Aztag, 25th year, April 14, 1951, No. 29 (5719).

⁵ Aztag, 25th year, April 13, 1951, No. 28 (5718).

members and supporters

"to vote for all those candidates who are struggling for the freedom and complete sovereignty of the Lebanese people, for the improvement of the public services, for bread and employment, peace and for a higher standard of living."¹

Before the election Zartouk called its supporters to vote for the "Popular List", making special mention of its Armenian candidates and the "Independent List" in Metn, drawing attention to the presence of Dikran Tosbath.² Ararad called its followers to vote for Krikor Khacherian, Noubar Toursarkissian, Dikran Tosbath, Elia Abi Jaoudé and the independent candidates in Beirut.³ Aztag appealed to its supporters to vote for the "List of Giants" specially mentioning Der Kaloustian and Dr. Hairabedian, (but making no mention of Chader), and the Destouri list of Metn, making special mention of "comrade Vahan Papazian."⁴

On April 8, 1951 after Mass celebrated at the Armenian Catholic Church, President Khoury in the presence of Cardinal Agagianian said "I swear in front of God and men that the elections of April 15th will be perfectly free."⁵ Strict precautions were taken by

¹ Zartouk, 14th year, April 14, 1951, No. 4048. Le Jour, 17th year, April 13, 1951, No. 5141.

² Zartouk, 14th year, April 15, 1951, No. 4049.

³ Ararad, 14th year, April 15, 1951, No. 3057.

⁴ Aztag, 25th year, April 14, 1951, No. 29 (5719).

⁵ Le Soir, 5th year, April 8, 1951, No. 1319.

the government of Oweyni against the "violence, intimidation and corruption which had marked the previous elections".¹ All privately owned weapons were confiscated and senior officials were appointed to preside over the polling.²

The elections took place on April 15 in an orderly atmosphere, and their fairness was acknowledged by the opposition.³

In Beirut out of 57,658 resigtered voters 21,948 persons voted.⁴ The official results were the following:⁵

Rashid Beydoun	14779
Ramiz Sarkis	14775
Sami Solh	14758
Abdallah Yafi	14629
Henri Pharaon	13284
Charles Helou	13180
Saeb Salam	12808
Moussa de Freige	12747
Amin Beyhum	12175
Movses Der Kaloustian	12004

¹ Keesing's Contemporary Archives, July 14-21, 1951, p. 11590A.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ According to Aztag (25th year, April 18, 1951, No. 32 (5722)) the number of registered voters was 57,652 and the number of those who voted 21,988.

⁵ Zartonk, 14th year, April 19, 1951, No. 4051. Aztag, 25th year, April 18, 1951, No. 32 (5722).

Melkon Hairabedian	11946
Habib Abi Chahla	11016
Nassim Majdalani	10333
Joseph Chader	9660
Nasri Maalouf	7411
Mohammed Jaroudi	7171
Noubar Toursarkissian	6987
Benoua Aboussouan	6684
Mohieddine Nsouli	6584
Hratchia Setrakian	6583
Zouheir Osseiran	6538
Yetvart Barsoumian	5883
Mustafa Aris	5502
Anis Hneykati	5380
Hussein Sejaan	4073
Raif Abellama	3930
Jean Jalkh	3789
Takieddine Solh	3348
Artin Madeyan	2765
Elie Khayat	2257
Rafik Tabbara	1653
Krikor Khacherian	1099
Dikran de Chadarevian	231

Members of the "List of Giants" and Joseph Chader were elected member of the Chamber of Deputies.

The opposition "Popular List" in a declaration acknowledged that the elections had been free but that from 11 a.m. and on it had turned into a black market, concluding the declaration with the statement that "a struggle ended; a new struggle has begun".¹

In Metn out of 40,449 registered voters 22,904 voted.² In Bourj Hammoud incidents occurred that disturbed the orderly atmosphere of the election.³ The official results were as follows:⁴

Dikran Tosbath	12504
Elia Abi Jaoudé	11920
Abdallah Hajj	11534
Hassan Farhat	11311
Emile Lahoud	10988
Beshir Aouar	10776
Behiege Mezher	10519
Elias Khoury	10400

¹ Zartok, 14th year, April 20, 1951, No. 4052.

² Zartok, 14th year, April 19, 1951, No. 4051. Aztag, 25th year, April 18, 1951, No. 32 (5722).

³ Zartok, 14th year, April 18, 1951, No. 4050. Ararad, 14th year, April 19, 1951, No. 3058. Le Soir, 5th year, April 16, 1951, No. 1325. Le Jour, 17th year, April 16, 1951, No. 5144.

⁴ Zartok, 14th year, April 19, 1951, No. 4051. Aztag, 25th year, April 18, 1951, No. 32 (5722).

Vahan Papazian	10186
Fouad Khoury	9926
Michel Doumit	9653
Wadih Naim	9012
Habib Akl	8697
Khalil Abi Jaoudé	8419
Pierre Gemayel	7945
Pierre Eddé	7798
Nicolas Hayek	6680
Albert Moukheiber	6177
Edouard Honein	5737
Gabriel Murr	4717
Joseph el Khoury	4647
Salah Labaki	3813
Michel Mouawad	2939
Antoine Tabet	2464
Hafiz Munzer	1735
Rukoz Abi Nader	512
A. Khoury	65
Noubar Nokhoudian	34

From the Destouri list Elias el Khoury, Emile Lahoud, Michel Doumit (Maronites), Fouad Khoury (Greek Orthodox), and Beshir Aouar (Druze) and from the Independent list Elia Abi Jaoudé (Maronite) Abdallah

Hajj (Shiite) and Dikran Tosbath (Armenian Orthodox) were elected members of the Chamber of Deputies. For the fifth Maronite seat a second ballot was to take place between Wadih Naim and Pierre Gemayel.¹

The candidate of the Armenian Front Tosbath, though he was elected wrote:

"A Bourj Hammoud où les membres du parti Tachnak, au vu et au su de la gendarmerie, ont littéralement occupé le bureau de vote et ses abords immédiats empêchant tout électeur qui n'était pas de leur bord, de déposer son bulletin."²

Zartouk,³ Ararad,⁴ Le Soir,⁵ and Al-Amal⁶ strongly protested against the Tashnags. Al Amal mentioned a protest handed to the Prime Minister complaining that five offices were put in one building in a Tashnag quarter, and guns were used in front of the constabulary. Upon the protest of Dikran Tosbath and Gabriel Murr, the army intervened for a short while. After their departure the Tashnags could

¹ Zartouk, 14th year, April 18, 1951, No. 4050.

² Le Soir, 5th year, April 16, 1951, No. 1325.

³ Zartouk, 14th year, April 18, 1951, No. 4050.

⁴ Ararad, 14th year, April 19, 1951, No. 3058.

⁵ Le Soir, 5th year, April 16, 1951, No. 1325.

⁶ Zartouk, (14th year, April 20, 1951, No. 4052) as quoted from Al-Amal, of April 17, 1951.

vote until 5:30 p.m. with the help of the Mukhtar of the area.¹

Aztag, wrote that their candidate in Metn, Papazian, had received ninety percent of the Armenian votes in Bourj Hammoud² and the success of Tosbath could be explained by the fact that he was on both opposition lists.³ The Tashnag daily criticised the anti-Tashnags for bragging about the success of Tosbath "which was independently achieved". The paper concluded by asking by how many votes had they assisted Tosbath's success.⁴

In reply to the Tashnag daily, Tosbath's Le Soir wrote:

"Que le directeur du Soir n'ait pas obtenu la majorité des voix arméniennes de Bourj Hammoud, nous ne le contestons pas ici. Mais chacun sait, comment le scrutin s'est déroulé dans les quartiers arméniens du fleuve, où profitant de la carence de la gendarmerie, les Tachnak ont pu interdire l'accès des bureaux de vote aux électeurs de l'opposition."⁵

On April 17, 1951 at 11:30 a.m. deputy Dikran Tosbath accompanied by fifty cars and notables of the Armenian Front Dr. Jidejian, Karnig Minassian, Dr. Tabourian, Pakarad Bakalian, Parounag Tovmassian,

¹ Ibid.

² Dikran Tosbath, in an interview in July 1962, told the present writer that Papazian received 951 and he 127 Armenian votes in Bourj Hammoud.

³ Aztag, 25th year, April 18, 1951, No. 32 (5722).

⁴ Aztag, 25th year, April 22, 1951, No. 35 (5725).

⁵ Le Soir, 5th year, April 17, 1951, No. 1327.

Hratchia Setrakian, Yetvart Barsoumian, Vahridj Jerejian, Souren Khanamirian and others visited the Catholicossate of Antelias where they were received by the Cilician Congregation headed by Bishops Khoren Paroyan and Terenig Poladian. Then, led by Dr. Jidejian, Tosbath visited the ailing Catholicos in his chamber and promised to serve to his best, the interests of the Armenian community. Catholicos Karekin I blessed Tosbath wishing him success.¹

On May 11, 1951 it was reported that a few days before the Armenian Catholicossate of Antelias had given a reception in honour of the newly elected Armenian deputies. The presence of Vicar General Archbishop Khat, Bishop Paren, Deputies Tosbath, Dr. Hairabedian, and Chader was reported.²

¹ Zartonk, 14th year, April 21, 1951, No. 4053. Le Soir, 5th year, April 19, 1951, No. 1328. Ararad, 14th year, April 19, 1951, No. 3058.

² Zartonk, 14th year, May 11, 1951, No. 4066.

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The Elections of 1953

In September 1952 the opposition had succeeded in overthrowing President Bshara Khoury. The latter had been re-elected to the Presidency in 1949 by a special amendment of the constitution. The Parliament then elected one of the opposition leaders Camille Chamoun as President of the Republic. President Chamoun appointed Emir Khaled Chehab as Prime Minister, who was to rule the country with emergency powers.

On November 4, 1952 the Law for the Election of Members of the Chamber of Deputies promulgated on August 10, 1950 was amended by Legislative Decree No. 6 under which, for the first time women were granted the franchise and voting for men was made compulsory under pain of a fine (LL.50) for non-compliance without valid reasons. The membership of the Parliament was reduced from 77 to 44 and Lebanon was divided into 33 electoral districts.¹ The Armenian Orthodox community was allotted two seats in Constituency one (Beirut I - Medawar) and Constituency Eight (Metn - Bourj Hammoud). The Armenian Catholics lost the seat they had according to the Electoral Law of 1950, but could profit from the seat allotted to the Minorities in Constituency Five (Beirut V - Minet el Hosn).

¹ Keesing's Contemporary Archives, September 26-October 3, 1953, p. 13159 B.

After bitter attacks on Chehab's government in Parliament by Hamid Frangié, Emile Lahoud, Dikran Tosbath, Yacub Sarraf, and Rashid Beydoun¹, on April 29, 1953 Premier Chehab resigned and was succeeded by the government of Saeb Salam. Salam also held the Ministry of Interior.² The Parliament was dissolved by a decree issued on May 30. It accused the former Parliament of having shown itself "incapable of fulfilling its task" and of having "neglected to complete numerous legislative measures by reason of the frequent absence of deputies".³ The elections were to take place in three stages, on July 12 in Beirut and Mt. Lebanon, on July 19 in South Lebanon and Bekaa and on July 26 in North Lebanon.⁴

Within the Armenian community many changes had occurred since the elections of 1951. On June 21, 1952 Karekin I, Catholicos of the See of Cilicia had passed away, creating the problem of his succession. The Armenian political parties had their own candidates for the succession but only the success of the Tashnag candidate seemed plausible as the Tashnag dominated the communal councils of most Cilician dioceses. The Cilician congregation had elected as Locum

¹ Zartonk, 16th year, April 24, 1953, No. 4561.

² Zartonk, 16th year, May 2, 1953, No. 4565.

³ Keesing's Contemporary Archives, September 26-October 3, 1953, p. 13159 B.

⁴ Ibid.

Tenens Archbishop Khat Atchabahian, who was determined not to call for elections until a national concord was reached over the succession.

On the international scene Armenians were stunned to hear that on May 30, 1953 the Soviet government presented a note to the Turkish Ambassador in Moscow announcing that "the Georgian and Armenian Soviet Republic had renounced the territorial claims on Turkey" made in 1945, and that in consequence the U.S.S.R. had "no territorial claim whatsoever on Turkey".¹ The Tashnag party, profiting from the occasion criticised the Soviet government, the local Communists and all those who had hoped that the U.S.S.R. would settle the question of Armenian territorial demands on Turkey.

Within the Tashnag party there were internal difficulties while the Huntchag party split of 1951 was over, with reconciliation between the right and left wings. During 1951-52 the Ramgavar Azadagan party had met some difficulties within its affiliate youth organization and some members of that club had en masse joined the Veraznount Association. By decision of the 32nd Ramgavar Azadagan Party convention, Hagop Shirinian and Prof. Harutiun Kalayan were put out of the party for² having supported and led the movement against the leadership of

¹ Keesing's Contemporary Archives, 1953, p. 13101 C.

² Zartok, 16th year, May 9, 1953, No. 4574.

ty, within the youth organization and the party itself. On
1953, twenty-seven persons became Ramgavars by swearing on
the presence of the party honorary President Eugene Papazian.
7, 1953 the Annual Kermess of the Antranik Youth Organization
d at the Beirut public garden in the presence of the Prime
r Salam.

of March 1, 1953 Deputy Dikran Tosbath published an
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December 1952 during the Municipal elections and in March
ring the election of Mukhtars, the Tashnag candidates won
Beirut and Bourj Hammoud.¹ But there were protests from the

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candidates had withdrawn at 12 a.m. complaining of "Tashnag
ism". Out of 5640 voters 1132 had voted of which 790 votes
st for the Tashnag candidates. The Armenian Deputy of Bourj
Dikran Tosbath, in an editorial "j'accuse l'Emire Khaled
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Tiro-Sandjak, Marach, et Trad sous l'oeil bien veillant des
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Le Soir, No. 1842).

the party, within the youth organization and the party itself. On May 25, 1953, twenty-seven persons became Ramgavars by swearing on oath in the presence of the party honorary President Eugene Papazian. On June 7, 1953 the Annual Kermess of the Antranik Youth Organization was held at the Beirut public garden in the presence of the Prime Minister Salam.

As of March 1, 1953 Deputy Dikran Tosbath published an Armenian independent daily newspaper Ayk with the moral support of some neutrals, members of the Veraznount Association, Hagop Shirinian and Prof. Kalayan.

In December 1952 during the Municipal elections and in March 1953 during the election of Mukhtars, the Tashnag candidates won both in Beirut and Bourj Hammoud.¹ But there were protests from the

¹During the municipal elections of Bourj Hammoud the anti-Tashnag candidates had withdrawn at 12 a.m. complaining of "Tashnag terrorism". Out of 5640 voters 1132 had voted of which 790 votes were cast for the Tashnag candidates. The Armenian Deputy of Bourj Hammoud, Dikran Tosbath, in an editorial "j'accuse l'Emire Khaled Chehab" in his newspaper Le Soir (6th year, December 8, 1952, No. 1836) wrote "Comme aux pires heures du Destour les Tachnaks ont fait regner la terreur à Bourj Hammoud. Les troupes de Choc Tachnak n'ont pas cessé un seul instant de faire couler le sang dans les quartier Tiro-Sandjak, Marach, et Trad sous l'oeil bien veillant des autorités et avec la collaboration des agents de l'état et de la force publique. Meme atmosphere et memes pratiques a Medawar." demanding the invalidation of the results as late as February 15, 1953. (Le Soir, No. 1842).

opposition and thus the electoral situation started in a tense atmosphere.

On June 20, the Huntchag daily mentioned the following persons as probable Armenian candidates for the First Constituency of Beirut, Karnig Malikian, Hratchia Setrakian, Hmayag Kranian, Noubar Nokhoudian, Movses Der Kaloustian, Puzant Giliguan, Dr. Melkon Hairabedian,¹ Hovhanness Kassardjian, Dajad Srabian and Hratchia Chamlian. For the Eighth Constituency the name of Dikran Tosbath as "Armenian popular candidate" was mentioned.²

Dikran Tosbath, who was elected Deputy from Metn as candidate of the anti-Tashnag "Armenian Front" in 1951, was a close friend and

¹ Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, was mentioned as Armenian Orthodox candidate in the First Constituency by the Armenian Catholic weekly Massis (7th year, June 17, 1953, No. 24 (338)). On June 25 the Huntchag daily (Ararad, 16th year, June 26, 1953, No. 3676) announced that Dr. Hairabedian had withdrawn from the electoral campaign. Dr. Melkon Hairabedian in an interview in December 1961 told the present writer he was financially unable to meet the electoral expenses. During another interview in September 1962, he added that the Tashnag party had requested him not to enter his candidacy and President Chamoun had promised him a seat in the Senate which he then intended to create in the near future.

² Ararad, 16th year, June 20, 1953, No. 3673-74.

collaborator of President Camille Chamoun. The latter advised and urged him for reasons of state politics to make an electoral alliance with the Tashnags and run as their candidate in the Eighth Constituency. Tosbath tried hard to be candidate of both Tashnags and anti-Tashnags.¹ The traditional policy of the Tashnag party being loyal to the government of the day, Tosbath was accepted as Tashnag candidate for Bourj Hammoud. The Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag parties and the Group of Independents refused to accept Tosbath as their candidate in Bourj Hammoud region so as to avoid collaborating with the Tashnag party.²

The Tashnag party itself had internal difficulties. Some local committees wanted to have another candidate other than former Deputy Movses Der Kaloustian. Famous Tashnag leader Tro came from Paris, and the Puro and the Central Committee of the party in Lebanon, succeeded in having Der Kaloustian accepted and declared as the official

¹ Interview with Dikran Tosbath, July 1962. During the interview Dikran Tosbath told the present writer that the Ramgavar leaders blamed him for publishing Ayk, a competitor with Zartonk. One of the Ramgavar leaders concerned confirmed this.

² Hratchia Setrakian, during an interview in March 1962 told the present writer that Tosbath insisted on being a candidate of both sides and added that this would not harm their friendly relations. Setrakian and others tried to dissuade him, showing him the impossibility of collaboration with the Tashnags in the Eighth Constituency and fighting them in the First Constituency. They also pointed out that a deputy elected by both sides would be of no use to either. After two disputes with Ramgavar leaders, Tosbath separated from the anti-Tashnag group.

party candidate.¹ On June 29, 1953 Movses Der Kaloustian was declared to be the Tashnag candidate for the Mudawar region of Beirut and Dikran Tosbath for Bourj Hammoud.² The Tashnag daily in an article entitled "our neutral candidate for Bourj Hammoud is Dikran Tosbath" made an effort to explain this fact in writing:

"If the party directing the political life of the Armenian people was to secure the confidence of the authorities for our people, it necessarily had to be realistic and had to know how to sacrifice its party interests to that of the general interest."³

In an editorial Aztag tried to explain why the Tashnags are participating in the elections with candidates of their own

"Now it is more than ever necessary that the Tashnag party should continue to run our political life because it is the only party, that enjoys the confidence of the local people who by their social ideology and psychology are with the democratic world."⁴

On July 1, 1953 in an official communiqué signed "Central Committee" the "Independents of the Armenian Community" announced that they had decided to present a candidate for the First Constituency

¹ Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian in February, 1962 and Zartok, 16th year, July 6, 1953, No. 4624.

² Aztag, 27th year, July 1, 1953, No. 101 (6330). Le Soir, 7th year, June 30, No. 2009.

³ Aztag, 27th year, July 3, 1953, No. 103 (6332).

⁴ Aztag, 27th year, July 4, No. 104 (6333).

of Beirut, and their unanimous choice had been Karnig Malikian¹ as "the only candidate of the Independents" in the legislative elections of 1953. It further stated that Malikian's candidature was adopted and supported by the Ramgavar Azadagan² and Huntchag parties and by cultural and sports associations such as Veraznount, Homenmen and Antranik.³

The next day Tosbath's Le Soir and Ayk doubted the existence of the so-called Group of Independents calling it a "ghost entity".⁴

As if in answer to this on July 6, 1953 in an official declaration the "Group of Independents" announced that for more than six months" the great majority of the notables of the Armenian community of Beirut had been periodically meeting at the Alumni Club of the

¹ Karnig Malikian, a multi-millionaire was with his brothers the agent of Philco Electrical Appliances in Lebanon. He had never held office within the community.

² During an interview in February 1962 a Ramgavar Azadagan leader, whose name upon his request is not disclosed, said that the choice fell on Malikian as no other person was willing to undergo electoral expenses.

³ L'Orient, 29th year, July 3, 1953, No. 8035, p. 2. Ararad, 16th year, July 2, 1953, No. 3679. Zartonk, 16th year, July 3, 1953, No. 4621.

⁴ Le Soir (7th year, July 2, 1953, No. 2011) wrote "Qui sont ces Independants de la communauté armenienne qui se cachent derriere une signature anonyme et qui sonne vraiment un peu faux: 'Comité Central'...? 'Comité Central' de quoi? De quels partis?" after doubting the authority of such a group to represent the mass of independents added "Que ces 'Independants' aient le courage de signer de leur nom les manifestes qu'on distribue ou les communique qu'on publie ici et la".

American University of Beirut and the residence of Dr. Jidejian, for the purpose of the question of Catholicossal succession to see that the election would be held in a spirit of concord and conciliation amongst all elements of the community. The names of the participants were also disclosed in Zartonk, Ararad and L*Orient.¹

¹According to Zartonk (16th year, July 4, 1953, No. 4622), Ararad (16th year, July 6, 1953, No. 3681) and L*Orient (29th year, July 6, 1953, No. 8038) the participants of the group were the following: Dr. Yervant Jidejian, President of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox community, member of the Municipal Council of Beirut and Head Surgeon of the American University Hospital, Dr. Hovsep Yenikomshian professor of Medicine at the American University of Beirut, Abro Abroyan manufacturer, Dajad Srabian, member of the Communal Council of the Armenian Orthodox community, Inspector of Banque de Syrie et du Liban, Yervant Demirjian, businessman, Vice President of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox community, Karnig Minassian businessman, member of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox community, Kevork Tchatalbashian, manufacturer, member of the Communal Council of the Armenian Orthodox community, Levon Nazarian, businessman, Karnig Malikian, businessman, Dikran Kalbian manufacturer, Karnig Tufenkdjian, businessman (.), Sarkis Shekerjian businessman, Dr. Karekin Tabourian, professor at A.U.B., Dr. Antranik Tchavoushian, Hagop Abadjian businessman, Ghazaros Beylerian businessman, Serovpé Beylerian businessman, Hagop Seferian Banker, Khoren Tahan, businessman (.) Hratchia Chamlian, former Member of Parliament, Dr. Matheos Kalbian, Yervant Vishabian businessman, Yetvart Barsoumian engineer, Dikran Zawzawatchian manufacturer, Haroutyun Kazandjian engineer, Garabed Tedjirian, businessman, Aram Khatchadourian, businessman, Haig Zawzawatchian, industrialist, Boghos Parseghian, businessman, Kegham Dantzigan, member of the Communal Council of the Armenian Orthodox community, manufacturer, Hagop Kalpakian pharmacist, Hovhaness Kassardjian manufacturer, Krikor Boutchakjian, businessman, Dr. Hovhaness Srabian dentist, Avedis Manougian manufacturer, Garabed Kassardjian businessman, Dr. Levon Kardjian, dentist, Takvor Palandjian businessman, Dr. Khoren Yeretsian municipal doctor, and other personalities.

(.) Both Tufenkdjian (L*Orient, 29th year, July 7, 1953, No. 8039) and Tahan (Zartonk, 16th year, July 9, 1953, No. 4626) denied having participated in these meetings. Tufenkdjian mentioned that he had participated in only one and that he supported the candidature of Der Kaloustian and Tosbath. Zartonk and Ararad on July 9, 1953, in reply insisted that he had been present at the meetings and had agreed on the candidature of Malikian.

The declaration concluded by saying that to maintain union and concord within the Armenian community these personalities had elected a central committee to deal with the legislative elections of July 12, 1953. It further stated that this "Rally of Lebanese Armenians" had been possible by the adherence of the Ramgavar and Huntchag parties and many cultural and sport associations and by accepting, without any reserve, the candidature of Karnig Malikian for the first constituency of Beirut.¹

The Tashnag party daily wrote that, the Huntchag-Ramgavar Front, to defend the candidature of Malikian, had used lies and fraud and was shamelessly exploiting the names of honest personalities.² To counteract the anti-Tashnag independents a meeting of pro-Tashnag independents was held on July 6, 1953 at 6 p.m. at the Tashnag Club. 150 persons were present though their names were not disclosed. During the meeting it was announced that the name of Dr. Jidejian³ was exploited intentionally with the name of other independents and

¹ Zartok, 16th year, July 4, 1953, No. 4622. Ararad, 16th year, July 6, 1953, No. 3681. L'Orient, 29th year, July 6, 1953, No. 8038.

² Aztag, 27th year, July 7, 1953, No. 106 (6335).

³ Dr. Jidejian in a letter dated July 9, 1953 published in Aztag (27th year, July 10, 1953, No. 109 (6338) p. 4) addressed to the Tashnag Lebanon District Committee wrote that "he was and is president of a group of neutrals".

the denial of Karnig Tufenkdjian was read. Those present, after expressing their indignation and protest, elected a Central Committee.¹ This committee, in the name of all those present, unanimously decided to support the candidature of Der Kaloustian and Tosbath.²

On June 20, 1953 Dikran Tosbath in an article published only in his French newspaper,³ announced that he had set his candidature at Bourj Hammoud with the unreserved support of the Lebanese National Bloc. The Tashnag party, the Bloc of Armenians and the people of Jdeydé, Baoushrieh, Sed-Baoushrieh, Dekouani, Sin el Fil and Bourj Hammoud.⁴ On June 28, 1953 Tosbath was present at a ball of the anti-Tashnag Veraznount Association with Mrs. Chamoun, Pierre Eddé, Karnig Tufenkdjian, Pakarad and Vazken Bakalian, and Boghos Nadjarian.⁵ On June 26, the National Bloc of Raymond Eddé declared Tosbath as its candidate at Bourj Hammoud, and on June 29 the Tashnag party did likewise.⁶

¹The Committee was composed of Karnig Tufenkdjian, Roupen Mavisakalian, Yervant Sarrafian, Khoren Tahan, Simon Tchitikian, Missak Azirian, Kegham Khanamirian, Onnig Tcherkezian, Hagop Tavitian, and Vahé Setian.

²Aztag, 27th year, July 8, 1953, No. 107 (6336). Ayk 1st year, July 9, 1953, No. 111.

³On July 2, 1953 Zartouk (16th year, No. 4620) published the Armenian translation of Tosbath's article of June 20, 1953 entitled "Tosbath's case" and asked why it was not translated into Armenian in Ayk as all his articles were.

⁴Le Soir, 7th year, June 20, 1953, No. 2001.

⁵Ayk, 1st year, July 1, 1953, No. 104.

⁶Ayk, 1st year, July 1, 1953, No. 104. Le Soir, 7th year, June 30, 1953, No. 2009.

The Ramgavar-Huntchag-Independent Group concentrated its efforts in the first constituency of Beirut.¹ Although L'Orient² held out good chances of success for the anti-Tashnag candidate for Bourj Hammoud, their probable candidate, Noubar Nokhoudian, did not present himself for election.³ The Communist party of Lebanon, profiting from the absence of a Ramgavar-Huntchag-Independent Group candidate, on June 26, 1953, presented a candidate of its own Harutiun (Artin) Madeyan.⁴

The Tashnag party were faced with strong opposition in the first constituency of Beirut, as both sides had to face each other without the assistance of multi-denominational lists and so launched a fierce electoral campaign. Their daily organ wrote that

"someone called Karnig Malikian relying upon stacks of money he piled up during the war, and confusing the Parliament with the market, has had the audacity to present his candidature."⁵

Then the party went on criticising the Ramgavar and Huntchag parties for not presenting candidates of their own⁶ and supporting a man "devoid

¹ Interview with Hratchia Setrakian, March 1962.

² "Les Tachnaks, qui autrefois tiraient leur force de L'appui des autorités et du fait qu'ils empechaient leur adversaires de voter, se trouvent actuellement en minorite dans la masse d'electeurs que le vote obligatoire va amener aux urnes." The paper also added that the anti-Tashnags had contacted the Kataeb for an alliance in return of their help to Maurice Gemayel in Eshrefieh to Kataeb support in Mudawar and Bourj Hammoud.

³ Interview with Hratchia Setrakian, March 1962.

⁴ Zartok, 16th year, June 27, 1953, No. 4616.

⁵ Aztaq, 27th year, July 3, 1953, No. 103 (6332), p. 4.

⁶ Aztaq, 27th year, July 5, 1953, No. 105 (6335).

of Armenian spirit". The Tashnag paper led personal attacks on Malikian, who, it said had never been in public life and was "a tool in the hands of the Communists."¹

The Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag organs supported Malikian. Zartonk wrote that Malikian would strengthen the Arab-Armenian brotherhood ties, would be the champion of the Armenian community's administrative and other rights and with his position would support a sane national policy.² Ararad wrote that they could never imagine that the Tashnag party would act so immorally in front of the public for one Parliamentary seat.³ The paper declared that the Huntchag party had accepted Malikian's candidature so as to preserve national unity. It continued by saying that they accepted that Malikian had not yet had experience of politics, but what had Der Kaloustian done in Parliament. The paper said he had never spoken in Parliament or defended the rights of the Armenian community. It further inquired what services, if any had he rendered to Lebanon or the Armenian community.⁴

¹ Aztag, 27th year, July 12, 1953, No. 111 (5340).

² Zartonk, 16th year, July 4, 1953, No. 4622.

³ Ararad, 16th year, July 10, 1953, No. 3684.

⁴ Ararad, 16th year, July 11, 1953, No. 3685.

On July 6 at 7 p.m., the Ramgavar-Huntchag-Independent Group held an electoral meeting attended by 5000 people under the patronage of Dr. Jidejian, who was not present. During the meeting Armen Gharib, Hratchia Setrakian, Antouan Saad, Vahridj Jerejian, Ibrahim Jarra and Malikian spoke.¹ On July 8, Malikian with representatives of the "Rally of Lebanese Armenians" visited Locum Tenens Archbishop Khat Atchabahian at the Armenian Catholicosate of Antelias. On behalf of the group Dajad Srabian spoke saying that a non-partisan Catholicos must be elected. Archbishop Khat replied that the Cilician See was open to all its children and that party interests could never guide it.²

For July 9 a public meeting for Malikian at the Tekeyan Club under the presidency of Dr. Jidejian was announced³ and for July 10 a public meeting of the Tashnag party was announced opposite their Karantina Club.⁴

Last appeals were made before the election by both sides. Dr. Yervant Jidejian, President of the "Rally of Independent Armenians"

¹ Zartok, 16th year, July 9, 1953, No. 4626. Ararad, 16th year, July 8, 1953, No. 3682.

² Zartok, 16th year, July 10, 1953, No. 4627. Ararad, 16th year, July 10, 1953, No. 3684.

³ Zartok, 16th year, July 9, 1953, No. 4626.

⁴ Aztaq, 27th year, July 10, 1953, No. 109 (6338).

in an appeal, asked Armenian voters to vote according to their preference mentioning that Karnig Malikian was the candidate of the Armenian Independents and that their movement had found an enthusiastic reception.¹ Malikian in an appeal said that together they would try to develop the multiple resources of Lebanon and create employment for all. He concluded his statement by saying that he was independent and neutral and not for any political party.²

El-Yowm had written that Malikian worked for Jewish companies.³ Pamphlets in Arabic on these lines had been distributed in Beirut, allegedly by the Tashnags.⁴ L'Orient which strongly campaigned for Malikian announced that the Philco-Israel agreement was cancelled through the efforts of its Lebanon agent Karnig Malikian on May 1, 1953.⁵

Ararad wrote that the Tashnags in pamphlets distributed freely to the people, had said that the Huntchag and Ramgavar parties exploited

¹Zartok, 16th year, July 10, 1953, No. 4627. Ararad, 16th year, July 9, 1953, No. 3683. L'Orient, 29th year, July 9, 1953, No. 8041.

²L'Orient, 29th year, July 11, 1953, No. 8043.

³As quoted by Aztag, 27th year, July 8, 1953, No. 107 (6336).

⁴Zartok, 16th year, July 11, 1953, No. 4628. During an interview in January 1962 Movses Der Kaloustian told the present writer that "the Tashnags can't allow themselves to do such mean things".

⁵L'Orient, 29th year, July 9, 1953, No. 8041.

the name of neutral personalities but the presence at public meetings of those neutral personalities showed that the electorate did not approve of the views of Aztag or the Tashnag party.¹ the Huntchag paper also wrote that if the Tashnags were sure of their success in the election they would not threaten their opponents.²

Aztag in an editorial entitled "He will be crushingly defeated" alluded to Malikian and urged that no votes be given to persons who enjoyed the assistance of suspicious elements.³ Tosbath's Ayk and Le Soir as well wrote in a very sure tone that Der Kaloustian and Tosbath would win.⁴

Although the election of Dikran Tosbath in Bourj Hammoud seemed secure⁵ the Communist candidate Artin Madeyan - who was not campaigned for in the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag organs - was determined to struggle to the end. Just before election day, twenty-five of Madeyan's supporters were arrested by the constabulary in Bourj

¹ Ararad, 16th year, July 8, 1953, No. 3682.

² Ararad, 16th year, July 10, 1953, No. 3684.

³ Aztag, 27th year, July 12, 1953, No. 111 (6340).

⁴ Ayk, 1st year, July 10, 1953, No. 112. Le Soir, 7th year, July 11, 1953, No. 2019.

⁵ Le Jour, 19th year, July 5, 1953, No. 5830.

Hammoud when they were distributing pictures of the Communist candidate. Upon Madeyan's protests to the Ministry of Justice, an inquiry was ordered.¹

Joseph Chader Vice President of the Kataeb Party and outgoing Armenian Catholic deputy ran for the Minority seat in the Fifth Constituency of Beirut. His opponents were Edmond Rabbath, Chafik Nassif, Farid Jebran, and Jemil Attié. Rabbath had the support of Syrian Catholic Patriarch Cardinal Tappouni,² while Chader had the support of the Jewish community.

The elections took place on July 12, 1953. In the first constituency out of 21,410 registered voters 6552 voted. In the eight constituency out of 15,985 registered voters 4696 voted.³ The lowest proportion of voters in Beirut and Mt. Lebanon 30% were registered in these two constituencies despite the compulsory vote for men. In the fifth constituency out of 13830 registered voters 5852 voted.⁴

The official results were the following:⁵

¹ L'Orient, 29th year, July 12, 1953, No. 8044.

² L'Orient, 29th year, July 7, 1953, No. 8039.

³ Medawar had 10,376 male voters and 10,848 female voters. Bourj Hammoud had 7,855 male and 8,023 female voters.

⁴ Zartouk, 16th year, July 16, 1953, No. 4632. Aztaq, 27th year, July 14, 1953, No. 112 (6341).

⁵ L'Orient, 30th year, July 13, 1953, No. 8045. Zartouk, 16th year July 15, 1953, No. 4631.

First Constituency¹

Movses Der Kaloustian	3729 votes
Karnig Malikian	2799 votes

Fifth Constituency

Joseph Chader	2081 votes
Edmond Rabbath	1922 votes
Chafik Nassif	1097 votes
Farid Jebran	646 votes
Jemil Attié	55 votes

Eighth Constituency

Dikran Tosbath	3929 votes
Artin Madeyan	709 votes

Der Kaloustian, Chader and Tosbath were elected as deputies.

After the election the Ramgavar daily vehemently protested to the authorities in writing that

"the compulsory (vote) for men was turned to ridicule by Tashnag terrorism, disorders, and complicity of policemen".²

The Huntchag daily in a milder tone wrote

"The Armenian people has no deputy in the Parliament. The Armenians have the sons of the chivalrous Arab people as their deputies."³

¹ According to Aztag (27th year, July 14, 1953, No. 112 (6341)) the results of the first constituency were Der Kaloustian 3732 votes, Malikian 2703 votes.

² Zartonk, 16th year, July 15, 1953, No. 4631.

³ Ararad, 16th year, July 15, 1953, No. 3687.

The Tashnag daily in reply wrote that the anti-Tashnag Front was defeated as it was formed by Communists and their fellow travellers. It further stated that after being defeated their opponents complain of terrorism instead of preventing them on election day.¹ Dikran Tosbath in his Armenian and French newspapers wrote that he remained what he had always been "the representative of the Independent Armenians in the service of all Armenians without distinction of party, denomination or clans, in the service of all the Lebanese".²

The Anti-Tashnag papers only criticised the election in Mudawar; nothing was written about the elections in Bourj Hammoud. These complaints and criticisms can be summarised briefly as follows.³

Many "suggestions" and threats were made upon Malikian to withdraw from the electoral campaign but as these did not have any effect, two days before the elections the government altered, upon Der Kaloustian's request, one of its former decisions⁴ by changing the

¹Aztag, 27th year, July 18, 1953, No. 6345.

²Ayk, 1st year, July 14, 1953, No. 115. Le Soir, 7th year, July 13, 1953, No. 2020.

³Zartouk, 16th year, July 15, 1953, No. 4631. Ararad, 16th year, July 15, 1953, No. 3687.

⁴Le Jour (19th year, July 9, 1953, No. 5833) wrote:
"Le ministre de l'intérieur a pris un arrêté modifiant comme suit les bureaux de vote dans la première circonscription électorale de Beyrouth (Quartier Medawar) les 18ème, 19ème, 20ème, 21ème, 22ème, 23ème, 24ème et 25ème bureaux de vote pour les hommes ont été transférée de la Quarantaine à l'école arménienne nationale (Sahaguan). Les 26ème, 27ème, 28ème, 29ème, 30ème, 31ème, 32ème, et 33ème bureaux affectés aux femmes ont été transférés de l'école Ishac Mesrobian (Camp Hajjine) et de l'école arménienne nationale à l'école arménienne Masroubian sise dans la rue des Moines. Les bureaux de vote (allant du 34ème au 44ème inclus) pour les femmes ont été transférés de l'école arménienne nationale et de l'école arménienne évangélique à la Quarantaine".

women's voting center from Hadjin to Karantina, a zone of Tashnag influence. In Karantina Der Kaloustian received 300 more votes than Malikian, as it was easier to frighten women than men. By this transfer the government showed its preference for Der Kaloustian, so did the policemen on duty during election day. At 10 a.m. it was obvious that female voters for Malikian were in the majority. To upset this the representative of Malikian was arrested, then supporters of opposing candidates were separated and only those who were going to vote for Der Kaloustian were admitted to the election centers. Many supporters of Malikian returned home without voting. At 11 a.m. the Tashnags started their terrorism in front of the policemen. Aztag wrote that after 12 a.m. not a single voter for "Malikian could be found at Mudawar", Zartonk added this was due to Tashnag terrorism. Mr. and Mrs. Malikian were attacked, Sarkis and Krikor Tchuldjian were stabbed with knives.¹ Malikian voters from Bourj Hammoud were not allowed to cross to Mudawar. Only at the last minute, when the Tashnags passed all limits, did the army intervene. This fact only brought many Malikian voters back to the polls. Contrary to the order of the Ministry of Interior that voting would continue

¹Zartonk, 16th year, July 17, 1953, No. 4633.

after 4 p.m. if there were voters, all electoral centers were closed with few exceptions, and these were open for supporters of Der Kaloustian. From 8 to 12 a.m. 2799 people had voted for Malikian. Voting for Der Kaloustian had continued until 4 o'clock and he had received only 930 votes more. Only 30% of the total number of voters had voted, with Tashnags having brought voters from Tripoli, Zahle, Jounnie, Bikfaya, Brummana, and even from Aleppo and Damascus. Thus only 3729 voters out of 21410 voters were duped by the Tashnags to vote for them.¹

After the elections on July 14, 1953 Deputies Movses Der Kaloustian and Tosbath accompanied by members of the Electoral Central Committee of the pro-Tashnag Independents led by Karnig Tufenkdjian, Tashnag notable Hagop Der Melkonian and former Ramgavar Hagop Shirinian visited the Locum Tenens of the Cilician See Archbishop Khat Atchabahian at the Catholicosate of Antelias. Archbishop Khat advised them to serve their country Lebanon and the Armenian community in the best possible way. In reply Tufenkdjian wished that all the disputes would end soon. His wish was reciprocated by Archbishop Khat.²

¹ Zartok, 16th year, July 15, 1953, No. 4631. Ararad, 16th year, July 15, 1953, No. 3687.

² Aztag, 27th year, July 16, 1953, No. 6343. Ayk, 1st year, July 16, 1953, No. 117.

On July 15 the same group visited the Armenian Orthodox Prelate of Lebanon Bishop Khoren Paroyan at the Prelacy where representatives of the Civil, Religious, and Communal Councils received them.¹

The Armenian deputies also visited Deputies Sami Solh, Abdallah Yafi, Alfred Naccache, Ghassan Tueni, Raymond and Pierre Eddé to offer their congratulations.²

The anti-Tashnag Armenians in their frustration wrote they could never believe in promises of "free elections" and termed the whole September Movement of President Chamoun "a fiasco".³ The split within the community administration also began, on August 3, 1953 six independents Dr. Yervant Jidejian, President of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox Community, Yervant Demirjian, Vice-President of the same council, Karnig Minassian⁴ member of the Civil Council, Kevork Tchatalbashian, Kegham Dantzgian and Dajad Srabian, members of the Communal Council, resigned because of six-seven months of continual disputes.⁵

¹ Ayk, 1st year, July 18, 1953, No. 119.

² Aztag, 27th year, July 18, 1953, No. 6345.

³ Zartonk, 16th year, August 1, 1953, No. 4646.

⁴ Karnig Minassian, anti-Tashnag candidate for the legislative elections of 1947, however cooperated with the Catholicosate of Cilicia when the anti-Tashnags boycotted it in 1956. During 1959-1963 he was the Chairman of the Central Civil Council of the Cilician See.

⁵ Zartonk, 16th year, August 3, 1953, No. 4648.

The opposition within the Tashnag party to the candidature of Der Kaloustian was manifested by the publication of Aztarar as a daily newspaper in September 1953. Aztarar until then had been a pro-Tashnag weekly published by Onnig Topouzian. The paper edited by Khosrov Tutundjian attacked the Tashnag leadership.¹

¹ Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian, November-December 1961.

The Elections of 1957

After the Anglo-French-Israeli aggression against Egypt was called to a halt, a meeting of the Arab Kings and Presidents took place in Beirut in November 1956. Hardly was the meeting over when President Camille Chamoun accepted the resignation of Prime Minister Abdallah Yafi and Minister of State Saeb Salam. The two men had demanded the breach of diplomatic ties with Great Britain and France, but their demand was rejected by the President of the Republic. President Chamoun then appointed Sami Solh as Prime Minister who formed his new cabinet¹ with Charles Malik, former Lebanese Ambassador at Washington D.C., and the United Nations, as Minister of Foreign Affairs.

In January 1957, the Congress of the United States of America was asked by the President to approve what was immediately dubbed as the Eisenhower Doctrine. The Lebanese Government expressed its readiness to adhere to the Doctrine. An opposition front led by former premiers Yafi and Salam, which termed itself "National Front", was organized against the pro-Western foreign policy and the new electoral bill of the government. On April 2, 1957 the opposition, in a public declaration

¹ On January 3, 1957 it was reported that General Fuad Chehab had resigned from his post of Minister of Defence as he did not want to be a party in the question of electoral reform (Aztag, 30th year, January 3, 1957, No. 7397).

addressed to President Chamoun, demanded amongst other things, that the number of deputies be increased to 88, and that a neutral government with none of its members participating in the elections be formed.¹ The opposition delegation (composed of Ahmed el Assaad, Saeb Salam, Fuad Khoury, and Fuad Ammoun) which had come to hand in the opposition manifesto was not received by President Chamoun, on the grounds that it had already been published in an Arabic newspaper. To retaliate, the opposition decided to boycott the President of the Republic.²

On April 3, 1957, Parliament by twenty-four votes to eleven, with four abstentions and four deputies absent, decided to have 66 members rather than 88 members in the next Chamber of Deputies.³ When the government of Solh asked for a vote of confidence over its foreign policy, opposition deputies Abdallah Yafi, Hamid Frangié, Rashid Karamé, Sabri Hamadé, Ahmed al-Assaad, Abdallah Hajj, and Kamal el-Assaad resigned on April 5, 1957 in protest, and the government won the vote of confidence by 30 to 1 cast by Dr. Hashim Husseini.⁴

¹ Zartok, 20th year, April 3, 1957, No. 159 (5777).

² Ibid.

³ Zartok, 20th year, April 4, 1957, No. 160 (5778).

⁴ Zartok, 20th year, April 7, 1957, No. 163 (5781).

The new electoral law was promulgated on April 24, 1957 increasing the number of deputies from 44 to 66, abolishing the compulsory vote for men, and dividing Lebanon into twenty seven electoral districts.¹

According to this electoral law, the Armenian Orthodox community was allotted three seats, two in Beirut and one in Bourj Hammoud, and the Armenian Catholic community was given one seat in Beirut.

Beirut was divided into two electoral constituencies. Constituency I which comprised Mseitbe, Mazraa, Eshrefieh, Rmeil and Seifi, with 110,022 inhabitants, was to elect two Sunnite, one Maronite, one Greek Orthodox and one Armenian Orthodox deputies. Constituency II which comprised Mudawar, Marfa, Minet el Hosn, Ain Mreyse, Ras Beirut, Zokak el Blat and Bashoura, with 109,927 inhabitants, was going to elect two Sunnite, one Shiite, one Armenian Orthodox, one Armenian Catholic and one Minority deputies.²

¹ Republic of Lebanon Chamber of Deputies, Law, Amendment of the Electoral Law of Lebanon for Members of Parliament, Beirut, 1957, p. 2.

² According to L'Orient (33rd year, June 9, 1957, No. 9433) the number of registered voters in Constituency I was as follows:

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Eshrefieh	9721	9873
Mseitbe	9199	8639
Mazraa	9346	9321
Rmeil	7047	6948
• Saifi	2347	2503
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	37660	37284

With the Armenian Orthodox community a split had occurred after the election on February 20, 1956, of Bishop Zareh Payaslian, the Prelate of the Armenians of Aleppo, as Catholicos of Cilicia, as he was the Tashnag candidate for that high ecclesiastical post. Although the Lebanese, Syrian and Cyprian governments recognized Bishop Zareh as Catholicos of Cilicia, the Ramgavar Azadagan¹ and Huntchag² parties, the Veraznount Association³, and the anti-Tashnag group of Independents,⁴ officially announced that they would not recognize Bishop Zareh as

Cont*d (from page 217)

The number of registered voters in Constituency II was as follows:

	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Medawar	12240	11588
Bashoura	6021	6426
Zokak el Blat	4960	5385
Ras Beirut	4399	3928
Ain Mreisse	2079	2124
Minet El Hosn	3644	3951
Marfa	1582	1521
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total	34925	34923

¹Zartok, 19th year, March 6, 1956, No. 137 (5447).

²Ararad, 19th year, March 21, 1956, No. 246 (4263).

³Zartok, 19th year, March 9, 1956, No. 140 (5450).

⁴Ayk, 4th year, March 13, 1956, No. 934.

Catholicos of Cilicia. The majority of the religious Brotherhood of Cilicia, 11 celibate clergymen out of 19, refused to recognize the Catholicossal election and on July 23 deposed Locum Tenens Bishop Khoren Paroyan "by a vote of no-confidence" and elected instead Archbishop Khat Atchabahian.¹ But this action remained unheeded by the Catholicos-Elect and the governments concerned. After the consecration of Bishop Zareh as Catholicos of Cilicia on September 2, 1956 the split within the community became final. Out of the 17 Armenian Orthodox churches in Lebanon, the opposition controlled three churches, two in Beirut and one in Zahle. After the monastery of Bikfaya was seized by government order from the followers of Archbishop Khat and handed over to the Catholicossate of Cilicia, Archbishop Khat and his followers resided in a hotel in Beit-Mery. Archbishop Khat, his followers, the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag parties, the Veraznount Association, and the Group of Independents decided to separate themselves from the Catholicossate of Cilicia citing decree 60 (voted on March 17, 1936) and decree 146 (voted November 18, 1938) of the Lebanese Republic as authority. They informed the Lebanese Government on October 12, 1956, that they had formed

¹ Ararad, 19th year, July 25, 1956, No. 351, (4368) Le Matin Magazine, 4th year, August 3, 1956, No. 969, p. 10.

religious and civil councils of the so called Independent community of the Catholicosate of Cilicia with Archbishop Khat as its head.¹ A petition signed by 8800 Armenian Orthodox families demanding formal recognition of the "new independent community" was presented to the government.² The Catholicos of All Armenians, Vazken I,³ by a cable dated August 13, 1956 addressed to President Chamoun, already had announced his recognition of Archbishop Khat as Locum Tenens of the See of Cilicia.⁴ Sami Solh⁵, who had been the lawyer of Archbishop Khat and his supporters, became Prime Minister. After a visit of Henri Pharaon on December 27, 1956 to Archbishop Khat⁶ and "the Civil Council of the Independent Community"⁷, the Prime Minister,

¹ Ararad, 20th year, January 9, 1957, No. 492 (4509).

² According to Ararad (20th year, January 9, 1957, No. 492 (4508)), 2800 signatures of family heads were handed to the government in October 1956 and about 6000 new signatures of family heads were to be registered by the Ministry of the Interior.

³ From the four Cilician dioceses only the Prelate of the Armenians of Damascus Bishop Shavarsh Kouyoumjian and the Armenian Orthodox Communal Council of Damascus recognized Archbishop Khat as Locum Tenens.

⁴ Zartok, 19th year, August 28, 1956, No. 284 (5594).

⁵ On December 9, 1956 the Catholicosate of Cilicia had given a reception at Antelias honouring Premier Sami Solh where, amongst others, Minister of Plan Mohammed Sabra, deputies Raymond Eddé, Ghassan Tueni, Movses Der Kaloustian, Dikran Tosbath and former Foreign Minister Henri Pharaon were also present.

⁶ Zartok, 20th year, December 29, 1956, No. 82 (5700).

⁷ The members of this council were Dr. Jidejian (Chairman) Dajad Srabian, Hovhanness Kassarjian, Abro Abroyan, Yervant Demirjian, Sarkis Shekerdjian, Levon Nazarian, Pakarad Bakalian, Dikran Zawzawatchian, Hagop Beylerian, Kevork Tchatalbashian, Mardiros Altounian and Karnig Malikian.

on December 30, 1956, visited Archbishop Khat and his followers, and "the Civil Council of the Independent Community". He was accompanied by Alfred Naccache and Rashid Beydoun, and no less than 3000 people were present at the Summer Palace Hotel in Beit-Mery, during the visit.¹ The supporters of Archbishop Khat claimed the visit was an official one and meant de facto recognition of their community.² However on January 4, 1957 upon the intervention of deputies Dikran Tosbath and Movses Der Kaloustian³ the government, by a written reply dated January 22, 1957 and signed by Emil Tiyan, Minister of Justice, stated that the visit of the Prime Minister was a personal visit, and thus, in an indirect manner, implied that "the independent community" did not have government recognition.⁴

Meanwhile, on the occasion of the Armenian Christmas on January 6, 1957, after a mass celebrated at St. Kevork Church in Hadjin attended by a crowd of 12,000, the Mufti of the Republic Sheikh Alaya, Abdallah Yafi, Saeb Salam, Gabriel Murr, Mohammad Omar Turk and other

¹ Zartok, 20th year, January 1, 1957, No. 83 (5701). Ararad, 20th year, January 1, 1957, No. 487 (4504).

² Ibid.

³ Aztag, 30th year, January 5, 1957, No. 258 (7399).

⁴ Aztag, 30th year, January 31, 1957, No. 279 (7420).

personalities visited Archbishop Khat in Beit-Mery.¹ It was apparent that the opposition leaders wanted to woo the supporters of Archbishop Khat.

On February 2 and 3, 1957 incidents occurred in Khalil Bedewi Street when both Archbishops Khat and Khoren wanted to celebrate mass on the same day and at the same hour in St. Haroutune Church. By government order the church was closed.² Arrests were made from supporters of Archbishop Khat, though they were released after a few days.³

Seeing that it was impossible to get official recognition from the Lebanese Government, Archbishop Khat appealed to the President of Syria, Shukri el Kouatly, for recognition in Syria.⁴

Meanwhile both Tashnags and anti-Tashnags found an opportunity to show that they enjoyed public support. On April 1, 1957, the relics of St. Gregory the Illuminator which had mysteriously disappeared from Antelias after the Catholicossal election of February

¹ Zartok, 20th year, January 9, 1957, No. 88 (5706).

² Zartok, 20th year, February 5 and 6, 1957, No. 111 (5799) and 112 (5730). Aztag, 30th year, February 5, 1957, No. 7424. Ararad, 20th year, February 5, 1957, No. 515 (4532).

³ Zartok, 20th year, February 14 and 17, 1957, No. 119 (5737) and 122 (5740).

⁴ Ayk, 4th year, January 18, 1957, No. 1195.

20, 1956, were found in Amman and brought back to Lebanon by Archbishop Khoren Paroyan. The relics were given a reception by more than 25,000 people gathered at Khalde International Airport.¹ On April 22, 1957, the anti-Tashnag front held the "Pan-Armenian Festival" at the Municipal Field, under the patronage of Archbishop Khat Atchabahian. Two thousand athletes of the Homenmen, Antranik, Pagramian, Veraznount and Tekeyan-Baykar, paraded in the presence of a crowd 25,000.²

The Armenian Communists started the publication of a weekly newspaper called Ilal-Amam - Haratch in January 1957. The Ramgavar Azadagan daily organ, Zartonk, published its Arabic counterpart, called Al-Yaqza, as a weekly newspaper in April 1957.

Deputy Dikran Tosbath and his friends, with the support of pro-Tashnag independents, founded in March 1957 a new association known as the Haig Club, with Dr. Karekin Tabourian as its president and Mrs. Lucy D. Tosbath as its secretary.³ The official inauguration of the new club took place on April 12, 1957, in the Hotel Bristol, where the presence of Premier Sami Solh, Speaker Adel Osseiran,

¹ Aztag, 31st year, April 2, 1957, No. 25 (7471). Ayk, 5th year, April 3, 1957, No. 1258.

² Zartonk, 20th year, April 25, 1957, No. 177 (5795).

³ Ayk, 5th year, March 13, 1957, No. 1240.

Alfred Naccache, Foreign Minister Charles Malik, National Economy Minister Nasri Maalouf, National Bloc leader Raymond Edde, deputies Beshir Aouar, Ghassan Tuani, Clovis el Khazen, Georges Hraoui, Georges Akl, Joseph Chader, Colonel Jamil Lahoud, U.S. Ambassador Donald Heath, British Ambassador Middleton, Jamil Mekkaoui and others was noted.¹

After the promulgation of the electoral law on April 24, 1957, both the Government and Opposition tried to form lists. There were rumors of the possibility of a reconciliation between Sami Solh and Abdallah Yafi and the appearance of both on the "official list", if Yafi approved the foreign policy of the government.² However no agreement was reached. Both Solh and Yafi tried to get the support of the Armenian community. The backing of the Tashnag party for the candidates of the regime was already secured by the Solh government.³ There yet remained the anti-Tashnag Armenian parties and organizations who had been frustrated by the refusal of the government to give formal recognition to their independent community. Solh, through his

¹ Ayk, 5th year, April 14, 1957, No. 1267.

² Aztag, 31st year, May 8, 1957, No. 59 (7499).

³ Aztag, (30th year, January 1, 1957, No. 255 (7396) in an editorial entitled "The Wise President" supported President Chamoun's policy and actions during the crisis of November 1956.

son Abdul Rahman Solh, approached the anti-Tashnag leaders and offered them an Armenian Orthodox seat on the government list out of the four seats allotted to the Armenians.¹ Dikran Tosbath's Le Soir and Ayk echoed their discontent with Solh's proposal by writing that his "dreams" about the Armenian candidate might cause his defeat as he was forsaking the votes of the Armenians of Rmeil and Eshrefieh; the article concluded with the hope that Solh would not commit such a blunder.² However the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag leaders turned down Solh's proposal.³

As the Tashnags habitually supported the government, the opposition leaders tried to get the support of the anti-Tashnag parties and organizations. The Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag parties agreed to join the opposition if they were assured that the opposition would carry out their demands concerning the Armenian church.⁴ The opposition leaders accepted the condition and the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag parties rallied to their support.⁵ On May 8, 1957, the Prime Minister

¹Hratchia Setrakian during an interview in July 1962 confirmed this to the present writer.

²Le Soir, 11th year, April 25, 1957, No. 3191. Ayk, 5th year, April 26, 1957, No. 1276.

³The present writer was shown by Hratchia Setrakian, chairman of the Lebanon District Committee of the Ramgavar Azadagan party, the minutes of the District Committee dated May 8, 1957 in which it was written that they had turned down Solh's "last proposal a week ago".

⁴This was also written down in the minutes of the Lebanon District Committee of the Ramgavar Azadagan Party dated May 8, 1957.

⁵Ibid.

of Syria, Sabri Assali, in a letter No. 1/1891, informed Archbishop Khat Atchabahian that the Syrian Government "doesn't see any obstacle to establish an independent community" in Syria¹ and requested the regulations of the community be sent for consideration.² The letter was interpreted by the jubilant Ramgavar Azadagan³ and Huntchag dailies,⁴ as a recognition of the "independent community" by Syria. The Catholicossate of Antelias, in an official communiqué dated May 10, 1957, published in Aztag⁵ and Ayk⁶, declared that the letter of the Syrian Premier didn't mean formal recognition of the so-called independent community. On May 12, 1957, the opposition held a meeting at Tarik Jedide where Hamid Franjié, Saeb Salam, Hussein Oweyni, Abdallah Yafi, Abdallah Hajj, and Nassim Majdalani, spoke. An Armenian anti-Tashnag delegation of 3000 persons attended this public meeting.⁷ During the meeting loyalty to the 1943 National Pact

¹ On May 19, 1957 Archbishop Khat and his followers went to Damascus to establish the "Independent Catholicossate of Cilicia".

² Zartonk, 20th year, May 10, 1957, No. 188 (5806). Ararad, 20th year, May 11, 1957, No. 593 (4610).

³ Zartonk, 20th year, May 9, 1957, No. 187 (5805).

⁴ Ararad, 20th year, May 10, 1957, No. 592 (4609).

⁵ Aztag, 31st year, May 12, 1957, No. 63 (7503).

⁶ Ayk, 5th year, May 11, 1957, No. 1288.

⁷ Zartonk, 20th year, May 14, 1957, No. 191 (5809). Ararad, 20th year, May 14, 1957, No. 595 (4612). Ilalamam-Haratch, 1st year, May 19, 1957, No. 20, p. 3.

through which Lebanese independence was maintained was stressed.¹

Although Sami Solh was in hospital since April 29, 1957, on account of a heart attack, on May 7, 1957, the state of emergency which included censorship of the press, was lifted by decree No. 15734.² By another decree, the elections were arranged to take place in four stages from June 9 to June 30. The Beirut elections were to take place on June 9; those of Bourj Hammoud, on June 16.³

After Solh's recovery and his return home on May 12 in a procession of 1000 cars, the efforts of the supporters⁴ of the Government were intensified to form a list. There were rumors that Solh would run in the Second Constituency of Beirut. However on May 9, 1957 Solh decided to run against Yafi in the First Constituency.⁵ Despite the rumors that he would run in the First Constituency with Solh,⁶ the Tashnag party candidate Movses Der Kaloustian joined the

¹
Ibid.

²
L'Orient, 33th year, May 7, 1957, No. 9400.

³
Ibid.

⁴
Aztaq, 31st year, May 14, 1957, No. 64 (7504).

⁵
Le Jour, 23d year, May 10, 1957, No. 7123.

⁶
Le Soir, 11th year, April 25, 1957, No. 3191. Le Jour, 23d year, May 9, 1957, No. 7122.

Mekkaoui list in the Second Constituency.¹ For the Armenian Orthodox seat in the First Constituency on the government list pro-Tashnag independents Dr. Karekin Tabourian, Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, Khatchig Babikian and Souren Khanamirian were mentioned as probable candidates.² The choice of the Tashnag party fell on Babikian.³ As for the Armenian Catholic seat, the Kataeb party put forward the candidature of Joseph Chader⁴ for the Maronite candidate on Solh's list in the first constituency, former President Alfred Naccache was accepted. On May 15, 1957 Solh's list for the First Constituency was ready, formed as follows: Sami Solh (Sunnite), Khalil Hibri (Sunnite), Alfred Naccache (Maronite), Ghassan Tueni (Greek Orthodox) and Khatchig Babikian (Armenian Orthodox).⁵ On May 18, 1957 the National Bloc announced the candidature of Pierre Eddé for the Maronite seat in the First Constituency.⁶ On May 19, 1957 a public meeting for Solh's

¹ Aztag, 31st year, May 24, 1957, No. 73 (7573).

² Le Soir, 11th year, April 25, 1957, No. 3191. Ayk, 5th year, April 26, 1957, No. 1276.

³ Aztag, 31st year, May 19, 1957, No. 69 (7509). Ayk, 5th year, May 21, 1957, No. 1296. During an interview in August 1962, Souren Khanamirian told the present writer, that the Tashnag party asked the advice of some twenty leading pro-Tashnag independents on selecting the second Armenian Orthodox candidate and that their choice fell on Babikian whose candidature was adopted by the Tashnag party.

⁴ Le Soir, 11th year, April 25, 1957, No. 3191.

⁵ L'Orient, 33th year, May 15, 1957, No. 9408. Aztag, 31st year, May 17, 1957, No. 67 (7507).

⁶ Le Jour, 23d year, May 19, 1957, No. 7132.

list was held in Ras el Nabeh where Naccache was present.¹ During the meeting Babikian spoke in Arabic.² But on May 22 it was announced that Pierre Edde had replaced Naccache on Solh's list.³ Naccache in a public declaration announced his intention to continue the electoral campaign and added that "the drama of the legislative elections of 1947 seems to be repeating itself."⁴

On May 20, 1957 Sami Solh announced the formation of his list in the Second Constituency as follows: Jamil Mekkaoui (Sunnite), Faouzi Hoss (Sunnite), Rashid Beydoun (Shiite), Moses Der Kaloustian (Armenian Orthodox), Joseph Chader (Armenian Catholic), and Chafik Nassif (Minorities).⁵

The opposition tried to complete its list with the addition of a Maronite and an Armenian Orthodox candidate. Former deputy Louis Ziade joined the opposition list as Maronite candidate.⁶ The

¹ L'Orient, 33d year, May 20, 1957, No. 9413.

² Aztag, 31st year, May 21, 1957, No. 70 (7510).

³ L'Orient, 33d year, May 22, 1957, No. 9415. Le Soir, 11th year, May 21, 1957, No. 3211.

⁴ Le Jour, 23d year, May 28, 1957, No. 7141.

⁵ Aztag, 31st year May 24, 1957, No. 73 (7573). Le Jour, 23d year, May 21, 1957, No. 7134. Le Soir, 11th year, May 22, 1957, No. 3212. Ayk, 5th year, May 23, 1957, No. 1298.

⁶ L'Orient, 33d year, May 22, 1957, No. 9415.

anti-Tashnag Armenian Independents were reluctant to run against the candidates of the government with a candidate of their own, so the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag parties decided to present party candidates on the opposition list.¹ Opposition leaders Abdallah Hajj on May 15, Abdallah Mashnouk, Sheikh Yamout and members of the Moslem Supreme Council on May 16, visited Archbishop Khat at his residence in Beit-Mery and promised their support for the "Independent community" led by Archbishop Khat.² On May 22 at noon, Abdallah Yafi, Saeb Salam, Nassim Majdalani, Louis Ziade and Ramgavar Azadagan party Lebanon District Committee Chairman Hratchia Setrakian met and declared that they would oppose Solh's list in the First Constituency.³ At the last minute the group of anti-Tashnag Independent Armenians decided to run in the election with a candidate of their own and pay electoral expenses on condition that their candidate Hratchia Chamlian replaced Hratchia Setrakian. Setrakian withdrew willingly and gave his place to Chamlian "to consolidate the unity within the anti-Tashnag Front". This caused discontent among some young members of his party. The Ramgavar daily had not as yet announced the candidature of Setrakian.⁴ On May 24, 1957 Zartouk and Ararad announced that

¹ Interview with Hratchia Setrakian, July 1962.

² Ararad, 20th year, May 17, and 18, 1957, No. 598 (4615) and 599 (4616).

³ L'Orient, 33d year, May 23, 1957, No. 9416. Aztag, 31st year, May 25, 1957, No. 74 (7574).

⁴ Interview with Hratchia Setrakian, July 1962.

the Central Electoral Committee of the Lebanese Armenian Rally had chosen its candidates, Hratchia Chamlian for the First Constituency, Nazareth Gharibian¹ and Noubar Toursarkissian for the Second Constituency and Noubar Nokhoudian² for the Constituency of Bourj Hammoud.³ Thus, the opposition lists were formed as follows: for the First Constituency, Abdallah Yafi (Sunnite), Saeb Salam (Sunnite), Nassim Majdalani (Greek Orthodox), Louis Ziade (Maronite), and Hratchia Chamlian (Armenian Orthodox); for the Second Constituency, Abdallah Mashnouk (Sunnite), Rafik Naja (Sunnite), Mohammed Ali Rez (Shiite), Nazareth Gharibian (Armenian Orthodox), Noubar Toursarkissian (Armenian Catholic), and Farid Jebran (Minorities).⁴

On May 28, 1957 a group of Tashnags from the Djagadamard Club, who were against the leadership of the party, visited Yafi and Salam, in a party of 30 cars led by Souren M. Azirian, and announced that because of the illegal and dictatorial conduct of Tashnag leaders, they had separated and had formed their independent club which had

¹ Nazareth Gharibian, better known as Armen Gharib, a teacher, has been one of the leaders of the Huntchag party in Lebanon since 1937. At present he is the principal of "New High School" which he also owns.

² Noubar Nokhoudian, a Ramgavar Azadagan, is a merchant and landowner who has good relations within local political circles.

³ Zartok, 20th year, May 24, 1957, No. 200 (5818). Ararad, 20th year, May 25, 1957, No. 605 (4622).

⁴ Zartok, 20th year, June 6, 1957, No. 5829. Ararad, 20th year, June 6, 1957, No. 615 (4632).

decided to support the opposition.¹

Now that the lists were formed public meetings were organized. On May 28, 1957 at Museitbe quarter in Beirut, 200 meters apart from each other, the Government and opposition lists held public meetings.² At the opposition meeting Yafi, Mashnouk and Chamlian spoke. The latter defended the views of the National Front and its aims "on behalf of Armenian voters".³

The opposition demanded the formation of a neutral government.⁴ The Ramgavar daily in an editorial entitled "For Free and Democratic Elections" wrote that the members of the government, with the exception of one, were all candidates and that there was unrefutable evidence that the authorities were doing their utmost by various "means" to secure the success of their candidates.⁵ On Monday May 27, 1957 the opposition, in a cable⁶ to President Chamoun, demanded

¹ Ararad, 20th year, May 29, 1957, No. 608 (4625).

² Zartouk, 20th year, May 30, 1957, No. 205 (5823). Ararad, 20th year, May 30, 1957, No. 609 (4626). L'Orient, 33rd year, May 29, 1957, No. 9423.

³ Zartouk, 20th year, May 30, 1957, No. 205 (5823). Ararad, 20th year, May 30, 1957, No. 609 (4626).

⁴ Aztaq, 31st year, May 30, 1957, No. 78 (7578).

⁵ Zartouk, 20th year, May 29, 1957, No. 204 (5822).

⁶ The cable was signed by Saeb Salam, Abdallah Yafi, Ahmed el Assaad, Fouad Ammoun, Louis Ziade, Hassan Bohsali, Farid Jebran, Maarouf Saad, Fouad Khoury, Nassim Majdalani, Mohammed Safieddine, Hratchia Chamlian, Sabri Hamade, Ali Bazzi, Abdallah Mashnouk, Hussein Oweyni, Philip Tacla, Hamid Frangie, Rafik Naja, Mohammed Ali Rez, Adnan Hakim and Dr. Bshara Dahan.

the resignation of the cabinet of Solh within 48 hours and the formation of a neutral government.¹ Solh in reply announced that his government was neutral and he had no intention of resigning.² Abdallah Mashnoug leader of the opposition list in the Second Constituency in Beirut in his newspaper Beirut al-Massa, attacked the President of the Republic, upon which the government issued a warrant of arrest. The opposition, in retaliation, in a declaration³ announced that Mashnoug had spoken in the name of the National Front and expressed its views and that they shared his views and assumed responsibility.⁴ As the government had refused the opposition demand for the formation of a neutral government, the opposition called for a general strike and demonstration to demand the resignation of the government, so that elections could take place in an "unbiased"

¹ Ararad, 20th year, May 29, 1957, No. 608 (4625). Aztag, 31st year, May 30, 1957, No. 78 (7578).

² Aztag, 31st year, May 31, 1957, No. 79 (7579). Le Jour, 23rd year, May 28, 1957, No. 7141.

³ The declaration was signed by Saeb Salam, Abdallah Yafi, Hamid Frangié, Sabri Hamadé, Adnan Hakim, Louis Ziade, Fouad Ammoun, Ahmed el Assaad, Kamel el Assaad, Nassim Majdalani, Hassan Bohsali, Mohammed Safieddine, Dr. Ali Saad, Mohammed Ali Rez, Rafik Naja, Dr. Bshara Dahan, Farid Jebran, Hratchia Chamlian, Noubar Toursarkissian, and Nazareth Gharibian.

⁴ Ararad, 20th year, May 31, 1957, No. 610 (4627). Zartouk, 20th year, May 31, 1957, No. 5824.

atmosphere.¹ On May 30, 1957 despite a government ban on meeting, the opposition demonstration march was held, beginning at Museitbe. The constabulary intervened at 9:30 a.m. when the demonstrators led by Yafi, Salam, Hamade, Mashnouk, Ahmed el Assaad and the opposition candidates started to march towards the centre of Beirut. Fire was opened and the demonstrators were dispersed. Eight persons were killed and hundred injured, including Salam and Hamade.² The demonstrators destroyed two armed tanks. Opposition candidates Salam, Ziade and Chamlian were arrested.³ 500 demonstrators were detained⁴ amongst them twelve Armenians.⁵ The government charged the opposition with hoping to carry out a coup d'etat by inciting the mob to seize control of administrative buildings.⁶

The Opposition National Union Front however claimed that it had intended to protest "peacefully" against the electoral tactics and foreign policy of the government.⁷ On June 1, the Prime Minister

¹ Zartonk, 20th year, May 31, 1957, No. 5824. L'Orient, 33th year, May 30, 1957, No. 9424.

² Keesing's Contemporary Archives, August 3-10, 1957, p. 15696A.

³ Zartonk, 20th year, May 31, 1957, No. 5824. Aztag, 31st year, June 1, 1957, No. 80 (7580).

⁴ Keesing's Contemporary Archives, August 3-10, 1957, p. 15696A.

⁵ Aztag, 31st year, June 1, 1957, No. 80 (7580).

⁶ Keesing's Contemporary Archives, op. cit.

⁷ Ibid.

accused the opposition of using Syrian, Palestinian and other extraneous elements to instigate trouble in the capital.¹ On June 2, the entry of all Egyptian newspapers and magazines into Lebanon was banned by government order.²

Zartok wrote that the authorities, seeing that they would be defeated in free elections had begun arresting many persons including influential candidates so as to crush the opposition.³ The Ramgavar Azadagan, Huntchag, and Armenian Communist organs demanded the release of Chamlian from prison.⁴

The Tashnag daily wrote that the Armenians had no part in this internal crisis of Lebanon, and their attitude showed that they wanted to be an element making for peace. If they were participating in the struggle of lists that was because from purely electoral concerns. The paper added that this was known by their opponents, but as the latter were sure of their forth-coming defeat they were trying to exploit events so as to make the Tashnags lose face and appear as suspicious elements.⁵ The next day Aztag continued to write that

¹ According to Prime Minister Solh among the detained were many Syrians and two members of the Syrian Deuxieme Bureau.

² Asian Recorder, July 27 - August 2, 1957, p. 1564.

³ Zartok, 20th year, June 1, 1957, No. 5825.

⁴ Zartok, 20th year, June 2, 1957, No. 5826. Ararad, 20th year, June 4, 1957, No. 613 (4630). Ilalamam-Haratch, 1st year, June 2, 1957, No. 22.

⁵ Aztag, 31st year, June 4, 1957, No. 82 (7582).

"it is not our role to play at opposition, or to go to extremes and participate in enterprises tending to overthrow the government. All these can only harm our community and destroy our reputation of trustworthiness achieved through years of faithful work."¹

Former President Bshara Khoury criticised the internal and the external policy of the government, followed by Maronite Patriarch Archbishop Paul Meoushy.²

On June 3, in a decree two neutral ministers were appointed, Dr. Joseph Hitti and Mohammed Ali Beyhum. In a second decree all security measures taken during the period of the election whether by the armed forces, police or constabulary were declared to be subject to the final authority of the Commander in Chief of the Army, General Fuad Chehab, whose impartiality was recognized by all.³ Also a Commission of Four was formed composed of ministers Joseph Hitti, Mohammed Ali Beyhum, Majid Arslan and Mohammed Sabra to examine complaints regarding the elections.⁴ The opposition called off its general strike.⁵

¹ Aztag, 31st year, June 5, 1957, No. 83 (7583).

² Zartouk, 20th year, June 4, 1957, No. 5827.

³ Keessing's Contemporary Archives, August 3-10, 1957, p. 15696A.

⁴ Le Jour, 23d year, June 3, 1957, No. 7147. Zartouk, 20th year, June 4, 1957, No. 5827.

⁵ Keessing's Contemporary Archives, August 3-10, 1957, p. 15696A.

On June 3, at 4:30 p.m. Opposition candidate Hratchia Chamlian was released from prison along with fellow prisoners.¹

On June 6, 1957 in a complaint, signed by Yafi, Salam, Majdalani, Ziade and Chamlian, addressed to the Commission of Four, these contested the right of Khatchig Babikian to present himself as candidate on the grounds that Babikian and his father had received Lebanese identity by a decree of November 27, 1953 registered by the judge of Metn. They claimed this was against the law, as Babikian has said that he was a Turkish citizen and had settled in Lebanon on August 30, 1924 and could become a Lebanese according to the stipulations of the treaty of Lausanne. The opposition candidates claimed that he was born in Cyprus in 1922 and had come to Beirut from Paris in 1929 and his father was an Italian citizen. The complaint added that Babikian had been imprisoned by the French Authorities as an Italian from 1940 to 1941, that he had an Italian passport dated April 25, 1947 issued by the Italian Embassy at Beirut and that he was registered at the Bar as an Italian. The opposition candidates demanded that his candidature be refused as the decision of the Metn court was valueless.² The Commission of Four examined

¹ Zartonk, 20th year, June 4, 1957, No. 5827. Ararad, 20th year, June 5, 1957, No. 614 (4631).

² Zartonk, 20th year, June 8, 1957, No. 5831, p. 3. Ararad, 20th year, June 9, 1957, No. 618 (4635), p. 3.

the complaint. Babikian¹ called upon the undeniable legal aspect of the decision of the court of Metn. The commission esteemed that as this complaint was strictly legal, it was not their competence.²

The Huntchag daily also protested and demanded the Commission of Four to return the fourteen polling centers, which were originally in Camp Hadjin, to their proper places.³

The Opposition National Front which was in favor of Egypt's Gamal Abdel Nasser and his policy of positive neutralism and Arab nationalism, with the support of the Egyptian, Syrian and Soviet press and the radio, attacked in the electoral campaign both the internal and external policy of the government.⁴ The Communists were bitterly opposed to the Eisenhower doctrine and intended "to save Lebanon from its claws"⁵. The government on the other hand enjoyed the full support of President Chamoun and the Western powers.

¹ Khatchig Babikian during an interview in December 1961 told the present writer that he was Lebanese since 1924.

² L'Orient, 33d year, June 8, 1957, No. 9432, p. 2.

³ Ararad, 20th year, June 5 and June 8, 1957, No. 615 (4632).

⁴ Keesing's Contemporary Archives, August 3-10, 1957, p. 15696A.

⁵ Ilalamam-Haratch, 1st year, May 12, 1957, No. 19.

specially the United States of America who was "making little effort to disguise its support for Solh".¹ Just a day before the elections the United States had flown in from West Germany four aircrafts containing 37 jeeps and 12 recoilless rifles for mounting on jeeps as the first shipment under the Eisenhower Doctrine.² The same day Moscow Radio, in its Arabic broadcast, said that the arrival of arms on the eve of elections was part of an "outrageous game" being played by American diplomacy.³

For the Armenians, the dispute centered on the Armenian Church crisis and the ideological feud between the Tashnags and their opponents.⁴ The Ramgavar Azadagan daily wrote that they were not going to let traitors, agents of foreigners, enemies of the Armenian church and opportunists, "who have divided our community into two camps, infiltrate into the Parliament and continue their detrimental policy".⁵ The Huntchag daily wrote that, by voting for the opposition candidates, opportunists will be left out of the Lebanese Parliament,

¹ Time (International edition), June 24, 1957, p. 28.

² Ibid., and Asian Recorder, July 27-August 2, 1957, p. 1564.

³ Asian Recorder, July 27-August 2, 1957, p. 1564.

⁴ Only Tosbath's Ayk and the Communist Ilalamam-Haratch besides the Armenian Church campaigned on the grounds of international politics.

⁵ Zartonk, 20th year, June 9, 1957, No. 5832.

the unity of the Armenian Church will be secured and will be liberated from destructive elements. As well as this Lebanese national unity will be realised under the glorious flag of Lebanon.¹ The Lebanese Armenian Rally, in an appeal, declared that the National Front was the Champion of the unbreakable brotherhood of Armenians and Arabs and a loyal collaborator. It further stated that the Front rallied around itself the strongest and most select persons who are devoted to the supreme interests of Lebanon and to the defence of the national and ecclesiastical rights of the Armenians.²

On June 6, 1957 at Sahagian Stadium a meeting was organized by the Lebanese Armenian Rally honoring the opposition list of the Second Constituency of Beirut. 10,000 people including the opposition candidates of both constituencies of Beirut were present. Jirayr Nayiri, Gharibian, Toursarkissian (in Arabic), Yafi, Salam and Mashnoug spoke. According to Zartouk and Ararad, Saeb Salam had declared that this time they did not want the Armenians to have only a cipher deputy in Parliament and that they would permit the division of the Armenian church. Abdallah Mashnoug declared that the injustice done to the Armenian church would be repaired.³ The Tashnag daily

¹ Ararad, 20th year, June 7, 1957, No. 616 (4633).

² Ararad, 20th year, June 9, 1957, No. 618 (4635).

³ Zartouk, 20th year, June 8, 1957, No. 5831. Ararad, 20th year, June 8, 1957, No. 617 (4634).

wrote that the effort and aim of Armenian voters must be to secure the success of the candidates of the government list, as it is a sacred duty to see those forces who are a guarantee of the independence and freedom of Lebanon "in such days"¹ be the legitimate leaders of Lebanon. The Huntchag organ published the translation of an article entitled "The Tashnags are a danger for Armenians and Arabs, as they are a tool and agent in the hands of imperialism" published first in al-Sarkha on May 11, 1957 of Damascus, and began a series of articles revealing the decisions of the XVth General Convention of the Tashnag party held in Cairo in 1955 and bitterly criticising them.² In Dikran Tosbath's Ayk, its editor Yeghia Nadjarian³ retaliated with equal force denying the charges of Al-Sarkha and in its turn revealing that the ultra-secret Tashnag document published by Ararad on October

¹ Aztag, 31st year, June 7, 1957, No. 85 (7585).

² Ararad, 20th year, May 31, 1957, No. 610 (4627).

³ Yeghia Nadjarian after resigning from the editorship of Ayk by an open letter dated August 24, 1957 published first in Ararad (20th year, August 25, 1957, No. 682 (4699)) declared that all that he had written in Ayk was made up by the Tashnag Puro and edited by him. Later Yeghia Nadjarian wrote a book Tashnag Ghogavaroutune Odari Dzarayoutian Metch (The Tashnag Leadership in the Service of Foreigners) which was translated into Arabic and published under the title of Isabat al Tashnag fi Khdmal el Isti^mmar in Beirut in 1958. At present Nadjarian lives in Soviet Armenia.

12, 1955 was made up by Soviet agents. Nadjarian based his allegations on some documents of Jean Touma¹ and accused the Huntchags of being Communist fellow travellers.² The Huntchag daily denied all the charges and wrote that "Yeghia Nadjarian and Jean Tovmassian are the Yassian*s³ of today."⁴

Aztag and Ayk accused the broadcasting station of Yerevan, capital of Soviet Armenia, of interfering in the interior affairs of Lebanon. According to Ayk⁵ on June 2, and according to Aztag⁶ on June 6 at 10 p.m. the state operated station had presented Der Kaloustian and Tosbath as "enemies of the Arab peoples and imperialist agents" and their colleagues as "reactionary and tools of the colonialists"

¹ Jean Tovmassian or Touma was condemned to death in 1961 and hanged on December 21, 1962 by the U.A.R. Authorities in Cairo as the leader of an espionage ring for Israel. See Zartouk (26th year, December 22, 1962, No. 75 (7505)).

² Ayk, 5th year, June 2 and 4, 1957, No. 1307 and 1308.

³ Arshavir Yassian, was a notorious Armenian informer, who had worked for the Turks during the Armenian massacres and deportation of World War I. He was later shot by Armenian gunmen.

⁴ Ararad, 20th year, June 6, 1957, No. 616 (4632).

⁵ Ayk, 5th year, June 6, 1957, No. 1310.

⁶ Aztag, 31st year, June 16, 1957, No. 93 (7593).

and had encouraged people to vote for the "progressive candidates", Antoine Tabet, Nazareth Gharibian and Abdallah Mashnouk. Aztag concluded that the opposition¹ candidates thus "enjoyed the total confidence and assistance of the Communist party".²

On June 6, 1957 Hagop Khoren Tahan, who had posed his candidature independently in the First Constituency, withdrew in favor of Babikian³. George Jahshan, Alfred Naccache, and Toufic el-Masri from the First Constituency and Anis el Saghir, Abdallah Hajj, Malik Kanbar and Henri Janji from the Second Constituency withdrew their candidatures.⁴ On June 9, 1957 former deputy Dr. Melkon Hairabedian⁵ President of the Regional Union of Adana, in an appeal, invited all his compatriots to vote for Khatchig Babikian whose family was originally from Adana.⁶

¹ Zartok (20th year, May 12, 1957, No. 190 (5808)) in reply to L'Orient which had made similar charges wrote that "The anti-Tashnag front had nothing to do with Communists".

² Aztag, 31st year, June 9, 1957, No. 87 (7587).

³ Aztag, 31st year, June 7, 1957, No. 85 (7585). Ayk, 5th year, June 7, 1957, No. 1311, p. 4.

⁴ Ararad, 20th year, June 7, 1957, No. 616 (4633).

⁵ During an interview in December 1961 Dr. Melkon Hairabedian told the present writer that there were rumors that Armenians originally from Adana were disappointed as Dr. Hairabedian was not chosen as Armenian candidate and that Dr. Hairabedian was against the candidature of Babikian. To calm down the 1000 family (5000 persons) strong Armenians from Adana and set things straight, this declaration was issued.

⁶ Aztag, 31st year, June 9, 1957, No. 87 (7587). Ayk, 5th year, June 9, 1957, No. 1313.

There remained one major candidate running independently, Antoine Tabet, former President of the Syndicate of Engineers, and candidate of the pro-Communist Partisans of Peace for the Maronite seat in the First Constituency of Beirut.¹ The Armenian branch of the Lebanese Communist party organized a public meeting on May 26 at 5:30 p.m. in Khalil Bedewi quarter attended by 8000 people to honour Antoine Tabet. Dr. Harutiun Lachinian and Karnig Attarian invited all those present to vote for Tabet and the anti-Tashnag Armenian candidates.²

The Armenian Communist Ilalamam - Haratch quoting from As-Sayad wrote that 14000 identity cards had been removed from the office of the Etat Civil asking whether this was the reason why the government allowed the use of identity cards without photos for voting purposes.³

The situation within the Armenian quarters was very tense before the elections. On June 7, 1957 Toros Tchiftjdian, a 26 years old member of the Tashnag party, was shot dead in front of his house

¹ Ilalamam - Haratch, 1st year, May 5, 1957, No. 18.

² Ilalamam - Haratch, 1st year, June 2, 1957, No. 22.

³ Ilalamam - Haratch, 1st year, June 9, 1957, No. 23.

at Bourj Hammoud, (according to Aztag¹ by members of the Huntchag party) when quarelling about sticking up on walls the photos of candidates.²

Before the elections General Fuad Chehab stated that the Army was charged with maintaining order and not controlling the electoral operations.³

The elections of Beirut were held on Sunday June 9, 1957 from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. The elections were held calmly though in a tense atmosphere. The exception was the Armenian quarterz where bloodshed occured. Out of 74,944 registered voters about 34,500 voters participated in the First Constituency (i.e. 48%) and out of 69,848 registered voters about 31,000 voters participated (i.e. 44%) in the Second Constituency of Beirut.⁴ Twenty "leftists" were arrested.⁵

The ballots were counted at the City Hall. At 10 p.m. the results of the Second Constituency of Beirut were out. At the same hour, after it was announced that the opposition list led the government

¹ Aztag, 30th year, June 14, 1957, No. 91 (7591).

² L'Orient, 33d year, June 8, 1957, No. 9432.

³ L'Orient, 33d year, June 9, 1957, No. 9433.

⁴ L'Orient, 33d year, June 11, 1957, No. 9435.

⁵ Asian Recorder, July 27 - August 2, 1957, p. 1564.

list by thousands of voters in the First Constituency, the checking and counting of ballots took place in a restricted committee. The results were out at 5:30 a.m. on June 10.¹

The official results were as follows:²

For the First Constituency of Beirut.

Sami Solh	19092
Khatchig Babikian ³	18038
Khalil Hibri	17907
Pierre Edde	17560
Nassim Majdalani	16567
Hratchia Chamlian	16341
Abdallah Yafi	16270
Saeb Salam	15725
Ghassan Tueni	15421
Antoine Tabet	11052
Louis Ziade	4998

¹ L'Orient, 33d year, June 10, 1957, No. 9434. Le Soir, 11th year, June 10, 1957, No. 3229.

² L'Orient, 33d year, June 11, 1957, No. 9435. Le Jour, 23d year, June 11, 1957, No. 7155. Le Soir, 11th year, June 10, 1957, No. 3229.

³ Aztag (30th year, June 11, 1957, No. 88 (7588)) mentioned Babikian to have received 18400 votes.

William Haoui	2579
Laure Tabet	652
Joseph Hayek	217

For the Second Constituency of Beirut:

Rashid Beydoun	17065
Joseph Chader	16670
Movses Der Kaloustian	15611
Jamil Mekkaoui	15101
Chafik Nassif	14471
Faouzi Hoss	13803
Noubar Toursarkissian	11737
Abdallah Mashnouk	11639
Nazareth Gharibian	11198
Farid Jebran	10923
Mohammed Ali Rez	10309
Rafik Naja	9574
Adib Kaddura	3398
Jamil Attieh	855
Robert Abela	706
Ali Fakhreddine	525
Noureddine Medawar	181

Members of the government lists in both constituencies were elected deputies with the exception of Ghassan Tueni who lost the

Greek Orthodox seat to Nassim Majdalani because of a dispersal of votes cast by government supporters as there was William Haoui, Kataeb candidate for the Greek Orthodox seat. Nasri Maalouf, member of the Ministerial Commission of Four declared that their commission had registered no complaints.

After the elections the Opposition National Front disputed these results alleging false counts. According to the opposition, at 11 p.m. out of 204 ballot boxes¹ of the First Constituency, 145 boxes were emptied and the votes counted, which gave the opposition an advance of 4000 votes over the government. Members of the government list panicked and left the polling center. The counting of votes slowed down and no more results from new boxes were announced, A meeting lasting two hours took place, while the radio at midnight announced that the results would be given in the morning of June 10

¹ Ilalamam - Haratch (1st year, June 30, 1957, No. 26) quoting as-Sayad wrote that the First Constituency had 204 ballot boxes of which 100 were in the Eastern section and 104 in the Western section. According to the government results 15861 persons had voted in the Eastern section (Christian quarters). While the Kataeb who worked for William Haoui had calculated only 12000 voters, of which 9000 had voted for the government list and 3000 for the opposition. As-Sayad wrote that Kataeb Chief Pierre Gemayel had confirmed these results and added that the addition of these 4000 votes had "elected" the government list.

L'Orient (33d year, June 10, 1957, No. 9434) wrote that at 10 p.m. the results of 60 boxes out of 204 of the First Constituency were announced and the lists followed each other closely and that the results were known at 3:15 a.m. of June 10, 1957, after counting by a restricted committee in the presence of Mashnouk and Majdalani.

Le Soir (11th year, June 10, 1957, No. 3229) and Ayk (5th year, June 11, 1957, No. 1314) wrote that at 10 p.m. the opposition list in the First Constituency had "an advance of thousands of votes" and "then came the great silence", and the results were known at 5:30 a.m. on June 10 "because of the careful examination of the votes".

at 5 a.m. in an official communique the results were issued.¹

On June 11, Abdallah Yafi declared that the opposition National Front had lost the legislative elections of Beirut because of "forgery and intrigue". On June 17, Saeb Salam said that "no other election in Lebanon had been accompanied by so much terrorism and other malpractices".² On July 2, in another declaration Salam said that despite the trade of votes and all the possibilities under the disposal of the government, the opposition had an advance of 3500 votes and by forgery, the authorities had added these additional votes on Solh's list.³

The Communist candidate Antoine Tabet declared that in the special case of the Nahr quarter where the Tashnags provoked incidents it was difficult to speak of free elections. However he agreed that on the whole the ballot technically speaking was regular and the voting operations with the exception of Nahr were normal.⁴

The Ramgavar Azadagan daily wrote that in the Armenian quarters the elections were characterised by many irregularities, an atmosphere

¹ Ilalamam - Haratch, 1st year, June 16, 1957, No. 24.

² Asian Recorder, July 27 - August 2, 1957, p. 1564.

³ L'Orient, 33d year, July 3, 1957, No. 9457.

⁴ L'Orient, 33d year, June 10, 1957, No. 9434.

of terror, Tashnag murders, the omission of the names of about 2000 non-Tashnag Armenians from the electoral lists¹, the partiality of the authorities towards the Tashnags, despite protests the shift of polling centers from Camp Hadjin to Karantina without reason and explanation, the arrest by the police in Bourj Hammoud and Beirut of members of the electoral committees of the Lebanese Armenian Rally, the barring of all routes from Bourj Hammoud to Beirut by Tashnags so as not to allow their opponents to vote with the² of the unrefutable permission of the government and finally various forms of pressure. The paper added that the result of the counting of votes was a puzzle in itself and that the Lebanese National Union Front would continue the struggle for the defence of law, justice and the supreme interests of Lebanon.

All the opposition papers announced the deaths of Krikor Vrtanessian, Bedros and Levon Kdjoyan brothers, killed at noon on election day in front of Bagramian Club by machine gun bullets "fired

¹ Zartok, (20th year, June 11, 1957, No. 215 (5833) mentioned the name of Hratchia Setrakian, candidate during the legislative elections of 1951 as being unable to vote as his name was omitted. Meguerditch Messerlian, candidate during the elections of 1943, told the present writer during an interview in April 1961, that he could not vote in 1957 as his name didn't appear on the electoral lists.

² Zartok, 20th year, June 11, 1957, No. 215 (5833).

by Tashnag¹ gunmen" in rapidly passing cars.² Zartouk, added these murders caused hundreds of anti-Tashnag voters to remain in their houses and refrain from voting.³ The funeral of the first two victims who had died instantly was held on June 10, at St. Kevork Church in Hadjin in the presence of the Lebanese Armenian Rally leaders, Saeb Salam, Adnan Hakim, Antoine Tabet, Mohammed Ali Rez and Abdallah Mashnoug. The funeral procession to the Armenian cemetery of Furn Shebak was accompanied by four tanks, five armored cars, each followed by a jeep full of five soldiers, and two groups each of policemen and constabulary. At the cemetery Abdallah Mashnoug, the Rev. Knel Jerejian, Hrant Kankrouni, Garo Sarrafian and Karnig Attarian spoke.⁴

The Huntchag daily wrote that when the government had declined to give place to a neutral government to conduct the elections, this was a proof that the government was determined not to loose its control of the country.⁵

¹ Aztag, 31st year, June 14, 1957, No. 91 (7591) wrote that their opponents were exploiting the deaths of "the victims by unknown bullets during a fight caused by Huntchag and Bolshevik agitators" and added they had written nothing about the murder of Toros Tchiftjdjian not to disturb the order and peace. The Tashnag paper also reported that a mother of four children (without giving her name) was injured by gunmen while passing from Hadjin.

² Zartouk, 20th year, June 11, 1957, No. 5833, Ararad, 20th year, June 11, 1957, No. 619 (4636).

³ Zartouk, 20th year, June 11, 1957, No. 5833.

⁴ Ararad, 20th year, June 11, 1957, No. 619 (4636).

⁵ Ibid.

All the opposition papers alleged fraud and attacked the government. Nasib Metni's Telegraph wrote that votes were bought for a price amounting to one million Lebanese pounds, journalists were not allowed to witness the counting of votes, and from the petition handed to the government on the formation of an independent community, the names of more than 2000 Armenian voters were omitted. Tashnag women voted as much as five times, profiting from the absence of photos on the identity cards. The shift of polling centers from Hadjin to Tashnag clubs was unjust and hundreds of demonstrators from May 30 were still in prison.¹ Abdallah Mashnouk's Beirut al-Massa wrote that not a single Jew voted for the opposition list. It claimed that 7000 voters could not vote, and that it was impossible to approach the Nahr polling centers because of Tashnag terror. At Nahr the representative of Mashnouk could not be present at the counting of votes.² Abdallah Yafi's Al-Siasa wrote that seventy per cent of the names of Armenian voters were omitted and the Tashnags created an atmosphere of terror.³ The Destouri Al-Diar

¹ Telegraph, as quoted by Ararad, 20th year, June 11, 1957, No. 619 (4636).

² Beirut al-Massa, as quoted by Ilalamam-Haratch, 1st year, June 16, 1957, No. 24.

³ Ibid.

reported that at 10 p.m. on June 9, the opposition had an advance of three to four thousands votes in the First Constituency, then a meeting of two hours took place and the radio announced that the results would be broadcast the next day. The paper alleged fraud.¹ The government took legal action against Al-Diar and Telegraph.²

The Tashnag daily wrote that the elections were held in "complete calm and in an atmosphere of absolute freedom." The paper added that the elections showed that the majority of Armenians supported the Catholicossate of Cilicia and its ruler.³ Commenting on the remarks of their opponents, Aztag added that when their opponents had had the courage and honesty to bow to truth, then they would accept their weakness and poverty.⁴ Tosbath's Ayk wrote that their Armenian opponents were defeated as they had separated from the Catholicossate of Cilicia.⁵ The Ramgavar Azadagan organ replied in an editorial, that both for the Catholicossal and legislative elections the highest authorities had wanted the success of their opponents.⁶

¹Ibid.

²Le Soir, 11th year, June 12, 1957, No. 3231.

³Aztag, 31st year, June 11, 1957, No. 88 (7588).

⁴Aztag, 31st year, June 13, 1957, No. 90 (7590).

⁵Ayk, 5th year, June 11, 1957, No. 1314.

⁶Zartonk, 20th year, June 12, 1957, No. 5834.

L'Orient, Le Soir, Nahar, Bayrak, Al-Jaryda, Al-Amal and all pro-government newspapers wrote that the elections were free. The independent Le Jour reported that the elections were held in an atmosphere of calm, liberty and discipline with the exception of an incident at Nahr "without any gravity".¹ Kataeb Supreme Chief Pierre Gemayel and National Bloc leader Raymond Edde qualified the elections as normal. Gemayel however stressed the immensity of the trade of votes.²

The Lebanese Foreign Minister Charles Malik alleged that the "parties opposing the government's foreign policy were under Soviet influence" after the Moscow Radio Arabic broadcast had presented the Lebanese legislative elections as a political conflict between pro-Western elements and those favoring positive neutralism and friendship with Arab countries.³ On June 11, 1957 the U.S.S.R. handed a note to the Lebanese Foreign Office through its embassy in Beirut, stressing that it had not in any way sought to influence Lebanese political groups during the legislative elections.⁴ On June 24, 1957

¹ Le Jour, 23d year, June 10, 1957, No. 7154.

² L'Orient, 33d year, June 10, 1957, No. 3434.

³ Asian Recorder, July 27-August 2, 1957, p. 1564.

⁴ Asian Recorder, *op. cit.*, Le Soir, 11th year, June 12, 1957, No. 3231. L'Orient, 33d year, June 13, 1957, No. 9437.

the Lebanese government in reply accused the U.S.S.R. of "regrettable interference in the Lebanon's private affairs" for it had alleged that the Lebanese people did not support the foreign policy of its government.¹

As for the election of the Armenian Orthodox deputy from Bourj Hammoud there was scarcely a campaign. Dikran Tosbath's Ayk wrote that the Ramgavar and Huntchag papers denied the existence of Noubar Nokhoudian, that the latter had not signed the manifesto of the opposition supporting Mashnouk, that he had sent a cable to President Chamoun supporting the foreign policy of Lebanon so as he could be considered a governmental candidate.² Dikran Tosbath who as Tashnag candidate³ enjoyed the support of the Kataebs, the Syrian Popular party and the National Bloc⁴ was confronted with what he termed "local intrigues".⁵ On June 12 at midnight the Lebanese Armenian Rally candidate for Bourj Hammoud withdrew his candidature, thus Dikran Tosbath was declared elected as deputy as he had no competitor.⁶

¹ Asian Recorder, July 27 - August 2, 1957, p. 1564.

² Ayk, 5th year, June 7, 1957, No. 1311.

³ Aztag, 31st year, May 19, 1957, No. 69 (7509).

⁴ Ayk, 5th year, June 14, 1957, No. 1317.

⁵ Ayk, 5th year, May 10, 1957, No. 1277.

⁶ Le Soir, 11th year, June 13, 1957, No. 3232.

The Lebanese Armenian National Rally in a declaration announced that considering the tense atmosphere caused by the bloody incidents of June 9 which caused the death of innocent Armenian voters, and considering that not only the conditions of a free and democratic election were lacking but various kinds of irregularities made the authentic results of an election impossible, they had withdrawn the candidature of Noubar Nokhoudian.¹ In a declaration Nokhoudian announced that "to spare our people of new victims" he had "resigned from electoral success", upon the express wish of Armenian and Arab notables of the district.² The Ramgavar Azadagan daily in two editorials wrote that the Bourj Hammoud district limitation was wrong, that the murderers of June 9 were not prosecuted, that as the Tashnags had not let Bourj Hammoud inhabitants cross to Beirut, the same thing would have happened on June 16. The paper concluded by saying that Tosbath "can never represent the people but only the person who *elected* him".³ The Huntchag daily wrote, that the partiality of the government, pressure and an atmosphere of crime

¹ Zartok, 20th year, June 15, 1957, No. 5837. Ararad, 20th year, June 16, 1957, No. 4641.

² Zartok, 20th year, June 14, 1957, No. 218 (5836).

³ Zartok, 20th year, June 16, and 18, 1957, No. 220 (5838) and 221 (5839).

in the Armenian quarters, forced Nokhoudian to withdraw his candidature.¹ The Tashnag daily reported that Nokhoudian had withdrawn as a consequence of the serious defeat of the two candidates of the Rally in Beirut; and in an editorial wrote that the "victory of the Armenian people was completed with the election of Dikran Tosbath".²

After the elections of Mount Lebanon on June 16, 1957 which resulted in the total victory of all government candidates, the two neutral ministers Dr. Hitti and Beyhum, who were appointed to allay the apprehensions of the National Front that the legislative elections would not be conducted fairly, resigned.³ In a brief note addressed to Premier Solh they wrote, that although the elections from the administrative point of view were held in a precise and correct manner "the general atmosphere and certain implications" did not encourage them to continue their mission.⁴

On July 2, 1957 Saeb Salam declared that the opposition would stop its activities if the 1957 legislative elections were annulled, the electoral law was modified and if the government returned to the traditional foreign policy of Lebanon.⁵

¹ Ararad, 20th year, June 14, 1957, No. 622 (4639).

² Aztag, 31th year, June 15, 1957, No. 92 (7592).

³ L'Orient, 33d year, June 18, 1957, No. 9442.

⁴ L'Orient, 33d year, June 18, 1957, No. 9442. Le Jour, 23d year, June 18, 1957, No. 7162.

⁵ L'Orient, 33d year, July 3, 1957, No. 9457.

However these suggestions were not accepted and the tension increased, leading to an armed conflict in 1958.¹

Within the Armenian Community the situation deteriorated. In August, the General Assembly of the Cilician Religious Brotherhood, which had increased in number after the ordination of seven celibate priests, officially expelled Archbishop Khat, two bishops, and eight celibate priests from the Cilician Religious Brotherhood. Occasional vendettas were also registered. In September an anti-Tashnag Jirayr Madaghjian was allegedly murdered by Tashnags.

¹ Time, (International edition), June 27, 1960, p. 28., wrote that in 1957 "pro-Western President Camille Chamoun boldly rigged the parliamentary elections in Lebanon and brought on an insurrection by his Nasser-minded opponents."

The Elections of 1960

During the crisis of 1958 on the basis of an agreement made on July 31, 1958 General Fuad Chehab, commander in chief of the Lebanese Army was elected President of the Republic by the Parliament, and was installed in office on September 23, 1958. On October 15, 1958, by an agreement reached between the former opposition National Union Front and the major Christian political groupings, namely the Kataebs and the National Bloc, a government of four led by Rashid Karame with the participation of Pierre Gemayel, Hussein Oweyni, and Raymond Edde was formed, putting an end to the crisis which had started in May, 1958.

The National Union Front, some of whose leaders were left out of the Parliament of 1957, demanded the dissolution of the Parliament. But it was not possible to organize legislative elections. Passions had not calmed down, as some incidents in February 1959 proved, and it was desired to change the electoral law in such a way as to permit each major community to elect its own deputies.

The government of four had to give way to another government led by Karame with the assistance of Gemayel with National Bloc leader Edde excluded on account of divergence of views between him and the Kataeb leader.

With some difficulty, the Government succeeded in having the Electoral Reform Bill approved by the various parliamentary commissions,

and by the Parliament itself on April 20, 1960.¹

According to the new electoral law promulgated on April 26, 1960 secret ballot was established for the first time, the enlargement of the Chamber of Deputies from 66 to 99 members was provided, the deposit for candidacy was set at 3000 Lebanese pounds and the country was divided into 26 constituencies.²

On May 4, 1960 the Chamber of Deputies was dissolved, by President Chehab, a year before the expiration of its term and it was announced that the legislative elections would be held in four stages from June 12 to July 3, 1960. On May 14 few hours after the resignation of the government of Karame a neutral caretaker cabinet to supervise the election was established under the leadership of former Premier Ahmed Daouk. None of the members of the cabinet were candidates.³

According to the new electoral law the Armenian Orthodox community was to have four seats: three from Beirut and one from Metn, and the Armenian Catholic community was to maintain its seat from Beirut.

¹ Keesing's Contemporary Archives, July 30-August 6, 1960, p. 17756 A.

² Ziadeh, Nicola A., "The Lebanese Elections 1960", Middle East Journal, vol. 14, Autumn (1960) No. 4, p. 368.

³ Keesing's Contemporary Archives, July 30-August 6, 1960, p. 17756 A.

Beirut was divided into two major and one minor constituency in such a manner that it perpetuated the division of opinion which had existed in the capital during the crisis of 1958 as it grouped all Christian denominations in Constituency I and the Sunnite community in Constituency II.¹

Three of the Armenian Orthodox deputies and the Armenian Catholic deputy were to be elected by the voters of Constituency I of Beirut, comprising the quarters of Eshrefieh, Rmeil, Mudawar, Saifi, and Minet el Hosn.²

On April 4, 1960 the census offices published the electoral lists, of which the list of Constituency I of Beirut included:³

¹ Ziadeh, Nicola A., "The Lebanese Elections, 1960", op. cit., p. 375.

² According to Aztaq (34th year, June 17, 1960, No. 82-8509) and Le Soir (14th year, June 17, 1960, No. 4154, p. 2) the number of voters in Constituency I of Beirut was as follows:

	<u>Men</u>	<u>Women</u>
Medawar	13207	13142
Eshrefieh	11394	11234
Rmeil	8186	8367
Saifi	2630	2914
Marfa	1764	1647
Minet el Hosn	4027	4527
Total	83,039	

³ Zartonk, 23d year, April 6, 1960, No. 160 (6673).

Armenian Orthodox	27600	Protestant	3761
Greek Orthodox	16459	Syrian=Catholic	2702
Maronite	13654	Shiite	2200
Sunnite	8861	Latin	1777
Armenian Catholic	7403	Chaldean	748
Greek Catholic	5059	Syrian Orthodox	460
Jewish	5121	Druze	152
Miscellaneous			180

Constituency I thus was to have three Armenian Orthodox, one Greek Orthodox, one Maronite, one Armenian Catholic one Greek Catholic and one Protestant deputies.

It was noteworthy that for the first time the Jewish community, in Minet el Hosn, which had belonged to Ain el Mreyse because of geographical proximity, was joined to the First Constituency of Beirut.¹

In the constituency of Metn was included Bourj Hammoud, which had been a separate constituency in the previous two elections. The former constituency of Bourj Hammoud included Jdeyde, Baoushrieh, Sed=Baoushrieh, Dekouani, Jesr Pasha, Sin El Fil, Bourj Hammoud, Watani and Ermeni, but it now was to comprise only the Armenian sections the other sections being joined to Metn proper.²

¹L'Orient (36th year, March 18, 1960, No. 10413) wrote that 3000 Jewish voters and the elements of the Tashnag party would represent an electoral force of primary importance in Constituency I.

²Le Soir, 14th year, June 15, 1960, No. 4152.

The constituency of Metn was to have three Maronite, one Greek Orthodox and one Armenian Orthodox deputies.

After the legislative elections of June 1957, the situation within Lebanon and the Armenian Community had gradually deteriorated. The Lebanese Armenian National Rally before, during and after the Lebanese Crisis of 1958 had maintained its membership in the opposition National Union Front, through its representatives Hratchia Chamlian and Noubar Toursarkissian.¹ Armenian representatives were included in the National Front visits to King Saoud in 1957 and President Nasser in 1958 and 1959. After the election of General Chehab as

¹The last reference in the Lebanese Armenian National Rally papers to the National Union Front in relation to Armenians was made on the occasion of a dinner given by Noubar Nokhoudian in honour of the National Union Front on April 17, 1959 at the Federal Hotel. At the banquet the presence of Nassim Majdalani, Mohammed Safieddine, Saeb Salam, Shafic Mortada, Hassan Farhat, Rafik Naja, Farid Jebran, Habib Keyrouz, Habib Kenj, Fuad Ammoun, Noubar Toursarkissian, Hratchia Chamlian, Hratchia Setrakian, Abdallah Yafi, Dr. Elias El Khoury, Fuad Khoury, Khodr Harake, Lahoud Lahoud, Prof. Parounag Tovmassian, Yervant Demirjian, Louis Ziade, and Setrag Kassardjian was noted. Toursarkissian, Dr. Lahoud and Salam stressed the necessity of maintaining the unity of the Front in speeches. (See Zartouk, 22nd year, April 21, 1959, No. 158 (6379).

The last reference to a political meeting of the National Union Front was made in L'Orient (35th year, November 27, 1958, No. 9943). This meeting demanded the broadening of the ministry. Among the participants of the meeting were Saeb Salam, Kamal Jomblat, Sabri Hamade, Elias Khoury, Fouad Ammoun, Rafik Naja, Suleyman Frangie, Rene Moawad, Hratchia Chamlian, Noubar Toursarkissian and Maarouf Saad.

President on August 26, 1959 a delegation composed by Hratchia Setrakian, Ara Topdjian, Hratchia Chamlian, Noubar Toursarkissian and Armen Gharib congratulated the President.¹ On August 29, 1958 another lay and clerical delegation of the so called Armenian Independent community led by Dr. Jidejian congratulated the President and informed him about the crisis of the Armenian community.²

The Tashnag party stood by the legitimate government of Lebanon. On July 4, Archbishop Khoren, the Rev. Hrant Khachadourian, Deputies Der Kaloustian, Tosbath and Babikian had visited President Camille Chamoun and assured him of their loyalty. On August 2, 1958 a clerical delegation led by Zareh I had congratulated President Chehab, after the latter's election.³ The anti-Tashnags allege that after the expiration of President Chamoun's term the Tashnags continued to support Chamoun, the Kataeb, and the Syrian Popular Party, even after October 15, 1958.⁴ On October 23, a delegation of the Armenian community administration led by Archbishop Khoren Paroyan had congratulated Premier Rashid Karame.⁵

¹ Ilalamam-Haratch, 2nd year, August 31, 1958, No. 35 (87), p. 4.

² Ibid.

³ Zartouk, 22nd year, May 12, 1959, No. 6396, p. 2.

⁴ Tutundjian, Khosrov, op. cit., p. 93.

⁵ Zartouk, 22nd year, May 12, 1959, No. 6396, p. 2.

In September 1958 the Huntchag, Ramgavar Azadagan, and Tashnag parties announced their support of President Chehab and their belief in the independence of Lebanon by official declarations. However these declarations did not stop the wave of fratricides within the Armenian community. These incidents ended only after claiming the lives of about 50 Armenians of opposing parties in late November 1958, upon the start of negotiations for a truce¹ urged by Interior Minister Raymond Edde. On December 7, 1958, a truce among the Huntchag, Ramgavar Azadagan, and Tashnag parties was concluded.²

After the successful settlement of the Lebanese crisis the Lebanese Armenian National Rally tried to secure the official recognition of the "Independent Catholicossate of Cilicia" at Damascus from the Authorities of Cairo and Damascus. They also hoped for a possible recognition of an independent Armenian community in Lebanon, as their allies in the National Union Front had³

¹ The truce provided for the stopping of press campaigns, the return to their homes of citizens who had left and assistance to the authorities for the arrest of troublemakers. The truce was signed by Dr. Adour Kabakian (Tashnag), Kersam Aharonian (Ramgavar Azadagan) and Haroutiun Jerejian (Huntchag).

² L'Orient, 35th year, December 9, 1958, No. 9955.

³ In December 1958 former Prime Ministers Yafi and Salam during their visit to Cairo visited the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag clubs where receptions were given in their honour. During these days Hratchia Setrakian was also in Cairo.

ascended to power in Lebanon, though with partnership of the Kataebs and the National Bloc leaders, who were opposed to the official division of the Armenian Orthodox community.¹

The Tashnag party, which was on friendly terms with the Kataeb and National Bloc parties, made strenuous efforts to arrange a rapport with the National Union Front, against which they had campaigned in the previous legislative elections, supporting President Chamoun during the crisis of 1958. In this respect, George Mardikian, a citizen of the United States who had good relations with Arab Nationalist circles, in 1959, coming to the Middle East, with Tashnag leaders visited Arab Nationalist leaders on behalf of Tashnags stressing their support to the cause of Arab Nationalism, after President Nasser's attack upon the Communist party of Syria. Only deputy Dikran Tosbath continued to support President Chamoun's newly formed National Liberal party acting independently of the Tashnag Party, with whose support he was elected.

On May 17, 1959 President Chehab along all the other community churches visited the Catholicosate of Antelias² which meant that no change in the status quo of the Armenian Church could be expected

¹ Interview with Hratchia Setrakian, August, 1962.

² L'Orient, 35th year, May 18, 1959, No. 10110.

in Lebanon. On the other hand President Chehab received a delegation of Huntchag, and Ramgavar Azadagan parties and Rally of Independents, led by Dr. Jidejian on May 23, 1959.¹ To President Chehab's Iftar during the Moslem month of Ramadan on March 22, 1960 amongst many others were invited Tashnag deputies Der Kaloustian, and Babikian, Tosbath, and Armenian Catholic deputy Chader, Ramgavar Azadagan leader Hratchia Setrakian, Huntchag leader Harutiun Jerejian and Independent leader Hratchia Chamlian² so that all factions of the Armenian community were represented.

Before the promulgation of the electoral law Zartonk demanded six seats for the Armenian community in the new chamber of deputies five for the Orthodox and one for the Catholics, on the ground of the government population statistics of 1953. The newspaper also accused the Armenian deputies of failing the community.³

¹ The delegation included Ara Topdjian, Armen Gharib, Hratchia Setrakian, Dr. Yervant Jidejian, Yervant Demirjian, Prof. Parounag Tovmassian, Dajad Srabian, Pakarad Bakalian and Haroutiun Jerejian (see L'Orient, 35th year, May 25, 1959, No. 10117).

² Zartonk, 23rd year, March 25, 1960, No. 150 (6663).

³ According to the government the Armenian Orthodox community counted 68,679 persons and the Armenian Catholic community 14,582 persons. According to the electoral law every 14,308 persons could elect one deputy. On this basis Zartonk (23rd year, February 27, 1960, No. 128 (6641) claimed that the Armenian Orthodox community had the right for five seats, as, after the allotment of four seats there was an excess of 11,477 persons, while the Greek Orthodox community was accounted 1553 less members than would be needed for ten seats, but was awarded eleven. The newspaper demanded a fair apportionment for the Armenians and blamed the Armenian deputies for their carelessness in this matter.

Aztag¹ and Ayk² resented this attack on the Armenian deputies. They said that the deputies had failed as the number of Lebanese Armenians was actually less than what the 1953 statistics showed as the repatriated Armenians were included in it. Zartonk reported that there was no "legitimate justification" in what the Tashnag paper wrote and added that Aztag was "conspiring against the basic interests of our community by its attempt to veil the truth": as within the last ten or fifteen years thousands of Maronites had emigrated, yet they were included in the 1953 statistics according to which the distribution of seats was made.³ Al-Anouar, Al-Jarida, L'Orient and other newspapers echoed the demands of Zartonk. These demands were officially presented by the Lebanese Armenian National Rally leaders to the Prime Minister and the Minister of the Interior.⁴ However when the new electoral law was promulgated, it was discovered that only five seats had been provided for the Armenian community.⁵

¹ Aztag, 34th year, March 8, 1960, No. 3 (8416).

² Ayk, 8th year, March 8, 1960, No. 2144.

³ Zartonk, 23rd year, March 17, 1960, No. 143 (6656), p. 2.

⁴ Zartonk, 23rd year, March 9, 1960, No. 136 (6649). Ayk, 18th year, March 10, 1960, No. 2146.

⁵ L'Orient, 36th year, April 27, 1960, No. 10451.

The organ of Ramgavar Azadagan in a series of editorials entitled "On the Margin of Parliamentary Elections" declared that their basic principle was not to attempt to play international politics. The Armenians of the Diaspora must not be a political element in the international field. If an Armenian organization becomes a tool in the hands of foreigners its position will strengthen but it will become associated with conspiracies and espionage.

"International adventures are dangerous and endanger all our community by making it a suspicious element. We have kept apart from foreigners. We have led our followers by the simple policy of staying away from international adventures. And so they are honest and loyal citizens of their Lebanese homeland."¹

The newspaper added that they were unreservedly in support of President Chehab and his new political orientation,² that they are as truly Lebanese as any other citizens, and that, consequently, the rights of their community should not be disregarded. It said that³ their love for Armenia was not an obstacle to their love of Lebanon comparing it with the love of the overseas Lebanese to their Fatherland. The editorial further emphasized that their feelings regarding

¹ Zartonk, 23rd year, March 2, 1960, No. 6643, p. 2.

² Zartonk, 23rd year, March 3, 1960, No. 6644, p. 2.

³ Zartonk, 23rd year, March 4, 1960, No. 6645, p. 2.

Soviet Armenia was not conditioned by the nature of the regime there, as they because of their ideology and principles, could not be conciliated with Communist dictatorship adding "regimes are temporary but fatherlands are everlasting."¹ As far as the Armenian dissensions in Lebanon were concerned, the newspaper declared itself against the Tashnag autocracy in Antelias and in favor of the administrative independence of the Cilician Catholicossate.²

The Huntchag announced in their publication that, joining their humble forces with those of "Arab brothers", they will defend the boundaries of Lebanon against aggressors, whether American or Soviet. The Communist weekly reproached the Huntchags saying that the Red Army³ had no aggressive intentions toward Lebanon.⁴

On Thursday April 7, 1960, the Huntchag, and Ramgavar Azadagan parties, the Veraznount Association, and the Rally of Independents met under the presidency of Dr. Yervant Jidejian and, after examining the electoral situation in the First Constituency of Beirut and Metn,

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Ararad, 23rd year, April 2, 1960, No. 118 (5486).

⁴ Ilalamam-Haratch, 4th year, April 10, 1960, No. 15 (170).

decided to participate in the forthcoming legislative elections in a United Front, adding that they enjoyed, the support of the overwhelming majority of voters in both constituencies. An electoral committee composed of Dr. Yervant Jidejian, Hratchia Chamlian (Independents), Vazken Bakalian (Veraznount Association), Hratchia Setrakian (Ramgavar Azadagan party) and Haroutiun Jerejian (Huntchag party), was formed to represent the Front.¹

Meanwhile, the President of the Kataeb party Pierre Gemayel, decided to be a candidate for the Maronite seat and the Vice President of the party, Joseph Chader, for the Armenian Catholic seat in the First Constituency of Beirut. As the Armenians had four out of eight seats and the majority of registered voters, the Kataeb leaders, especially Joseph Chader, tried to include candidates from both the Tashnag party and the Lebanese Armenian National Rally in their list. Their intention was to avoid an electoral campaign, on the grounds that it would have been rather impossible for any other party to form a second list without Armenian candidates. Dr. Jidejian had conferred with President Chehab, General Jamil Lahoud, and Pierre Gemayel who said they were desirous of the formation of one list in Beirut with the participation of the Tashnags and the Lebanese National Rally.

¹
Zartok, 23rd year, April 9, 1960, No. 163 (6676).

Negotiations began at the Kataeb club between Dr. Jidejian and Der Kaloustian, in the presence of Gemayel and Chader. The question arose of the distribution of seats between opposing Armenian groups. The Armenian Catholic seat was to be given to Chader as Kataeb candidate. There remained to be distributed three Armenian Orthodox seats of Beirut and the single seat of Metn.¹

The Lebanese Armenian National Rally "despite the fact that the Tashnags are a minority" claimed Zartonk agreed that two seats be reserved for the Tashnag party one in Beirut and one in Metn and the remaining two seats in Beirut for the Lebanese Armenian National Rally.² As this proposal was refused by the Tashnags, the Rally proposed to reserve two seats for the Tashnags in Beirut, and the remaining seats in Beirut and Metn for the Rally.³

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 6, 1960, No. 79 (8492). Spurk, 2nd year, June 4, 1960, No. 21.

² Zartonk, 23rd year, June 15, 1960, No. 218 (6731).

³ According to what the present writer has been told by Souren Khanamirian and Hratchia Setrakian, in August 1962, for one of the Armenian Orthodox seats the name of Dr. Smmikian, a former Lebanese Army physician and a personal friend of the President of the Republic, was suggested by the Authorities as neutral between the Tashnags and the anti-Tashnags. According to Dr. Jidejian (see Spurk, 2nd year, June 4, 1960, No. 21) Dr. Smmikian's candidacy on the united list as one of the two candidates of the Lebanese Armenian Rally was accepted by him although Dr. Smmikian was unknown to the Armenian Mass, and rejected by Der Kaloustian. During an interview in January, 1962, Movses Der Kaloustian denied the above statements as far as they concern the Tashnag Party.

The Tashnags refused the proposal and made a counter offer by which one seat was to be reserved to the Lebanese Armenian National Rally in Beirut on condition that the Rally did not present candidates on another list, keeping the other two seats for themselves and considering the seat of Metn open for an open election campaign in which the Tashnags and the Lebanese Armenian National Rally would be permitted to present candidates.¹

The Rally proposed to negotiate and agree upon the selection of an independent candidate for Metn who would meet with the approval of both sides. Upon the refusal of this proposal when finally Dr. Jidejian agreed to accept one seat in Beirut² Der Kaloustian³ accepted it on behalf of the Tashnag subject to the approval of the candidate by the Tashnag District Committee of Lebanon. This condition was

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 6, 1960, No. 79 (8492).

² Souren Khanamirian told the present writer during an interview in August 1962 that he had worked hard to achieve one Armenian list and had delayed accepting the Tashnag proposal to present his candidature. Khanamirian and Andre Tabourian had tried to have Vazken Bakalian as one of the four Armenian candidates on Gemayel's list as Lebanese Armenian National Rally candidate and had secured the approval of Der Kaloustian, but the Rally refused to consent to the appointment of one candidate and had required the right to nominate two candidates. In mid-May when the Kataeb list was unofficially declared, it did not include Khanamirian's name. (see Le Jour, 24th year, May 12, 1960, No. 7739).

³ During an interview in January 1962 Movses Der Kaloustian told the present writer that they were ready to accept one Rally candidate but that the Rally had requested two seats.

unacceptable to the Rally and the negotiations ended in failure.¹ After the failure of the negotiations the Tashnag organ wrote that Dr. Jidejian did not say anything about not presenting candidates from other lists.² The anti-Tashnag papers blamed Der Kaloustian and the Tashnag party leadership for the failure of the negotiations,³ which had began "upon the suggestion of great Lebanese leaders" and had revealed that the Tashnag leadership considered its partisan interests superior to the interests of the community.⁴

In Nayiri Khosrov Tutundjian wrote that Armenians should agree to on one list/abate partisan strife and pave way for a general Armenian concord to settle the crisis of the Cilician Catholicossate, which had divided the people into two unreconciliable groups. He added that only a minority of party leaders were against such cooperation, and they only for fear of loosing their positions.⁵

¹ Zartonk, 23rd year, June 15, 1960, No. 218 (6731). Aztag, 34th year, June 6, 1960, No. 79 (8492). Spurk, 2nd year, June 11, 1960, No. 22.

² Aztag, 34th year, June 11, 1960, No. 84 (8497).

³ Ararad (23rd year, June 5, 1960, No. 174 (5541)) wrote that the division of forces of the Armenian community occurred against the wish of President Chehab and Pierre Gemayel. Zartonk (23rd year, June 11, 1960, No. 215=6728) wrote that President Chehab and other political leaders had been desirous for a just and acceptable agreement between the Armenian factions and the responsibility of the failure of such an agreement falls on the Tashnag party leadership.

⁴ Zartonk, 23rd year, June 15, 1960, No. 218 (6731).

⁵ Nayiri, 8th year, May 29, 1960, No. 4, which was quoted by Zartonk, 23rd year, June 12, 1960, No. 216 (6729).

After the failure of negotiations, the Kataeb party¹, with whom the Tashnags had collaborated during the crisis of 1958, decided to participate in the elections with a joint Kataeb-Tashnag list.² The candidacies of Henri Pharaon as Greek Catholic Boulos Fayad as Greek Orthodox and Nassib Boulos as Protestant candidates on the Kataeb-Tashnag so called People's List did not materialise. On June 2, 1962 the names of the candidates were officially disclosed. They included Pierre Gemayel (Maronite), Fuad Boutros (Greek Orthodox), Antoine Sehnaoui (Greek Catholic), Movses Der Kaloustian (Armenian Orthodox), Khatchig Babikian (Armenian Orthodox), Souren Khanamirian (Armenian Orthodox), Joseph Chader (Armenian Catholic), and Charles Saad (Protestant).³

The Lebanese Armenian National Rally took occasion for a display of force during the Sports Festival of the Armenian Youth Association on April 18, 1960, at Camille Chamoun Sports City in the presence of about 20,000 spectators, under the presidency of Prime Minister

¹ In May 1960 Shahin Shahin, a member of the Kataeb party, was murdered at Sin el Fil creating some tension. The murder was ascribed to the Huntchag party which categorically denied it. (see Le Jour, 24th year, May 7, 1960, No. 7735). Later investigations proved the murder was non political. (Aztag, 14th year, May 5, 1960, No. 52 (8465).

² L'Orient, 36th year, March 26, 1960, No. 10421.

³ Aztag, 34th year, June 6, 1960, No. 79 (8492). Zartouk, 23rd year, June 3, 1960, No. 208 (6721). Ararad, 23rd year, June 3, 1960, No. 172 (5540). Ayk, 8th year, June 3, 1960, No. 2217.

Rashid Karame. The presence of Pierre Edde was noted. Another such occasion was the 26th inter-club games of Homenmen held on the same day attended by 6000 people, at Sahagian Stadium under the patronage of Speaker Sabri Hamade and the presidency of Kamal Jomblat.¹ On May 27, 1960, by a joint declaration, it was announced that a "complete agreement" had been reached between the Lebanese Armenian National Rally and Pierre Edde on behalf of the National Bloc for joint participation in the elections in the First Constituency of Beirut.² On May 30 the so called National Front publicly announced its candidates, including Pierre Edde (Maronite), Michel Sassine (Greek Orthodox)³ Abdalla Khoury (Greek Catholic), Hratchia Chamlian, (Armenian Orthodox), Vazken Bakalian⁴ (Armenian Orthodox), Mardiros Emile Iskenderian⁵

¹ L'Orient, 36th year, April 20, 1960, No. 10444.

² Zartok, 23rd year, May 27, 1960, No. 200 (6713). Ayk, 8th year, May 27, 1960, No. 2211. Ararad, 23rd year, May 28, 1960, No. 166 (5534).

³ Michel Sassine, a land owner who had some popularity in Eshrefieh was alleged to be the candidate of the Deuxieme Bureau by some persons interviewed by the present writer who requested that their names be withheld.

⁴ Vazken Bakalian is a wealthy capitalist and a specialist in industrial engineering. He is proficient in Arabic.

⁵ Mardiros Iskenderian told the present writer in January 1962 that since 1943 his relations with the huntchags have been official. Although Director of U.N.E.S.C.O. since 1954 for the Ministry of Education he was not forced to resign to present his candidature in the elections. Since 1943 he had received a number of Lebanese, Iranian, Iraqi, Spanish and Greek decorations.

(Armenian Orthodox), Noubar Toursarkissian (Armenian Catholic) and Selim Addi¹ (Protestant).²

After he formed his list, Pierre Edde declared that he had worked hard to achieve the formation of a list to represent all the tendencies of the Armenians, but because that could not be done the electoral campaign had been forced upon his colleagues against their wishes.³ Later, in an appeal to the Armenian voters Pierre Edde declared that the inter-party negotiations had failed because of the intransigence of Der Kaloustian. He added that he had declared that he was ready to remain outside the list if the cooperation of all Armenian organizations had been secured, and that had delayed the formation of both lists for that reason.⁴

¹ Selim Addi was a merchant, and a former teacher of Armenian Evangelical High School of Beirut, and in A.G.B.U.'s Melkonian Educational Institute in Cyprus. He speaks Armenian and has married an Armenian wife. Zartonk echoed his candidacy on April 13, 1960 (23rd year, No. 6679) and supported his entry in the Edde list.

² Zartonk, 23rd year, June 1, 1960, No. 206 (6719). Aztag, 34th year, June 1, 1960, No. 75 (8488). Le Jour, 24th year, June 1, 1960, No. 7759.

³ Zartonk, 23rd year, June 1, 1960, No. 206 (6719).

⁴ Zartonk, 23rd year, June 18, 1960, No. 221 (6734).

After the formation of the lists, Ararad commented that the government of Chehab had been theirs and that they would stand by its side, in the spirit of the slogan, "The Independence of Lebanon through the Unity of the Lebanese".¹

For the first time an Armenian Protestant, Dr. Papken Meguerditchian,² presented his candidature for the Protestant seat in the First Constituency.³ In case of an agreement between the opposing Armenian parties he could have been accepted on the united list as the Protestant neutral candidate. Although the negotiations between the opposing Armenian parties failed, he maintained his candidature.⁴

Independent candidates included Georges Hanna (Greek Orthodox) candidate of the pro-Communist partisans of peace, Fuad Moughabghab (Protestant), Sami Zreyck (Greek Catholic), George Berbari (Greek Orthodox), Michel Ghorayeb (Greek Catholic), Elias Noul (Greek Catholic), and Selim Wakim (Maronite).

¹ Ararad, 23rd year, June 2, 1960, No. 171 (5539).

² Dr. Papken Meguerditchian is the chief surgeon and responsible physician of the Azounieh Armenian Sanatorium since 1939. He was born in Marash in 1911. He received his M.D. degree from A.U.B. in 1936 and specialized in America receiving diplomas from the American College of Chest Physicians and International College of Surgeons. He is a member of the Board of the Haigazian College and of the Lebanon Committee of the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. He has held responsible positions within the Armenian Evangelical Community.

³ Ayk, 8th year, June 5, 1960, No. 2219.

⁴ Zartouk, 23rd year, June 15, 1960, No. 218 (6731), p. 4.

For Metn the Tashnag party decided to present Vartkes Chamlian a candidate of its own against Dikran Tosbath. The latter had maintained his collaboration with the National Liberal party.¹ The Tashnags joined with the Kataeb party in presenting one list, while Tosbath assured the support of National Liberal party, the National Bloc and the Syrian Popular party.² The Armenian National Rally decided not to participate in the elections of Metn, concentrating its efforts on the electoral campaign in Beirut. However, Noubar Nokhoudian presented himself as an independent candidate without being campaigned for or receiving official support of the anti-Tashnag parties.³ As the negotiations between Camille Chamoun and the Kataeb party failed, the former president on May 27 decided to run in the Metn area against the Kataebs. His candidacy infuriated his former allies.⁴

The two opposing lists were the following:

Maurice Gemayel (Maronite), General Jamil Lahoud (Maronite), Edouard Abi Jaoude (Maronite), Michel Murr (Greek Orthodox), and

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 2, 1960, No. 76 (8489).

² L'Orient, 36th year, March 20, 1960, No. 10415. Interview with Dikran Tosbath, August, 1962.

³ Interview with Hratchia Setrakian, August, 1962.

⁴ Ayk, 8th year, May 28, 1960, No. 2212.

Vartkes Chamlian (Armenian Orthodox).¹

Camille Chamoun (Maronite), Selim Lahoud (Maronite), Assaad Achkar (Maronite), Albert Moukhaiber (Greek Orthodox) and Dikran Tosbath (Armenian Orthodox).²

Independent Greek Orthodox candidate Gabriel Murr allied with Noubar Nokhoudian.

A wave of killings swept the Armenian quarters it started as early as February 27, 1960, with the murder of Yeghishe Kasbarian, a member of the Huntchag party.³ Bombs were thrown over the houses of Huntchag sympathisers Loussaper Madjarian, Sarkis Julfayan, and Avedis Poshoghlian between May 18 and 21 in Bourj Hammoud.⁴ On May 22 Simon Ateshparyan, and George Ibrahim were killed.⁵ On May 23 near Camp Charchabouk Tashnag sympathiser Khacher Tchiftjian was killed⁶ and Bedros Mirzoyan was seriously wounded while he was in the Tashnag Club of Eshrefieh.⁷

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 2, 1960, No. 76 (8489). Aztag, 34th year, June 6, 1960, No. 80 (8493).

² Ayk, 8th year, May 28, 1960, No. 2212.

³ Zartonk, 23rd year, March 1, 1960, No. 6642.

⁴ Ararad, 23rd year, May 25, 1960, No. 164 (5532).

⁵ Zartonk, 23rd year, May 24, 1960, No. 200 (6713).

⁶ Ayk, 8th year, May 24, 1960, No. 2208.

⁷ Ibid.

On May 31, the Armenian Orthodox Prelate of Lebanon appealed to his community to use only the ballot as a weapon deploring the "sad and sorrowful incidents" which had occurred.¹ Zartonk in reply remarked that they agree to the "thoughts expressed by Bishop Khoren" but added, "under his pen they sound false".²

On May 24 in an address to the nation President Chehab suggested making the forthcoming election into a free, sincere, and peaceful competition. Prime Minister Ahmed Daouk in his turn stressed the strict neutrality of the government in the elections.³

The struggle was bitter between the Kataeb which had come to be recognized as the spokesman of Christians during and after the crisis of 1958⁴, and the National Bloc which "had always considered itself to be the unofficial spokesman of Christians in Lebanon."⁵ For their

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 3, 1960, No. 78 (8491).

² Zartonk, 23rd year, June 10, 1960, No. 214 (6727).

³ Zartonk, 23rd year, May 25, 1960, No. 200 (6713).

⁴ According to an investigation of L'Orient, November 27=December 4, 1958, No. 9943=9950, the strength of the Lebanese parties in November=December 1958 at Beirut was as follows:

Syrian Popular Party	5500
Kataeb	5000
Najjade	4000
National Bloc	3392
Socialist Progressive Party	500

⁵ Ziadeh, Nicola A., "The Lebanese Elections, 1960", op. cit., pp. 378=79.

Armenian partners the electoral campaign centralized on communal issues. The Tashnag party considered the elections as a phase of their anti-Communist campaign and wanted to protect the Tashnag dominated community administration "from any mishap".¹ The Lebanese Armenian National Rally candidates, if elected, wanted to establish peace and national concord within the Armenian community, to put an end to fratricide and find a just solution for the Armenian church crisis.² The Armenian Communists declared that they were against the "candidates of American imperialism and the mercenary servants of Cairo".³

The Tashnag organ wrote that the so called Lebanese Armenian National Rally in Armenian life "is a docile and obedient follower of Soviet policy and the loyal agent of the red authorities of Yerevan in all national, political, and ecclesiastic issues."⁴ The paper wrote that "at all times the Tashnag party has stood in the first ranks of the defenders of Beirut and Lebanon in general from the Bolshevik danger."⁵ Concentrating its campaign on the elections of

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 10, 1960, No. 83 (8496).

² Zartok, 23rd year, June 19, 1960, No. 222 (6735).

³ Ilalamam-Haratch, 4th year, June 5, 1960, No. 33 (178).

⁴ Aztag, 34th year, June 8, 1960, No. 81 (8494).

⁵ Aztag, 34th year, June 9, 1960, No. 82 (8495).

Metn, Aztag wrote that people are boasting of the progress done by the Municipality of Bourj Hammoud, ascribing it to themselves.¹ The Tashnag organ, in a last appeal, asked its followers to give them a lesson in their district as the opponents of the Tashnag party "are the servants of Bolshevism and wish your defeat."²

Dr. Jidejian, in a letter dated June 8, 1960, addressed to Aztag, denied the Tashnag accusations categorically, stating that "the Lebanese Armenian National Rally is composed of a group of respected capitalist personalities as well as by the Huntchagian and Ramgavar Azadagan parties and Veraznount Association, and has no ties whatsoever with Communism."³ Zartouk, on June 10, in an editorial, denied the charges of Aztag.⁴ Ararad in its turn wrote that "the view that whoever is not a Tashnag is a Communist is a sample of stereotyped Tashnag mentality."⁵

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 8, 1960, No. 81 (8494).

² Aztag, 34th year, June 11, 1960, No. 84 (8497).

³ Ibid.

⁴ Aztag (34th year, April 28, 1960, No. 46 (8459)) wrote that according to Ilalamam-Haratch the Communists were with the Lebanese Armenian National Rally, but not to Zartouk. Ilalamam-Haratch (4th year, April 24, 1960, No. 17 (172)) had written that "our not being in the Rally is not an obstacle to be against the Tashnags."

⁵ Ararad, 23rd year, June 11, 1960, No. 179 (5547).

On June 3, 1960, at 8:30 p.m., a public meeting was organized in Nor Marash at Bourj Hammoud. 10,000 people attended, and all the Kataeb and Tashnag candidates were present. Tashnag and Kataeb candidates of Beirut and Metn spoke. Aram Sahagian spoke on behalf of the Tashnag party.¹

On June 4, 1960 public meetings honouring the National Rally candidates were organized by Meguerditch Postadjian in the Syrian Popular party and National Liberal party clubs of Bourj Hammoud, attended by 10,000 people. Dikran Tosbath and Albert Moukheiber spoke during these meetings.²

On June 5, 1960 President Chehab said his annual state visit to the Catholicosate of Antelias, accompanied by Prime Minister Daouk and Ministers Gaspard and Mikdad. The presence of the Tashnag candidates, their allies, and Dikran Tosbath was noted.³

Zartouk, though against both Tosbath and the Tashnags, wrote that the people who boasted of the progress done in Bourj Hammoud, attacked by the Tashnag daily, are none other than Chamoun and Tosbath, adding that it was comprehensible that the Tashnags run a "famous

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 4, 1960, No. 78 (8491).

² Ayk, 8th year, June 5, 1960, No. 2219.

³ Aztag, 34th year, June 6, 1960, No. 79 (8492).

stranger" against Tosbath, but it was incomprehensible for them to be so ungrateful and insolent.¹ Ayk asked how Camille Chamoun, the Syrian Popular party and Dikran Tosbath, twice Tashnag candidate in Bourj Hammoud, could be Bolsheviks.²

On Sunday June 12, 1960, the elections in Metn were held from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., in order and calm with few exceptions. Of 71,992 registered voters, 34,206 voted in 239 polling centers, 38 of which were in Bourj Hammoud. The percentage of voters was 48%.³

The official results were as follows:⁴

Maurice Gemayel	19337
Jamil Lahoud	18897
Camille Chamoun	17252
Vartkes Chamlian	17123
Assaad El Achkar	16265
Edouard Abi Jaoude	16092
Albert Moukheiber	15945
Dikran Tosbath	15282

¹ Zartouk, 23rd year, June 9, 1960, No. 213 (6726).

² Ayk, 8th year, June 12, 1960, No. 2225.

³ Le Soir, 14th year, June 13, 1960, No. 4150. Aztag, 34th year, June 15, 1960, No. 87 (8500).

⁴ Le Soir, 14th year, June 13, 1960, No. 4150.

Michel Murr	15064
Selim Lahoud	13634
Gabriel Murr	3197
Noubar Nokhoudian	1512
Abdallah Khoury	13

The number of votes obtained by the candidates in Bourj Hammoud was as follows:¹

Jamil Lahoud	4124
Maurice Gemayel	4052
Vartkes Chamlian	3940
Michel Murr	3895
Edouard Abi Jaoude	3848
Camille Chamoun	1186
Albert Moukheiber	1050
Assad Achkar	993
Dikran Tosbath	908
Selim Lahoud	668
Gabriel Murr	77
Noubar Nokhoudian	47

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 18, 1960, No. 88 (8510).

The number of votes¹ obtained by the above candidates in the Armenian section of Bourj Hammoud was as follows:²

Jamil Lahoud	3691
Maurice Gemayel	3537
Vartkes Chamlian	3482
Michel Murr	3442
Edouard Abi Jaoude	3429
Camille Chamoun	537
Albert Moukheiber	470
Assaad Achkar	438
Dikran Tosbath	418
Selim Lahoud	221
Noubar Nokhoudian	12

Maurice Gemayel, Jamil Lahoud and Vartkes Chamlian from the Kataeb list and Camille Chamoun and Albert Moukheiber from the so called National Rally list were declared elected to the Chamber of Deputies.

Dikran Tosbath's Le Soir and Ayk, Al Bina, and Sada Loubnane of the Syrian Popular party, Telegraphe, and Raouad alleged fraud.³

¹ Le Soir, (14th year, June 13, 1960, No. 4150) stated that Gemayel obtained 3547 votes, Murr 3424 votes, Selim Lahoud 521 votes, Achkar 436 votes, Moukheiber 418 votes and Tosbath 409 votes. The other results were the same as stated in Aztag.

² Aztag, 34th year, June 13, 1960, No. 85 (8498), p. 4.

³ Chehab, Camille, Les Elections Legislatives de 1960, Beirut 1960, p. 51.

The main allegations of Tosbath and his friends were the following: Interference of some organs of the Lebanese Government in favor of the opposing list, arbitrary arrests of supporters of their list, an atmosphere of terror in Bourj Hammoud. They further claimed that the percentage of voters in Metn was lower than in 1957 but had greatly increased in Bourj Hammoud, that since the repatriation of Armenians to Soviet Armenia the number of Armenian voters in Bourj Hammoud was only 1500, and that the results¹ of the Armenian polling centers of Bourj Hammoud were announced en bloc.²

Dikran Tosbath declared that although in 1953, 4638 persons had voted in the constituency of Bourj Hammoud it now included only the Armenian sector of Bourj Hammoud.³

In Sin El Fil, which was part of the constituency of Bourj Hammoud in 1953, 665 electors voted in favor of Tosbath and 863 in favor of Chamlian. In Dekouani 318 electors voted for Tosbath and 333 for Chamlian. In Mar Youssef, polling center of Bourj Hammoud Watani, 177 electors voted for Tosbath and 126 for Chamlian. After giving these results Tosbath demanded that the Prime Minister subtract their

¹ Ayk (8th year, June 15, 1960, No. 2227) stated that the declaration of the results of the first twenty boxes had ceased from 11 p.m. until 3 a.m. of June 13, 1960.

² Le Soir, 14th year, June 14, 1960, No. 4151.

³ Le Soir, 14th year, June 15, 1960, No. 4152.

number (2402) from the 4638 votes cast in 1953, so that he could estimate the number of votes in the Armenian sector of Bourj Hammoud.¹

In an open letter addressed to the Minister of the Interior, published in Le Soir, Dikran Tosbath claimed that, three days before election day, he had visited Gaspard and protested that the identity cards of the repatriated Armenians were going to be used during the elections. Tosbath also protested the lack of privacy, the open participation of the municipal employees in favour of the opponent list and the activity of terrorist gangs, and that the Minister had assured him that the identity cards of the repatriated Armenians were not going to be used, and that the number of voters in the Armenian sectors of Bourj Hammoud and Sin El Fil could not exceed 2000. Tosbath claimed that, contrary to the assurances of the Minister of the Interior the identity cards of the repatriated Armenians were used, and, despite his declarations that the electoral lists of Bourj Hammoud could be consulted, they could not be. He challenged him to publish them if he was "a man of courage". He concluded "je proclame sereinement, surement et sans passion, que votre Gouvernement a preside a la plus grande escroquerie electorale jamais organisee au Liban."²

¹Le Soir, 14th year, June 15, 1960, No. 4152.

²Le Soir, 14th year, June 14, 1960, No. 4151. Ayk, 8th year, June 15, 1960, No. 2227.

On June 17, 1960, the Minister of the Interior, Edmond Gaspard, having with him Commandant Jalbout the Director-General of the Security General, held a press conference in his office at the Serail to answer all the accusations brought against the government. To Dikran Tosbath's question as to the whereabouts of the identity cards of the Armenians who had left Lebanon, the Minister of the Interior answered that they were in the archives of the Etat-Civil and had not been moved from there. As to Tosbath's demand to photocopy these more than 9000 identity cards to make "comparisons and affirmations" the Minister answered that he had to consult with others, although he had the full authority to grant permission.¹

Zartok, wrote that, although the Lebanese Armenian National Rally did not participate in the elections at Metn the Tashnag leadership used all its "electoral specializations, fraud, terror, illegality" against an individual candidate. The Ramgavar Azadagan daily concluded that the elections may have been calm and peaceful in other areas of Metn with the exception of the Armenian sector of Bourj Hammoud, where the murder of a Huntchag, Roupén Karageusian was reported.² Ararad stated that "no government had been so partial" in that region.³

¹ Le Soir, 14th year, June 17, 1960, No. 4154.

² Zartok, 23rd year, June 14, 1960, No. 218 (6731).

³ Ararad, 24th year, June 14, 1960, No. 182 (5549).

The Minister of the Interior answered the accusations of Dikran Tosbath as follows:¹

First, the majority of the electors of Bourj Hammoud follow the Tashnag.

In 1951 as an independent candidate Tosbath received 127 votes while the Tashnag candidate polled 951 votes. In 1953 as Tashnag candidate Tosbath received 2013 votes out of 2336 cast by Armenians. In 1960 as independent candidate Tosbath received 438 votes while the Tashnag candidate obtained 3995 votes. Second, the high proportion of voters in 1960 was due to the presence of a specific Tashnag candidate. Third, even then, the proportion of voters was 31% while in the rest of Metn it was 47%. Fourth, the identity cards of the repatriated Armenians are in the possession of the Etat Civil. Fifth, the Etat Civil gave only 200 identity cards to Armenians who had lost their identity cards.

In its turn, Aztag denied that 2300 of the Armenians votes of Bourj Hammoud were fraudulent and only 1182 were legal. As for the identity cards of repatriated Armenians the Tashnag daily wrote that if there were such identity cards they would have used them to prevent

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 18, 1960, No. 83 (8510). Le Jour, 24th year, June 18, 1960, No. 7776.

their defeat in 1951. The Tashnag publication added that the complainant was elected by them in 1953, and no such cards were used then. It concluded, "Why then would they be used this year".¹

After the elections of Metn, when it was known that the defeat of three candidates of Chamoun's National Rally list was due to the Armenian votes of Bourj Hammoud, some newspapers attacked the Armenians in general, and the Tashnags in particular. Ghassan Tueni² wrote in Nahar,

"We Lebanese, so as to be able to represent Lebanon in parliament, are forced to apply to the Armenians and request their kind alms, and get inspiration from their orders and commands. This Arab country which is called Lebanon, this country which became the starting point of Arab civilization, has become one of the electoral constituencies of Armenia."³

¹ Aztag, 23rd year, June 16, 1960, No. 81 (8508).

² Aztag, (34th year, June 18, 1960, No. 83) in its reply published also in L'Orient (36th year, June 17, 1960, No. 10501) to Ghassan Tueni stated that in 1953 and 1957 when he received their support he didn't think in this manner. Tueni clarified Nahar's attitude on the Armenians in Le Soir (14th year, June 18, 1960, No. 4155, p. 4.) that they could not admit that certain Armenian parties accept to transform their community into an instrument of pressure and falsification. Tueni added "En fait, ce n'est ni M. Der Kaloustian, ni surtout M. Babikian, qui ont defendu les interets armeniens a la Chambre et au Gouvernement pendant de longues annees, mais bien ceux qui aujourd'hui se trouvent poignardes dans le dos par leur anciens allies..."

³ Nahar as quoted by Aztag, 34th year, June 18, 1960, No. 83 (8510) and Le Soir, 14th year, June 16, 1960, No. 4153.

In Le Soir, Kesrouan Labaki wrote that the membership of the Armenians to the Lebanese community could not be contested, and that it was comprehensible that they had bonds outside of Lebanon and were concerned about the fate of Armenians living in the United Arab Republic, so as to bring their support to President Nasser and to those Lebanese whom Nasser supported.¹ But he could less easily understand the fact that they did not take into consideration the sentiments and reactions of the non-Armenian Lebanese, and that their belonging to the Armenian community spread all over the world made them forget their membership in the Lebanese community. The writer added that they could not understand the fact that the Armenian Tashnags had voted against the majority of the inhabitants of Metn, and their bitter struggle against Camille Chamoun, although the latter had helped them more than himself or his sons.

Kesrouan Labaki concluded his article by writing,

"Nous n'avons pas compris et nous ne comprenons pas que les Armeniens tashnags permettent a l'Autorite de les utiliser dans la legalite et, parfois, dans l'illegalite, leur imposer aux autres communautes libanaises des deputes dont ces autres communautes ne veulent pas. Nous ne comprenons, nous ne pouvons pas comprendre, en tout cas, que les representants du Metn a la Chambre soient designes en fin de compte, par un parti que ne veut obeir qu'a des considerations etrangeres au Liban, par un parti qui est decide a se ranger en toutes circonstances aux cotes du

¹ On June 28, 1960 Prime Minister Daouk denied that there had been any interference in the elections on the part of the United Arab Republic.

pouvoir, par un parti qui n'hesite pas a recourir à la violence pour imposer ses vues a ses adversaires, par un parti qui peut accepter de se faire le complice d'une mystification."¹

The Kataeb defended the Tashnags and the Armenians in Al-Amal.² The Tashnag party Lebanon Central Committee on June 17 in an appeal addressed to all Lebanese stated that they were Lebanese and proud as the sons of this Motherland. The Tashnag party claimed that the great majority of the Armenian voters of all constituencies for 30 years had been with them and the events at Bourj Hammoud proved this fact. It stated that the irresponsible statements about the sympathy of voters of the First Constituency of Beirut were plainly blackmail. It concluded that they never betray their allies.³

Meanwhile in Beirut, Pierre Edde had protested against the transfer of three polling centers: Mesrobian School, the Lebanese-Armenian Assistance Cross Center, and the Karantina Center of the Assistance Cross all in a Tashnag quarter.⁴ Ararad claimed that ninety percent of the voting centers were in Karantina and that they demanded

¹ Le Soir, 14th year, June 17, 1960, No. 4154.

² Al-Amal, of June 16, 1960 as quoted by Aztag, 34th year, June 17, 1960, No. 82 (8509).

³ Aztag, 34th year, June 18, 1960, No. 83 (8510).

⁴ Zartouk, 23rd year, June 2, 1960, No. 207 (6720).

an equal distribution of polling centers. The Minister of the Interior promised to study the request.¹ The government affected only one change.² The Huntchag daily complained by writing "when was such a partial government seen?"³

On June 4, Pierre Edde protested to the Prime Minister, the Minister of the Interior and Justice, and the President of Inspecting Services that, according to Siasa No. 1071 of June 3, 1960, the Director General of the Ministry of the Interior had declared that he would not transfer the polling centers of the Armenian quarters, as the Armenian candidates of the Edde list "if not Communists, were partisans of peace." On behalf of National Front candidates, Edde demanded "immediate and public measures" against the Director General according to the gravity of his "uncannical act."⁴

After his defeat in Metn, Dikran Tosbath, as a former ally of the Tashnags, with huge headlines announced in Le Soir and Ayk that

"the maximum of Armenian votes available in Beirut is 11,000 of which 7500 for the Armenian Democratic Front, allied with Pierre Edde, and 3500 for the Tashnags and their sympathisers" adding that "any supplementary vote would be a crooked vote."⁵

¹ Ararad, 23rd year, June 4, 1960, No. 173 (5541).

² Zartonk, 23rd year, June 22, 1960, No. 224 (6737). Aztag, 34th year, July 5, 1960, No. 97 (8224).

³ Ararad, 23rd year, June 10, 1960, No. 178 (5546).

⁴ Zartonk, 23rd year, June 4, 1960, No. 209 (6722). Ayk, 8th year, June 5, 1960, No. 2219.

⁵ Le Soir, 14th year, June 14, 1960, No. 4151. Ayk, 8th year, June 15, 1960, No. 2227. Ararad, 23rd year, June 5, 1960, No. 174 (5542).

The Tashnag party termed this act "blackmail".¹

Raymond Edde, leader of the National Bloc, in a press conference, declared that Pierre Gemayel was relying on the authorities and was claiming that the Army would be with him. Edde replied that if they were strong they would not apply to such measures. Edde announced that the Kataebs claimed that the chief of the Deuxieme Bureau, Colonel Saad, had sent Deuxieme Bureau agent Joseph Kilani to organize their electoral meeting of Rmeil, adding that he could not believe that the Deuxieme Bureau allowed itself to stray so far from its own concerns as to interfere in such matters.²

Before the beginning of the legislative elections, Garo Sarrafian³, Secretary General of the Lebanese Armenian National Rally and a member of the Ramgavar Azadagan party Lebanese District Committee,

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 18, 1960, No. 83 (8510).

² Zartonk, 23rd year, June 25, 1960, No. 219 (6732).

³ The Lebanese District Committee of the Ramgavar Azadagan party by a communique dated July 3, 1960 published in Zartonk (23rd year, July 6, 1960, No. 236-6749) announced the expulsion of Garo Sarrafian, from the Ramgavar Azadagan party for his "anti-party conduct". Sarrafian published a book in 1962 at Beirut against the Central Council of the Ramgavar Azadagan Party called Rag Getroni Magapouydzner (The Parasites of the Ramgavar Azadagan Center).

of Syrian nationality¹, and Ara Topdjian, Principal of Hovagimian Manougian School for Boys of the A.G.B.U. and a leader of the Lebanese Armenian National Rally, of British nationality, were expelled from Lebanon for the duration of the elections.² Zartonk condemned the unfairness of the government stating that Hovhaness Hovhanessian, a member of the Tashnag Puro and an American citizen, who had specially come to Lebanon, was not affected by the same measure.³

Dikran Tosbath in an open letter addressed to Commandant Jalbout criticised him for expelling "a distinguished professor" while others were not expelled. Tosbath asked whether he was aware of the coercion exerted on the Jewish voters to force them to vote for the official list without any change.⁴

Zartonk deplored the partiality of the government, which it claimed was proved by its expelling Lebanese Armenian National Rally leaders, by concentrating the polling centers in Tashnag clubs, by constantly searching the anti-Tashnag quarters, and by its conduct in the elections of Bourj Hammoud. At Bourj Hammoud the anti-Tashnag

¹ Le Jour, 24th year, June 1, 1960, No. 7759, p. 5.

² Interview with Hratchia Setrakian, August 1962.

³ Zartonk, 23rd year, June 16, 1960, No. 219 (6732).

⁴ Le Soir, 14th year, June 16, 1960, No. 4153. Ayk, 8th year, June 17, 1960, No. 2229.

voters for Beirut were prevented from voting by threats.¹ Ararad wrote "we ask nothing else, only the impartiality of the authorities."²

On June 14 a delegation of 200 women from Hadjin, Bourj Hammoud and Charchabouk quarters protested the search of their houses and demanded to facilitate the access to polling centers on election day by "the stopping of the terrorist activity of the Tashnag party, whose provocations will not remain unanswered unless the government urgently takes dispositions necessitated by the situation."³ Prime Minister Daouk, Interior Minister Gaspard and Colonel Rifai, Chief of the Internal Security Forces, conferred on measures to be adopted in the Armenian quarters.⁴

On June 17, Der Kaloustian and Babikian visited the Minister of the Interior and requested the government to secure the transfer of the voters who sympathised with them.⁵ Previously, Joseph Chader and former Minister Fuad Boutros requested the transfer of a polling

¹ Zartouk, 23rd year, June 16, 1960, No. 219 (6732).

² Ararad, 23rd year, June 18, 1960, No. 186 (5553).

³ Le Jour, 24th year, June 15, 1960, No. 7773.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Ararad, 23rd year, June 18, 1960, No. 186 (5553).

center, and the Minister of the Interior promised to "study the request".¹ Meanwhile, candidates of both lists were active in visiting community leaders, clubs, and prominent families. The so-called People's List candidates, led by Pierre Gemayel, visited Maronite Patriarch Paul Meoushi, at Bkerke, Zareh I at Antelias, the Latin Vicar Apostolic Bishop Smith, Protestant Community head the Rev. Farid Audi, the Maronite Prelate of Beirut Archbishop Ziade, Greek Orthodox Vicar General Haddad, Greek Catholic Prelate Bishop Nabaa, and the Mufti of the Republic, Sheikh Alaya.² Public meetings were held in Rmeil and other places. On June 13, 1960, pro-Tashnag Armenian independents gave a reception in Djemaran honouring the "People's List". During the meeting Vahe Setian and Garo Sassuni spoke.³

The so called National Front list visited Maronite Patriarch Paul Meoushi and the Mufti of the Republic, Sheikh Alaya,⁴ the Homenmen Club, Zareh Nubar Club, and some prominent families of the First Constituency.⁵ On June 5, 1960, the "National Front" candidates

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 9, 1960, No. 82 (8495).

² Aztag, 34th year, June 10 and 11, 1960, No. 83 (8496) and 84 (8497).

³ Aztag, 34th year, June 14, 1960, No. 86 (8499).

⁴ Zartouk, 23rd year, June 9, 1960, No. 213 (6726). Ayk, 8th year, June 8, 1960, No. 2222.

⁵ Zartouk, 23rd year, June 16, 1960, No. 219 (6732). Ararad, 23rd year, June 10, 1960, No. 178 (5546). Le Soir, 14th year, June 16, 1960, No. 4153, p. 3.

attended the annual sports festival of Sahagian School at its stadium held under the presidency of Kevork Yerevanian. The presence of Dr. Jidejian, Mohsen Slim, and Farid Jebran was noted.¹

A few pre election incidents were noted. On June 10 Huntchags Sarkis Milossian and Bedros Gasparian were attacked at Jeitaoui, for which a few Tashnags were arrested.² On June 17, a group of Ramgavar Azadagans were attacked, on Saint Georges Street by some Tashnags.³

The organ of the Tashnag wrote, "the victor of Metn can not be defeated in Beirut and will not be defeated no matter how much power the opponents of the Tashnag party show."⁴ As for their political orientation, the paper declared that they were against Communists and Communist infiltration in all countries and consider the Communist movement in national life an evil to be opposed. The Tashnag publication then invited the people to vote for them if they wanted to be respected in Lebanon as loyal and trustworthy elements; and to refuse their votes to Communists and fellow travellers.⁵

¹ Ararad, 23rd year, June 7, 1960, No. 175 (5543).

² Le Jour, 24th year, June 12, 1960, No. 7770.

³ Le Jour, 24th year, June 18, 1960, No. 7776.

⁴ Aztag, 34th year, June 14, 1960, No. 86 (8499).

⁵ Aztag, 34th year, June 17 and 18, 1960, No. 82-83 (8509-8510).

Zartok, in an editorial entitled "The Will of the Majority Must Win" wrote that Der Kaloustian's clique was an obstacle/ⁱⁿthe way of Armenian national concord. Zartok stated that this clique must be defeated to open the way to a mutual understanding and cooperation.¹

Ararad and Spurk invited electors to vote for the "National Front" List. Ilalamam-Haratch appealed to its readers to vote for George Hanna, Edde, and to the Armenian candidates of Edde's list.²

Nayiri, "on behalf of all the Armenian teachers in all Armenian schools, partisans of moderation", wished the success of Mardiros Iskenderian, asking its readers in an indirect manner to vote for him.³ Former President Chamoun favored the list of Edde.⁴

The elections at Beirut took place on Sunday June 19, 1960, from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. in calm. Observers reported that the balloting was conducted with scrupulous fairness by the government.⁵ Although strict security measures were taken by the Government of Daouk,⁶

¹Zartok, 23rd year, June 19, 1960, No. 222 (6735).

²Ilalamam-Haratch, 4th year, June 18, 1960, No. 25 (180).

³Nayiri, 8th year, June 19, 1960, No. 7.

⁴Al-Bayrak, 49th year, June 16, 1960, No. 8274.

⁵Keesing's Contemporary Archives, July 30-August 6, 1960, p. 17556 A.

⁶All persons both Lebanese and foreigners, were required to carry their identity cards or passports. Foreigners, with the exception of diplomatic representatives and journalists, were forbidden to enter the constituencies until forty-eight hours after the declaration of results. Special permits were needed by Lebanese citizens to leave the country. The army was instructed to shoot down anyone seen carrying arms.

Vartan Sarkissian, a Ramgavar Azadagan, was killed at Karm el Zeitoun.¹
Out of 83,039 registered voters, about 33,600 electors voted. There
was great absenteeism.²

It was assumed that on election day between 8 to 10 a.m. about
thirty percent by noon forty to forty-five percent and at 3 p.m.
forty-five to fifty percent of the registered voters had exercised
their franchise.³ At noon observers gave the Kataeb list an advantage
of 3000 to 4000 votes.⁴ On June 20, 1960, at 4 a.m. the results of
211 polling centers over 234 gave the Gemayel list 19857 votes against
10877 of the Edde list.⁵ Observers revealed that the buying of votes
had taken place openly on election day.⁶

Raymond Edde claimed to have apprehended a member of the Deuxieme
Bureau attempting to influence voters against his brother's list.⁷

¹ L'Orient, 36th year, June 20, 1960, No. 10504.

² Ibid.

³ Le Jour, 24th year, June 20, 1960, No. 7778.

⁴ Chehab, Camille, op. cit., p. 36.

⁵ L'Orient, 36th year, June 20, 1960, No. 10504.

⁶ Chehab, Camille, op. cit., p. 50.

⁷ L'Orient, 36th year, June 20, 1960, No. 10504.

The official results were declared by the Ministry of the Interior at 11:15 a.m. on June 20, 1960:¹

Charles Saad	22339
Joseph Chader	21765
Khatchik Babikian	21364
Pierre Gemayel	21283
Souren Khanamirian	20719
Fouad Boutros	20666
Antoine Sehnaoui	20484
Movses Der Kaloustian	19977 ²
Pierre Edde	12282
Abdallah Houry	12224
Mardiros Emile Iskenderian	11700
Hratchia Chamlian	11669
Vasken Bakalian	11665

¹Le Soir, 14th year, June 20, 1960, No. 4156. L'Orient, 36th year, June 21, 1960, No. 10505.

²The present writer was shown by Movses Der Kaloustian, in September 1962, a handwritten and sealed document from the secretariat of the parliament dated January 25, 1961, according to which Der Kaloustian had received 20829 votes instead of the officially declared 19977. The distribution of the votes per quarter was as follows:

Mudawar	5578
Eshrefieh	5670
Rmeil	4527
Marfa	1882
Minet el Hosn	2568

During an interview in January 1962 Movses Der Kaloustian informed the present writer that about 900 Tashnag voters could not vote as their names were not on the electoral lists.

Independents

Hanna	Ghorayeb	Meguerditchian	Moghahghab	Berbari	Noul	Zreik	Wakim	Fayad	Number of those who voted	Number of Registered voters
779	82	11	121	79	16	8	5	3	6592	12874
57	34	11	15	6	12	1	1	1	1594	3592
162	42	2	82	37	3	2	2	-	5020	9151
1085	9	117	7	8	30	-	-	-	9143	24031
133	21	49	1	11	2	-	-	-	2713	5101
25	3	20	5	-	-	-	-	-	1127	3231
226	24	34	31	8	23	5	1	3	3710	8449
2467	215	244	262	149	86	16	9	7		
2693	301	326	252	153	96	19	9	7		

C A N D I D A T E S

Communities	P e o p l e ' S L i s t								N a t i o n a l F r o n t L i s t							
	Gemayel	Sehnaoui	Boutros	Chader	Der Kaloustian	Babikian	Khanamirian	Saad	Edde	Khoury	Sassine	Toursarkissian	Chamlan	Bakalian	Iskenderian	Addi
Greek Orthodox	3917	3477	3699	4057	3621	3886	3628	4592	2969	3023	2300	2466	2749	2754	2734	1971
Greek Catholic	1203	1105	1097	1214	1137	1200	1140	1252	383	606	409	320	351	365	350	267
Maronite	4305	4071	4111	4343	4162	4261	4086	4378	1079	1156	1032	970	1020	1045	998	833
Armenian Orth.	5271	5276	5221	5311	5283	5302	5284	5264	3946	3863	2808	3845	3901	3761	3936	3812
Moslems (Sunnite Shiite, Druze)	758	844	939	780	775	779	773	922	1928	1759	1563	1780	1813	1814	1795	1646
Jews	1052	1058	1023	1106	1020	1059	1036	1053	75	49	70	24	57	88	68	38
All Minorities (Latin, Chaldean, Assyrian)	2616	2688	2609	2899	2726	2849	2765	2908	1125	1139	1057	941	1027	1039	988	878
TOTAL	19122	18519	18669	19170	18724	19336	18712	20369	11505	11595	9239	10346	10918	10866	10869	9445
Government Results	21283	20488	20666	21765	19977	21364	20719	22339	12288	12224	9840	11197	11669	11665	11700	10451

TABLE INDICATING THE NUMBER OF VOTES CAST BY EACH COMMUNITY

This table was given to the present writer by Vahan Elmayan on behalf of the Rangavar Azadagan party. The Table is incomplete as the results of some polling centers were missing. The Table was compiled by the available official government written reports. Moses Der Kaloustian informed the present writer that the Tashnag party possessed the complete results but it could not be disclosed. Although the Table is incomplete it is reproduced here as it gives a general idea of the distribution of votes per community and candidate.

community, the Tashnag newspaper reported that they had received 8000 votes, as against 5000 received by their opponents.¹ The Huntchag organ claimed that they had obtained 5500 votes.² The elections revealed that the majority of the voters of the Lebanese Armenian National Rally had voted in favor of Michel Sassine of the Edde list instead of pro-Communist Georges Hanna, as some circles were expecting.

The organization, order, discipline, and organized party work in systematic campaigning of the Kataeb-Tashnag alliance contributed to the victory of Gemayel's list.³

The elections revealed the extremist tendencies of the Christian voters. Le Jour noted the defeat of the moderates.⁴

Al-Joumhouriya organ of the National Bloc wrote "It is appropriate to conclude that the real winners of the competition are the Americans".⁵

Al-Anouar, al-Amal, and Aztag⁶ defended the Authorities on charges and accusations made against them. The Manchester Guardian,

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 20, 1960, No. 84 (8511).

² Ararad, 23rd year, June 26, 1960, No. 193 (5560).

³ Ziadeh, Nicola A., "The Lebanese Elections, 1960", op. cit., p. 374-5. Chehab, Camille, op. cit., p. 51.

⁴ Chehab, Camille, op. cit., p. 82.

⁵ The public opinion held the view that the Kataeb-Tashnag list was the list favored by the Americans and the National Bloc-Lebanese Armenian National Rally list by the British.

⁶ Chehab, Camille, op. cit., p. 52.

the New York Times, Newsweek and Time considered the elections as regular.¹ France-Soir wrote

"Une premiere injustice est déjà réparée, disent les Libanais. La truquage des elections de 1957 a été le vraie cause de la guerre civile de 1958."²

The Huntchag daily termed the elections of the First Constituency as "exemplary elections" or Mr. Ahmed Daouk's "crucified liberty".³

Both Zartouk and Ararad considered the results obtained by the Lebanese National Rally as "honourable" under "unfavourable conditions."⁴

The Ramgavar Azadagan organ wrote that only the results of the Armenian voters interested them, and mentioned the "unfavourable conditions and atmosphere" under which the voting had taken place in the First Constituency of Beirut. The newspaper noted that forty-five percent of the votes received by the list headed by Pierre Edde were cast by Armenian voters of the Lebanese Armenian National Rally, while only one third of the votes obtained by Pierre Gemayel's list were Armenian votes given by members and sympathisers of the Tashnag party. The paper enumerated the "unfavourable conditions". First,

¹ Ibid., p. 54.

² Ibid., p. 86.

³ Ararad, 23rd year, June 21, 1960, No. 188 (5555).

⁴ Zartouk, 23rd year, June 21, 1960, No. 223 (6736). Ararad, 23rd year, June 21, 1960, No. 188 (5555).

that upon the pretext of a mysterious crime the quarters of Hadjin and Khalil Bedewi were searched while the Tashnag sectors of Bourj Hammoud were not troubled. Second, that Tashnag terrorists threatened Lebanese Armenian National Rally voters in Tashnag quarters of Bourj Hammoud and Eshrefieh, advising them to abstain from voting. Third that the polling centers for Armenians were established in Tashnag quarters and only a nominal change was affected upon the protest of Edde. Fourth, that Tashnag terrorists forcibly prevented hundreds of Lebanese Armenian National Rally voters from crossing the bridge from Bourj Hammoud to Beirut without opposition from the police. Fifth that Vartan Sarkissian¹ was killed by Tashnag gunmen at Karm el Zeitoun to terrorise Lebanese Armenian National Rally voters. Sixth, that twice the telephone communications lines of the electoral centers of the Lebanese Armenian National Rally were disconnected. Seventh, that Tashnags used the identity cards of more than a thousand repatriated Armenians to cast fraudulent ballots. Zartouk concluded that, "despite this internal and external intervention, despite all obstacles, despite the existing terrible

¹L'Orient (36th year, June 20, 1960, No. 10504) informed that four warrants of arrest, on the inculpation of murder, had been issued against Sarkissian whom the newspaper claimed to be a member of the Huntchag party.

atmosphere, 5000 electors of the Lebanese Armenian National Rally expressed their will" in favour of concord, mutual understanding and peaceful life within the Armenian community of Lebanon.

Zartonk reported that about 4000 Lebanese Armenian National Rally voters were prevented from voting by fear.¹

The Huntchag daily wrote that they had to struggle not only against their opponents but also against the police of Minister Gaspard, who had imposed a military cordon around "our quarters". It further complained that, of 118 polling centers allotted to the Armenians 116 were in Tashnag quarters. The paper added that their demand for equal distribution of polling centers was disregarded. It remarked that the Tashnags did not dare to vote in anti-Tashnag quarters, but the Tashnags wanted the anti-Tashnags to vote in Tashnag quarters: and the authorities acquiesced in their will as "the Tashnags were weak". Ararad claimed that the Tashnags cast all their votes but only sixty percent of the anti-Tashnag voters voted in Tashnag quarters. It concluded that the last legislative elections proved that they were stronger than the Tashnags.²

¹ Zartonk, 23rd year, June 22 and 23, 1960, No. 224-5 (6737-8).

² Ararad, 23rd year, June 26, 1960, No. 193 (5560).

The Communist Ilalamam-Haratch complained that, on June 19, only the Armenian quarters of the eastern part of Beirut were surrounded by a military cordon. Despite this, Sarkissian was killed and only 13,000 out of 34,000 Armenian electors voted. It continued that the sixty-two percent of the Armenians who could not vote were supporters of the anti-Tashnag Front. The weekly added that the polling centers were installed in Tashnag quarters, the identity cards of non-Tashnag Armenian voters of Bourj Hammoud were taken from them, that in Eshrefieh Tashnag women attacked Lebanese Armenian National Rally women, and that the Armenians showed their dislike of Tashnag party leader Der Kaloustian, who received 1387 voices less than Babikian.¹

In Le Soir Kesrouan Labaki wrote that the electoral divisions of Beirut were arbitrary. The writer alleged that the authorities had envisaged dividing Beirut into two great constituencies, one Christian and the other Moslem. Because this clear cut confessional distribution had given rise to protests a third constituency was also created, but, fearing that the Armenian voters will not give a sufficient margin of security to the government candidates, the authors of the electoral law attached the Jewish-Christian quarters

¹ Ilalamam-Haratch, 4th year, June 26, 1960, No. 26 (181).

of Minet el Hosn to the First Constituency. Labaki added that the Greek Orthodox community¹ had voted against Fuad Butros in all polling centers.²

The Tashnag daily declared that the legislative elections had proved that the Armenians were with the Tashnag party.³ Aztag also declared that, during the three successive regimes of Khoury, Chamoun, and Chehab, their candidates were victorious despite the hopes that

¹The following was published in Le Jour (24th year, June 26, 1960, No. 7784, p. 5) stating the number of votes obtained by the Greek Orthodox candidates in the Greek Orthodox polling centers:

	<u>Marfa</u>	<u>Rmeil</u>	<u>Eshrefieh</u>	<u>Medawar</u>	<u>Saifi</u>	<u>Hosn</u>	<u>Total</u>
Fuad Boutros	186	1105	1765	196	431	261	3944
Michel Sassin	36	327	1582	51	118	49	2163
George Hanna	1	213	518	43	33	9	817
George Berbari	=	10	37	7	19	3	76
Number of voters	223	1655	3902	297	601	322	7000

²Le Soir, 14th year, June 22, 1960, No. 4158.

³Aztag, 34th year, June 21, 1960, No. 85 (8512).

their opponents forever nourish of tying the power and influence of the Tashnag party to temporary regimes.¹ Meanwhile, Ararad announced that the Huntchag party had allied with Kamal Jumblat's Socialist progressive party, and that the Socialist deputies would equally be Huntchag representatives in Parliament.²

After the elections, a tense atmosphere developed in the Armenian quarters. Ararad³ and Zartonk⁴ reported that Tashnags were forcing their sympathisers to leave Bourj Hammoud and were creating an atmosphere of terror in the Tiro and Sandjak quarters there. Le Jour said that thirty Huntchag families were forced to leave Bourj Hammoud.⁵ On June 28 the Ramgavar Azadagan daily asked the Tashnags to put an end to this terrorism.⁶ L'Orient reported that Minister of the Interior Edmond Gaspard had denied that the Tashnags were driving the

¹ Aztag, 34th year, June 24, 1960, No. 88 (8515).

² Ararad, 23rd year, June 24, 1960, No. 191 (5558).

³ Ararad, 23rd year, July 1, 1960, No. 197 (5564).

⁴ Zartonk, 23rd year, June 28, 1960, No. 229 (6742).

⁵ Le Jour, 24th year, July 5, 1960, No. 7793.

⁶ Zartonk, 23rd year, June 28, 1960, No. 229 (6742).

the Huntchags out of their homes by threats.¹ Zartouk replied that, instead of denying, the Minister should investigate the "tragic situation of this sector", and he would see that the Tashnags were acting as if they had established a government within a government, adding that they were expecting that Minister to put an end to "Tashnag terrorism".² Dikran Tosbath wrote in Le Soir that, despite the denials of Minister Gaspard, the shops of Nor Marash had been stoned and citizens stabbed.³ Aztag considered the reports about Bourj Hammoud as "imaginary and fabricated" against "the peaceful district of Bourj Hammoud."⁴ On June 22, 1960 Nahabed Nahabedian and Garo Khatchadourian were reported by Ayk to have been injured, while Le Jour reported that Sahag Boyadjian, a member of the Huntchag party was killed on June 21, 1960 in Bourj Hammoud. A Tashnag was killed during a retaliatory gunfight.⁵ On July 3, Ararad reported that Arsen Baghdassarian and Abdallah Khatran were killed in Bourj Hammoud.⁶ On July 7, 1960 Garabed Gulvartian, a

¹ L'Orient of June 19, 1960 as quoted by Zartouk, 23rd year, June 30, 1960, No. 231 (6744).

² Zartouk, 23rd year, June 30, 1960, No. 231 (6744).

³ Le Soir, 14th year, July 1, 1960, No. 4164.

⁴ Aztag, 34th year, July 5, 1960, No. 97 (8524).

⁵ Ayk, 8th year, June 22, 1960, No. 2232.

⁶ Le Jour, 23rd year, June 22, 1960, No. 7780.

member of the Tashnag party was killed at Hadjin. The crime was condemned both by the Huntchag and Ramgavar Azadagan parties.¹ In retaliation, eighteen years old Sarkis Semerdjian was murdered, and Souren Gidour was gravely injured.²

The government of Daouk decided to impose a military cordon around the Armenian quarters and conduct a search to arrest the wanted criminals. From July 9 to 12, the Armenian quarters of Hadjin and Charchabouk were sealed off.³ The Huntchag organ protested that, despite the government decision, only their quarters were under military cordon and the Tashnag quarters of Bourj Hammoud were not.⁴ The Ramgavar organ wrote that "the tragic point of the case is that out of the 31 wanted individuals, 25 are Tashnag criminals who live in Bourj Hammoud, Karantina, and Eshrefieh", adding that the murderers and terrorists of Karageuzian, Semerdjian, Sarkissian, and Gidour were to be found not in the quarters under military cordon, but in the Tashnag quarters.⁵

¹ Aztag, 34th year, July 8, 1960, No. 100 (8527). Zartouk, 23rd year, July 8, 1960, No. 238 (6751). Ararad, 23rd year, July 8, 1960 No. 203 (5570).

² Zartouk, 23rd year, July 9, 1960, No. 239 (6752). Ararad, 23rd year, July 9, 1960, No. 204 (5571).

³ Middle East Journal, Vol. 14 Autumn (1960), No. 4, p. 445.

⁴ Ararad, 23rd year, July 10, 1960, No. 204 (5571).

⁵ Zartouk, 23rd year, July 12, 1960, No. 241 (6754).

The inhabitants of the Armenian quarters under military cordon appealed to the President of the Republic, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Interior, the Commander-in-Chief of the Lebanese Army, and the Internal Security Forces, demanding impartial justice, the arrest of criminals, and equality for all citizens. Appeals were also made to the Lebanese Red Cross.¹

When the cordon was lifted, Zartouk, remarked "Now that the criminals have not been found in these quarters, will Mr. Gaspard search for them in Bourj Hammoud?"²

Kesrouan Labaki in an article in Le Soir, wrote that, since 1943, the successive regimes of Khoury, Chamoun and Chehab were basing themselves upon the Tashnags and bringing their support to them. He mentioned that, since 1943, the Tashnag candidates had figured on the government lists, and the Armenian deputies were either Tashnags or their sympathisers. This fact has given the non-Tashnag Armenians of Lebanon the feeling of being bullied and frustrated. Labaki continued "With the official patronage of the authorities and all the moral and material pressures which were exercised over the voters, the Tashnags were not able to give more than 8000 votes to Pierre

¹ Ararad, 23rd year, July 13, 1960, No. 206 (5573).

² Zartouk, 23rd year, July 13, 1960, No. 242 (6755).

Gemayel and his colleagues, the non-Tashnag Armenians gave 5000 votes to the List of Pierre Edde". The writer concluded that the Tashnags are the majority but by experience it was better not to take into consideration the law of numbers as "it is not wise to permit an important mass of citizens to be systematically rejected and maintained in an sterile and more and more exasperating opposition." Labaki blamed the government for giving occasion to the atmosphere of vendettas in the Armenian quarters as all the seats reserved to the Armenian community were gained by the Tashnags and the Government had not attempted to reconcile the Armenians or attempted an equitable distribution of public offices. He suggested that the state should treat all the Armenians^{on}/grounds of equality, and that would put an end to the vendettas.¹

After the military cordon was established the wave of fratricides ceased.

Meanwhile, the Armenian deputies, with the exception of Joseph Chader, visited Patriarch Meoushy and Zareh I.²

On July 1, 1960 a political gathering took place at Club Sportive, to honour Saeb Salam, who was elected as Sunnite deputy from Beirut. The Kataeb and Tashnag deputies were present.³

¹ Le Soir, 14th year, July 11, 1960, No. 4174.

² Aztag, 34th year, July 1, 1960, No. 94 (8521).

³ Aztag, 34th year, July 2, 1960, No. 95 (8522).

On April 11, 1961 the favorable report of the Parliamentary Validating Committee, prepared by Deputy Bahige Takieddine, the President of the Committee, was approved, and all the deputies were validated.¹

Dikran Tosbath, who had protested to the Validating Committee alleging illegality in the legislative elections of Metn because of the use of identity cards of repatriated Armenians in the elections of Bourj Hammoud, claimed that the reports of Bahige Takieddine "officialised the illegality and fraud" of the elections of 1960.²

On June 17, 1960 answering a question of Dikran Tosbath, Commandant Jalbout had declared that the identity cards of repatriated Armenians were given to the Ministry of the Interior by the Security General. Interior Minister Edmond Gaspard had declared that the identity cards were found in the archives of the Etat-Civil. Bahige Takieddine's report maintained that the President of the Validating Committee had written a letter to the Director of the Etat-Civil requesting information on the whereabouts of the 9600 identity cards of the repatriated Armenians and was informed that the identity cards of the repatriated Armenians in question were not at the Etat-Civil. Dikran Tosbath wrote that, despite the affirmations of

¹ Le Soir, 15th year, April 12, 1961, No. 4407, p. 2.

² Le Soir, 15th year, April 14, 1961, No. 4409.

Interior Minister Gaspard, the identity cards of the Armenians emigrated to the Soviet Union were not in the Etat-Civil and were used in the legislative elections of 1960, in the order of at least 4000 in Bourj Hammoud, and 5000 in Beirut for the casting of false ballots. He concluded that the elections of Metn and Beirut were fraudulent.¹

¹ Ibid.

CHAPTER III

BIOGRAPHIES OF THE ARMENIAN DEPUTIES

Vahram Leilekian¹

Vahram Leilekian was born at Aintab in 1889. In 1905 he graduated from the "Atenagan" school of Aintab and entered in the freshman class of the Aintab Central Turkey College from where he received his Bachelor of Arts degree in 1909. He wanted to be an engineer and study in the United States, but in so far as his father had died in 1891, his mother disapproved of his undertaking a long voyage and so she urged him to study law at Istanbul. In accordance with her wishes, he entered the Law School of the State University of Istanbul in 1909, and received his legal degree in 1914. During the First World War he was at the military schools at Istanbul and Aleppo. During the resistance of the Armenians at Aintab he led the negotiations of the Armenians with the French.

During the war he supplied wood to the Railway Company from the forests of Islahiyé and Meydan Ekbezi. After the armistice, having practiced law slightly, he became a contractor of buildings and roads in Aleppo and Beirut. He definitely settled in Beirut in 1930.

¹Correspondence with Vahram Leilekian, November 1961.

In 1934 he was the first Armenian Orthodox to be elected a deputy in Lebanon. He was elected on the List of Khaireddin Ahdab, on the second ballot, as an independent candidate supported by the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag Parties. In 1937 he was appointed a member of parliament as an Armenian Orthodox deputy.

As a deputy in 1936, he was a member of the Lebanese delegation in the negotiating and signing of the Franco-Lebanese Treaty.

During his term of deputy he was also a member of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox Community of Lebanon. In 1940 he was elected President of the Local Council of the Armenian General Benevolent Union in Beirut.

In 1947 he presented himself to the Legislative elections as an independent candidate but withdrew on election day, alleging fraud with all other opposition candidates.

After 1947 he withdrew from public life. At present he lives in Cairo with relatives.

He was married with a Miss Haddad during the First World War. She died in 1961.

Khosrov Tutundjian¹

Khosrov Tutundjian was born in 1894 at Van in a family belonging to the Armenagan party. In 1896 Tutundjian suffered the loss of his three uncles killed by the Turks. He received his primary education in Yeramian school at Van until 1907, then he went to Istanbul to continue his studies. He attended there the Berberian, Mkhitarian, Garabedian and Hayrigian schools. He received his secondary education diploma from Hayrigian school. In 1912 he registered in the Law School of the State University of Istanbul but he could not continue his studies as due to the Balkan war the school was closed. Tutundjian returned to Van from where in 1913 he went to Lausanne (Switzerland) to study law. In 1919 he received his doctors degree from the University of Lausanne in law and Social Sciences. In 1919 he came to Yerevan, where he served consecutively in the Ministries of the Interior and of Justice. After the unsuccessful revolt of the Communists in May 1920 he was appointed Attorney General for the Yerevan Extraordinary Court in which position he served until July 1920. After this he was invited to be a lecturer in the Faculty of Law at the newly established University of Yerevan. During the Turkish - Armenian wars he served as a volunteer in the army of General Sebouh. On December 4, 1920

¹ Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian - November-December 1961.

two days after Armenia became a Soviet Republic Tutundjian returned to Yerevan and concealed himself until February 18, 1921 when an anti-Communist revolt took place of which he was one of the organisers. He was a member of the presidium of the anti-Communist extraordinary committee (i.e. anti-Communist intelligence). During the fights with the Communists he was wounded and on April 2, 1921, when Armenia was recaptured by the Communists, he fled to Iran. Until 1924 he lived as a refugee in Tabriz and occupied himself with Tashnag party affairs; a member of which he had become early in his life. In 1924, upon the recommendation of his party, he was invited to Beirut to publish, with Arshag Hovhanissian, Punig, then Nor Punig, a bi-daily newspaper, and to lead the party affairs of Lernavayr (Syria and Lebanon). From 1925 to February 1927 he was the only editor of Nor Punig. In September, 1927, he started to work as a lawyer, and he is still practicing that profession.

He was the vice-president of the council that organized the administration of the Armenian Orthodox community in Lebanon. In 1926 he was elected a member of the Communal Council and served until it was dissolved in 1928. In 1939 he was elected president of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox Community (1939-1941), and was elected to the Communal Council from Bourj Hammoud. He participated in the Representative Councils which elected Catholicos Sarajian and Hovsepianz and which created the Constitution of 1941.

In 1937, he was elected a member of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies as Tashnag candidate on the List of George Tabet. In 1937 the Tashnag party district of Lebanon was separated from Syria and formed a Central Committee of its own under the leadership of Tutundjian. Then quarrels started with the Puro of the party. In 1938, as a member in the party's general convention at Cairo, Tutundjian, on behalf of the Lebanon Central Committee, gave a report on the controversy that was opposing the Central Committee of Lebanon with the Puro. Through the efforts of the Puro, then led by Roupen Minassian and Navasartian, the Convention suspended the Central Committee of Lebanon for three years,¹ but, as the committee succeeding Tutundjian were his sympathisers, he held the public relations position. In 1941 he was re-elected as a member of the Lebanon Central Committee, the leadership of which remained in his hands until 1943. In 1943 through the efforts of the Puro and its supporters, the leaders of whom were Movses Der Kaloustian and Aram Sahagian, he remained in the minority in the party district convention and was not re-elected to the central committee of the party.

In 1944 when he spoke at the funeral of the late Manoug Aslanian, founder and first editor of Aztarar, criticising the party

¹ Other members were Nigol Aghpalian, Shahen Derderian, Nazareth Gergerian, Asadour Tchalian.

for boycotting the famous writer, he was left out of the party by joint decision of the Puro and Central Committee of Lebanon in 1945. This decision was changed in November 1953 to expulsion and published in Aztag. From 1953 to 1955 he was the editor in chief of Aztarar, an anti-Puro daily newspaper in which he severely criticised the party for its policy.

He has written in the following newspapers, Hairenik a Tashnag daily published in Boston, from 1917 to 1938, Haratch, organ of the Tashnag party in Yerevan 1919 to 1920, Houssaper organ of the Puro published in Egypt, from 1929 to 1935, Aztag of Beirut from 1927 to 1935, Aztarar, a weekly, from 1947 to 1948, Arevmoudk, an anti-Puro Tashnag paper published in Paris, from 1949 to 1952. Since 1957 he has been writing in Nayiri, an anti-Puro weekly. He wrote also in the Nazionaler Zeitung of Zurich and the Basler Nachrichten between 1919 and 1920, and in La Syrie, of Beirut, from 1927 to 1932.

In 1959 he wrote a book in Armenian Puroyagan Snangutiune yev Irav Tashnagtsutian Oughin Arapagan Ashkhari Vertchin Tepkeroun Louysin Dag (The Bankruptcy of the Puro and the Path of the True Tashnagism Under the Light of the Recent Events in the Arab World), in which he says that the Tashnag party can serve in the Armenian Diaspora when it is liberated from foreign influences, and than it can be a real friend to the national liberation movements of the Arab countries.

Hratchia Chamlian.¹

Hratchia Chamlian was born at Beirut in 1905. His father Sarkis Chamlian, a native of Alexandretta, had established his family at Beirut in 1900. Hratchia Chamlian received his elementary and secondary education respectively in the Armenian Orthodox Community School of Saint Nishan and the International College of the American University of Beirut. He then continued his studies at the French St. Joseph's University, from whence he graduated as a lawyer, which profession he has practiced until the present.

He has been very active within and outside the Armenian Orthodox Community. He was a member of the Educational Committee of the Armenian Orthodox Community in 1930 and a member of the Civil Council of the Community from 1934 to 1936 and from 1939 to 1941. He was president of the same Council in 1944 and from 1946 to 1948. For more than a decade, he has been a member of the District Committee of the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

As to his activities outside his community he was a member of the Beirut Municipal Council from 1940 to 1942 representing the Armenian Orthodox Community.

He presented himself as a candidate during the parliamentary elections of 1937, 1943, 1947, 1957, and 1960. He was elected a

¹ Interview with Hratchia Chamlian, November 1961.

deputy of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies in 1943, as a candidate of the Independent-Ramgavar Azadagan Front on the List of Sami Solh. He was defeated in all the other aforementioned elections.

Hratchia Chamlian is not a member of any political party, although he has presented himself on the anti-Tashnag list in all elections. He is one of the leaders of the Lebanese Armenian National Rally. He represented this "rally" with others in the Opposition National Front from 1957 to 1959. On May 30, 1957 he was arrested and imprisoned by order of the regime of Camille Chamoun, apparently for participating in the forbidden demonstration of the Opposition National Front on the same day. He was set free soon after. He was married in 1944.

Movses Der Kaloustian¹

Movses Der Kaloustian, the son of the Armenian Orthodox Vicar General of Antioch, Rev. Apraham Der Kaloustian, was born in 1895 at the village of Yoghoun Olouk, Moussa Dagh (in Turkish territory). He received his education in Armenian elementary schools, at his native village and at Aleppo.

After the abdication of Abdul Hamid II, Movses Der Kaloustian became a member of the Tashnag party. In 1915 he participated in

¹ Interview with Movses Der Kaloustian, January 1962.

the Armenian revolt of Moussa Dagh as military supervisor. When allied ships came to the rescue of Armenians Der Kaloustian also left Moussa Dagh to Egypt. In early 1917 he joined the First Battalion of the Armenian Legion of the French Army. They were sent to Cyprus to be trained and from there they were sent to participate to the defence of Castelorizon. He participated to the battles of Arara and the Allied occupation of Lebanon and Cilicia. Then with the Legion he participated in the war in Cilicia. In 1920, when the Legion was dismissed, he was the commander of the First Company with the rank of lieutenant.

Movses Der Kaloustian, a landowner until now, has no other profession or trade, but he plays a very active part in politics. In Cilicia he represented the Tashnag party in the multi-party National Union cabinet of Mihran Damadian, as secretary. After the evacuation of Cilicia by the French, he was appointed mudir of Jabal Moussa from 1924 to the end of 1927 when he resigned to present himself as a candidate in the elections for the Syrian Constituent Assembly. In 1928 he was elected to the minority seat in the Syrian Chamber of Deputies, on the Tashnag ticket. He was re-elected in 1932 and 1936 from the Sandjak of Alexandretta. From 1927 to 1932 as assistant to the special representative of the League of Nations at Sandjak, he helped to settle the Armenian refugees. When the question of Sandjak came forth, he joined the Syrian Front and went

to Paris to make his efforts to prevent the evacuation of the Sandjak by the French, or by arranging favorable terms for the Armenians in case of evacuation. Just before the annexation of the Sandjak by Turkey the Armenians evacuated Sandjak and settled in Ainjar (which they established) and Sour. The high commissioner appointed Der Kaloustian to settle the refugees at Ainjar. When the Second World War broke out, although he was not subject to mobilization as a French citizen, Der Kaloustian joined the French army as a reserve officer. (Meanwhile, in 1939, he had become a Lebanese citizen.) He was sent to the Foreign Legion, with the rank of lieutenant, but, on the demand of the High Commissioner, he administered the settling of refugees, the construction of houses, and public health, for two months, and then was appointed Vichy military governor. In 1941 he resigned from the army when the Vichy Forces left the Levant. From 1941 to 1943 he cooperated with the officer who replaced him as military governor of Ainjar specially in the economic organization of the village.

As to his activities within the Armenian community he was on the editorial board of Houssaper (Egypt) from the end of 1915 to the end of 1916. In Cilicia, at Adana, he was on the editorial board of Giligia from 1920 to 1921. He writes periodically under the name of A. Leilani in Tashnag newspapers such as Houssaper, Aztag, Tchahagir, and Hairenik Amsakir. In 1929 he was one of the founders of the first

"cabinet" of the Hamazkayin Cultural Association of Beirut in 1929 and also of Djemaran. In 1931, 1940, 1941, and 1943, 1956 and 1963 he was a representative of the Armenian communities of the Levant in Catholicossal elections. For more than a decade he has been a member of the Communal Council of the Armenian Diocese of Lebanon. He was a member of the Central Civil Council of the Cilician See from 1956 to 1958 and is a member of the National General Assembly.

In 1943 on second ballot he was elected a deputy of the Lebanese Parliament on the List of Habib Abi Chahla. In 1947 on the List of Abdallah Yafi, in 1951 on the List of Giants, in 1953 independently in 1957 on the List of Jamil Mekkaoui, and in 1960 on the List of Pierre Gemayel, he was re-elected as a deputy of the Armenian Orthodox Community, always as a Tashnag party candidate.

Although it has not been disclosed by Der Kaloustian, the present writer has reason to believe that in 1943 he was elected a member of the Lebanon Central Committee of his party and at present is a member of the Puro of the Tashnag party.

In August 1961 Der Kaloustian was subject to serious accusations by the authorities of the Syrian Region of the United Arab Republic. The accusations were maintained by the Syrian Arab Republic military court which in April 1962 condemned Der Kaloustian to 15 years of imprisonment by contumacy "for espionage in favor of a foreign power". However the Lebanese government considered the accusations of a

political nature and not as crimes of espionage and refused to extradite him.¹

Der Kaloustian is married. He is a holder of military medals including the Legion of Honour.

Dr. Melkon Hairabedian²

Dr. Melkon Hairabedian was born at Adana Turkey, in 1895. He received his preliminary education at Saint Paul's School at Adana. In 1913 he came to Beirut and registered in the preparatory section of the French University. After a year he entered the School of Medicine, but, because of the First World War, the school was closed and Hairabedian returned to Adana, from where he was exiled with his parents and other members of his family during the persecution of the Armenians by the Turks, to Aleppo, Damascus, then Hawran. In 1917 he took refuge in Damascus where, because of his knowledge of Armenian, French, Turkish, and German he obtained employment with the Hejaz-Syria Railway Company, where he served until the end of the war. In 1918 he returned to Beirut to continue his studies, and in 1922 graduated as a medical doctor.

In 1922 he was put in charge of medical treatment of refugees from Cilicia by the Armenian National Union. Largely as a result of

¹L'Orient, 38th year, April 15, 1962, No. 11159, p. 8.

²Interview with Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, December 1961.

his efforts, the district of Karantina was saved from the Malaria epidemic. He has been attending physician to the Adana Regional Association since its establishment in 1947. He is one of the founders of the Ordre de Medicine du Liban, which was established in 1947, and was a member of its board of directors for nine years.

He has been very active within the Armenian Orthodox Community. In 1923 he was appointed chairman of the First Local Council for the area called Saint Michel Karantina. He played a decisive role in the realization of a church and school building project there. In 1926 he was elected to the Communal Council, and he served until 1928 when the council was dissolved by Catholicos Sahag II. Meanwhile he was appointed to membership in the National Council, which administered the community affairs during the absence of the communal council. In 1932, he was elected to the Communal Council again, and since then he has been re-elected and is at present still a member. Between 1926 and 1959 he was a member of the Civil Council three times, and president of that body from 1959 to 1960. He was also president of the Community Court of Appeal in 1959-1960. He has been the vice-president of the National General Assembly of the Cilician See since 1956. He is also honorary president of the Adana Regional Association.

As to his activities outside his community, in 1925 he was one of the eighteen second degree electors who elected the deputies in

the Lebanese Representative Council from the ward called Medawar. From 1941 to 1953 he was a councilor of the municipal council of Jdeidé. He was a candidate in the elections of 1934, but withdrew before the second ballot. In 1947 and 1951 he was elected a deputy of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies on the government lists as one of the Tashnag candidates (although he, is not a member of that party). He is a member of the Cercle de l'Union Francaise. He has been awarded the Order of Cedars "for services rendered to Lebanon."

Dikran Tosbath¹

Dikran Tosbath was born in 1911 at Beirut of Armenian Catholic parents. He received his education at the College des Freres. At the age of 14 he published two student newspapers, La Génie and La Critique. In 1929 he started writing for L'Orient, and in 1936 became the editor in chief of L'Orient, in which position he remained until October 1946. During this period he wrote for the following periodicals: A-Z, Le Cahier Libanais, Goha, Pour Vous, and Etape, and became an agent of the American International News service.

On January 1, 1947, he started to published Le Soir, a daily political newspaper. He was interested in politics from the moment he chose journalism as his career. During the rule of President

¹ Interview with Dikran Tosbath, December 1961.

Bshara Khoury he criticised the government. After the return of Camille Chamoun from his post of ambassador at London, at the end of 1948, they joined together to form the nucleus of a movement which came to be known, in 1951, as the Front National des Socialistes: a movement that succeeded in bringing forth a change of regime in September 1952. He was condemned for "injury to the person of the head of state" (lèse majesté) and put in prison from December 1950 to the end of January 1951.

In 1951 he was elected member of the Chamber of Deputies, as a candidate of the anti-Tashnag Armenian Front, from Metn on the Lists of Pierre Gemayel and Pierre Edde. In 1953 he was elected deputy for a second term as a Tashnag candidate. In 1957, as a Tashnag candidate, he had no rivals and was elected for a third term. In 1960, as an independent candidate, he lost his seat in the parliament.

Dikran Tosbath does not belong to any Armenian or local political party. In 1953, he started to publish the Armenian daily newspaper Ayk. In 1956, he was one of the delegates of the Armenian Orthodox Diocese of Lebanon in the election of the Catholicos of Cilicia.

Originally he was Catholic but in 1951, before the legislative elections, he became Orthodox.

Tosbath is married to Lucy Zarifian-Potoukian, she is now the publisher of Ayk.

Khatchig Babikian¹

Khatchig Babikian was born in October 1922 at Larnaca, Cyprus. His father Diran Babikian a native of Adana, and Dragoman at the Italian Consulate there, had settled in Cyprus after the French evacuated Cilicia. From 1926 to 1930 Khatchig Babikian and his parents lived in Paris, and he received his primary education at public schools there. Then his family settled at Beirut, after arriving there, he attended the Italian community school, receiving his baccalaureate in philosophy and mathematics at the age of seventeen. Then he attended the Faculty of Law of the French University in Beirut, and graduated in 1943. But, as it was necessary to have attained the age of 21 to practice law, Babikian continued his studies in 1944 he received a doctor's degree in law, based on the study of political economics and public law. The examining board offered Babikian a professorial chair in a French University of Latin America, but he refused because he was determined to become a lawyer. He accomplished that purpose in 1944 by being admitted to the bar and beginning legal practice - which he has continued ever since. In 1947 he was a lawyer before the court of appeal. In 1947 he went to London to handle a case with English lawyers against the British Army. Profiting from his stay in London, he followed courses at the London Economics School for three months.

¹ Interview with Khatchig Babikian, December 1961.

Khatchig Babikian is acquainted with seven languages: Arabic, French, Armenian, English, Italian, Latin, and Turkish; and, for fifteen years, has been judicial councilor of the Armenian Orthodox Community Prelacy.

After being in a few school boards, in 1956 he was elected a member of the Central Civil Council of the Cilician See, in which capacity he served until 1958. In December, 1961, he was elected a member of the Communal Council from the ward called Eshrefieh.

Although he does not belong to the Tashnag party,¹ in 1957 he was elected a member of the Lebanese Parliament as a Tashnag Armenian Orthodox candidate on the List of Sami Solh at Beirut. In 1960 he was re-elected a deputy as a candidate of the same party on the List of Sheikh Pierre Gemayel representing Beirut.

On August 3, 1960 he became the first Armenian Orthodox to be a minister of the Lebanese cabinet. He was a Minister of State charged with administrative reform in the Cabinet of Eighteen of Saeb Salam. He served in this capacity until the Cabinet resigned in May, 1961.

Babikian has been married to Miss Margueritte Hajjar, an Armenian Catholic since 1956, and has three daughters.

¹During the elections of 1957 L'Orient presented Babikian as a member of the Tashnag party. Babikian, in a rectification published in L'Orient (33rd year, June 12, 1957, No. 9436, p. 2), wrote "En ce qui me concerne vous avez mentionné que j'étais membre du parti Tachnak. Bien qu'ayant eu l'avantage considerable de jouir de l'appui de ce parti au cours des récentes elections, je vous prie de noter que je n'appartiens pas à cette organisation."

Vartkes Chamlian¹

Vartkes Chamlian was born at Beilan, Sandjak of Alexandretta, in 1928. He studied at the local Armenian elementary school until 1939. When the Sandjak of Alexandretta was ceded to Turkey, his father removed his family to Beirut (where he had already established himself in business). Vartkes Chamlian attended the Nshan Palanjian Djemaran from 1940 to 1947, when he graduated. In 1948 he attended Lycée Laic des Garçons, and succeeded in the first and second baccalaureate examinations. Then he attended the Law School of the French University and in 1951 received his Licence en Droit Français and in 1952 Licence en Droit Libanais. In 1952 he became a member of the bar and in 1954 a lawyer before the court of appeal. After graduation, for sometime, he worked with his cousin Hratchia Chamlian. At present he is working independently.

During his student days he was a member of the Tashnag Zavarian Students Association. In 1956 he was elected president of the Alumni Association of Nshan Palandjian Djemaran, he was a member of the Community Educational Council from 1957 to 1958, secretary of the Beirut Branch of the Hamazkayin Cultural Organization, and member of the Communal Council from Bourj Hammoud in 1960. At present he is the Vice-Secretary of the Communal Council of the Armenian Orthodox

¹ Interview with Vartkes Chamlian, December 1961.

Diocese of Lebanon.

In 1960 he was elected a member of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies from Bourj Hammoud as a Tashnag candidate, though he is not a member of the party, on the Lahoud-Gemayel List.

Chamlian married Miss Izabel Arakelian in 1958.

Souren Khanamirian¹

Souren Khanamirian was born at Beirut on February 28, 1924. He received his elementary education in the Armenian Orthodox Community School of Saint Nishan, graduating in 1936. He continued his studies at the Collège des Freres of Beirut from where he received his baccalaureate in mathematics in 1943. He attended the School of the Law of the French University and received his legal degree in 1946. He never applied himself to that profession, but entered into business with his father, with whom he still works.

For six years (1947-1953) he was a member of the board of Saint Nishan School, meanwhile being treasurer of the Beirut branch of the Armenian General Benevolent Union for four years. He was a member of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox Community from 1957 to 1959, and member of the Central Civil Council of the Cilician See from 1959 to 1961. In 1960 he was elected a member of the

¹ Interview with Souren Khanamirian, December 1961.

Communal Council of the Community. In 1962 he donated 325000 LL to the Armenian Community to built a secondary school after his name.

Although he is not a member of the Tashnag party he was elected a member of the Lebanese parliament as a Tashnag candidate on the List of Sheikh Pierre Gemayel in 1960.

He married Miss Magda Akl, daughter of deputy Camille Akl, in 1961.

Joseph Chader¹

Joseph Chader was born at Beirut on December 27, 1907. His father, Meguerditch Chaderdjian, a native of Diyarbakir(Dikranagert) fled to Beirut in 1895, to escape Turkish persecution. Joseph Chader (also called Shader) received his elementary and secondary education at the Collège des Freres of Beirut, receiving his baccalaureate in philosophy in 1925. Then he attended the Law School of the French University. After being laureate for three times he graduated as a lawyer in 1928. Since November, 1928, when he became a member of the bar, he has been practicing law.

An active member of the Kataeb Lebanese Political Party (Falangist) in 1937, he was appointed secretary general of the party, in which capacity he served until 1950. During the events of November, 1937,

¹Interview with Joseph Chader, January 1962.

and November 13 to 22, 1943, he replaced Sheikh Pierre Gemayel as the supreme head of the party. In 1950 he was elected Vice-President of the party. Since then he has been re-elected to the same position every three years.

As an Armenian Catholic he has been a member of the Committee of Armenian Catholic Wakfs since 1935. After withdrawing with protest as opposition candidate for the minorities seat on election day in 1947, he was elected a member of the Lebanese Parliament from Beirut representing the Armenian Catholic Community, in 1951, as a candidate of the Kataeb Party by an alliance with the List of "Giants". In 1953 he was re-elected from the Minet el Hosn district of Beirut as a Minority candidate of the Kataeb party. In 1957 and 1960 he was re-elected as a deputy representing the Armenian Catholic Community, on the Lists of Jamil Mekaoui and of Pierre Gemayel respectively.

After being President of the Parliamentary Commission of Finances for many years on March 14, 1958 he was the first Armenian in Lebanon to become a cabinet minister. He held the portfolio of Minister for Planning and, in August, 1958, Minister of Finance in the last cabinet of Sami Solh, until September 23, 1958. In 1961 he published a booklet Study of the Financial Situation of the State of Lebanon Until the End of 1960.

He is Commander of the Order of St. Gregory the Great
(Vatican) and Grand-Officier de L'Ordre du Cèdre.

He is married to Miss A. Kehiyayan and is the father of
three children.

CHAPTER IV

THE FUNCTIONS, INFLUENCE, POLICIES AND ACTIONS OF ARMENIAN DEPUTIES

Vahram Leilekian (1934 - 1939)

Vahram Leilekian during his two terms as member of the Chamber of Deputies was regularly elected member of the Parliamentary Commission of Public Works, Health and Public Assistance and at times elected as its president. He was sometimes member of the Commission of Public Instruction, the Commission of Finance and the Commission of Tourism.¹

His first task, which took a considerable time to realize, was to give the Catholicossate of Cilicia, like spiritual centers of all other communities, its rightful position near the local and French authorities, thereby erasing all malicious accusations against it. Due to his efforts, the Catholicossate of Cilicia received invitations to all official receptions. The Catholicos, himself was received with due respect for his position, and, at Armenian religious holidays, received the official congratulations of the authorities.²

A few weeks after his election as a deputy, the Kawkab el Chark restaurant collapsed in Bourj, causing the death of 33 persons. On March 20, 1934 Leilekian in a letter proposed to the Parliament that

¹Correspondence with Vahram Leilekian, November 1961.

²Ibid.

a law to avoid such disasters was necessary to be elaborated on the following basis.

First, a technically detailed plan signed by an engineer must be presented to the Authorities and only then could an authorisation to build be issued. Second, the engineer should assume the responsibility. Third, the precise determination of the responsibility of the owner, the engineer, the tenant, and the government should be specified. Fourth, indemnisation of accident victim workers should be assured.¹

As the proposal of Leilekian was in the form of a letter, it was referred by the Parliament to the Commission of Public Works which studied it on April 3, 1934 and after a few amendments on April 11, 1934 the Commission proposed to the government a new legislative bill following these terms.² The bill was passed and became a law effective until today.³

In 1935 the production of silk moths by the Lebanese peasantry was dwindling; through his efforts a sum of 30000 Lebanese pounds was given from the income of the Customs which then was cashed by the Mandatory power to encourage this project.⁴

¹ Journal Officiel de la Republique Libanaise Chambre des Deputes, Troisieme Legislature 1934, p. 13-14.

² Ibid., p. 30-31.

³ Correspondence with Vahram Leilekian, November 1961.

⁴ Ibid.

After his election, Leilekian on behalf of the Armenian community demanded an increase in the subsidy of the Armenian schools per student, then he demanded government paid teachers for the instruction of Arabic in the Armenian schools. On December 7, 1936 in Parliament, he complained that for 4000 students the Armenian community was allotted two teachers for instruction in Arabic. The same day Parliament voted 2000 pounds so that teachers could be appointed to teach Arabic in Armenian schools.¹

In December 1937, in a written interpellation, Leilekian asked the reason why, when the budget of 1937 was executed, the decision of Parliament taken in December 1936 had remained on paper and no teachers had been appointed in Armenian schools; he added that 30000 Armenians live in the Bourj Hammoud-Nahr area and nothing was done about the demand to open government schools there.²

In a written memorandum he demanded the Chamber of Deputies to prepare a law according to which the families of gendarmes and policemen killed on duty would receive an indemnity in proportion to the number of persons depending on them and their rank, as no such law until then existed in Lebanon.³

¹ Journal Officiel de la Republique Libanaise Chambre des Deputes, Troisieme Legislature 1936-37, p. 101.

² Zartouk, 1st year, December 18, 1937, No. 69.

³ Correspondence with Vahram Leilekian, November 1961.

As the railway company was a French establishment the French forbade the use of trucks and disregarded the enlargening of public roads in the interior of the country so that the railway company, instead of loosing, gained without any competition. The bridges in Tripoli and Beirut were so narrow that large trucks from Aleppo, Homs etc. could not pass, so Leilekian demanded from Parliament the allotment of special sums for the enlargening of roads and bridges. The French Authorities looked with disfavor on his proposals but the Chamber of Deputies decided to order the beginning of the enlargening of roads and bridges.¹

As President or member of the Commission of Public Works (which he terms "an ungrateful task" as all deputies wanted a part of the budget to be allotted to their constituency) he claims to have satisfied all and earned their sympathy by his impartial attitude and equal and just distribution of the money available.²

He participated in Parliamentary debates whether in Arabic or French, in both of which he was proficient. He spoke about the equal share of costs of the construction of sidewalks between landowner and the municipality³, construction of bridges⁴, or the inefficient

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Journal Officiel de la Republique Libanaise, Chambre des Deputes, Quatrieme Legislature, 1938-1939, p. 22.

⁴ La Syrie, 19th year, February 26, 1937, No. 326.

distribution of mail by the postal Authorities¹, or by attracting the attention of the government on the question of elaborating a general programme of work which could be executed according to the importance of roads², or remarking on the cost of gasoline³ etc. He joined other deputies in the preparation of laws or interpellations. On March 24, 1939 Leilekian, Chafik Nassif and Mohammed Abdul Razak asked the government the reason why the "service des automobiles" did not tax the cars of ministers, deputies or officials, as, according to a recent law on cars, they were not exempted.⁴

He used his influence as a member of Chamber of Deputies outside of the Parliament too, as in successfully having the service of the League of Nations Refugees Office continued for two more years.⁵

As he did not belong to any political party he acted on his own "according to the interest of the country".⁶

On November 15, 1936 he was elected member of the Lebanese delegation for the negotiations of a treaty with France. The delegation

¹ Journal Officiel de la Republique Libanaise, Chambre des Deputes, Quatrieme Legislature, 1938-1939, p. 63.

² Ibid., p. 86.

³ Ibid., p. 258.

⁴ Ibid., p. 230-231.

⁵ Correspondence with Vahram Leilekian, November 1961.

⁶ Ibid.

was composed in such a manner as to represent all the communities of Lebanon. It included President Emile Edde, Secretary of State Ayub Tabet, Speaker Emir Khaled Chehab, Cheikh Bshara Khoury, Petro Trad, Nejb Osseiran, Vahram Leilekian, Hikmet Jumblat and Mohammed Abdul Razak.¹ During the negotiations on an article which stipulated that the French could maintain as many soldiers as they wanted in Lebanon, Leilekian urged the French to determine the small number of French forces necessary for the defense of Lebanon, thinking that during a world war the French may withdraw all their forces and leave Lebanon to its fate.²

The treaty however remained on paper, as after the Lebanese Parliament ratified it, the French Parliament did not.

On February 2, 1937 he formally accused the government of Khaireddin Ahdab, on whose list he was elected in 1934, of pressure and threats to grant the cabinet his vote of confidence.

The complaint read by Hamid Frangie as Parliamentary secretary stated that on February 1, 1937, Sami Kanaan, Director of the Cabinet of the President of the Council of Ministers had summoned Leilekian's brother-in-law, Georges Haddad, Municipal functionary, through the Mohafiz of Beirut and had menaced him with suppression of his post

¹Journal Officiel de la Republique Libanaise, Chambre des Deputes, Troisieme Legislature 1934, p. 2-3.

²Correspondence with Vahram Leilekian, November 1961.

if Leilekian did not join the government deputies and did not grant the government his confidence. They added that they would wait for an answer until noon of February 2 and would deny all charges, if Leilekian decided to interpellate through the Chamber of Deputies or the Press.¹

Because of its interest, the rest of the complaint is quoted in the original.

"Le fait est indéniable, parce que j'ai reçu personnellement par mon beau-frère communication de la menace du gouvernement et il m'a été demandé d'y donner ma réponse. Ma réponse sera la réprobation indignée de tels procédés, dignes d'un autre âge, et du gouvernement qui a recours à des moyens aussi indignes, pour intimider l'un de ses fonctionnaires, et par lui, un député du peuple."

"J'étais bien décidé à refuser ma confiance, à un pareil gouvernement avant d'être informé de ce procédé inqualifiable cet incident ne fait que me confirmer dans ma décision, en déclarant à la chambre, à l'opinion et au pays, que l'existence d'un gouvernement pareil est un danger public."²

Bshara Khoury, Ayub Tabet, Hamid Frangie, Emir Majid Arslan defended Leilekian, while Petro Trad and Gabriel Khabbaz defended the government.³ Habib Abi Chahla, Minister of Education, denied the accusation receiving applause from the audience.⁴ However Leilekian once more confirmed his accusations.⁵

¹ Journal Officiel de la République Libanaise, Chambre des Députés, Troisième Législature, 1936-1937, p. 192.

² Ibid., p. 192, and Le Jour, 3rd year, February 4, 1937, No. 720.

³ Journal Officiel de la République Libanaise, Chambre des Députés, Troisième Législature, 1936-1937, pp. 192-193.

⁴ Ibid., p. 193.

⁵ Ibid.

The ministry of Ahdab obtained a vote of confidence by a margin, 13 votes, including the votes of three ministers, against 12. Leilekian was among those who refused their confidence to the government.¹

On other occasions such as on November 10, 1938, Leilekian and Ayub Tabet abstained from giving a vote of confidence in the Ministry of Abdallah Yafi, which however received 55 votes. On January 24, 1938 on another ministry led by Abdallah Yafi he gave his vote of confidence with 32 other deputies when 21 voted against and 2 abstained.²

On January 20, 1936 he voted for Bshara Khoury for President when Emile Eddé with 15 votes against 10 was elected President of the Republic.³

On January 24, 1939 he demanded a ministry for the Armenians in the government. Camille Chamoun and Farid Khazen supported the demand of Leilekian⁴, Habib Abi Chahla Minister of Interior, expressed homage to the loyalty of Armenians towards Lebanon adding that "its not forbidden to hope that in the near future, an Armenian minister will take part in the conduct of the affairs of the Lebanese state."⁵

¹ Journal Officiel de la Republique Libanaise, Chambre des Deputes, Quatrieme Legislature, 1938-1939, p. 12.

² Ibid., p. 99.

³ Correspondence with Vahram Leilekian, November 1961.

⁴ Journal Officiel de la Republique Libanaise, Chambre des Deputes, Quatrieme Legislature, 1938-1939, p. 94.

⁵ Ibid., p. 98.

Khosrov Tutundjian (1937 - 1939)

Khosrov Tutundjian was usually elected a member of the Commission of Justice and Administration, the Commission of National Education and Fine Arts and the Commission of Petitions and Initiatives.¹

He was eloquent in Parliament. He made several speeches in French on the budget, the importance of political parties etc.

Khosrov Tutundjian, although a member of President Emile Eddé's National Union parliamentary group, criticised the government's financial policy. On February 25, 1938 he made a speech in Parliament, and after reviewing the political and social condition of Lebanon, criticised the Lebanese fiscal system as forseen in the budget and demanded that it be modified in the light of Lebanon's evolution towards a democratic ideal. Particularly he criticised that, out of a total budget of eleven million pounds, nine million pounds, that is 88 percent, were drawn from revenues of indirect taxes and customs duties, born mostly by the modest popular class. Nevertheless he voted in favor of the proposed budget as he declared that he believed in the "dogma of automatic progress of institutions".²

¹ Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian, March 1962.

² L'Orient, 14th year, February 27, 1938, No. 186. Majlis al Nuwab, Al-Jumhurriyyat al-Lubnaniyat, Al-Dawr Tashrii Al Rabi, Dawrat 1938-1939, pp. 390-392.

His criticisms found wide echo in the Lebanese press. L'Orient of deputy Gabriel Khabbaz wrote that "recently a Lebanese person" had brought the issue forth. The article added the following:

"Le representant du radical socialisme armenien de Beyrouth a fait l'expose doctrinal que M. Bichara el Khoury n'a pas osé - ou n'a pas pu. Il y a apporte toute la conviction et l'ardeur d'un technaquisme militant. Il a fait ressortir l'iniquite sur laquelle reposait l'equilibre financier de l'Etat. Il a declare que, dans une societe libanaise normale, sous un regime democratique normal, le rapport des impots indirects et des impots directs devrait etre renversé. Autrement dit: le propriete, le commerce, la banque, l'industrie, les professions libres, devrait payer les 9 millions de livres qui sont imposées aujourd'hui a la masse des consommateurs."¹

On February 13, 1939 at the session of the Parliament devoted to the examination and voting of the budget he said that the suppression of the unique tax on lands was a measure which, although favorising a great number of large landowners by discharging them of waiting for the cadastral survey of the lands of the Republic it is destined to discharge the small cultivators and the peasants in distress. Tutundjian added that this denoted that the government intended to follow an economic policy of global augmentation of agricultural production. He congratulated the ministry of Yafi "for this brave action in favour of the labouring classes of the Lebanese mountains."²

¹L'Orient, 14th year, February 28, 1938, No. 187. The name of Khosrov Tutundjian was misquoted as Dr. Kevork Tutundjian.

²Journal Officiel de la Republique Libanaise, Chambre des Deputes, Quatrieme Legislature, 1938-1939, pp. 111-112.

On November 10, 1938 during the debate on a vote of confidence in the cabinet of Yafi, Tutundjian demanded the reason why the government of Emir Khaled Chehab had resigned without the Parliament showing his ministry any hostility. He added that the two parliamentary groupings did not represent any political party outside the Chamber of Deputies or the country.¹ He further said:

"The members of these two groupings certainly can rely on friends who are bound to them, not by any political affinity, but by personal sympathy. Here is the great evil that Lebanon is condemned to suffer, whether she is administered by a constitutional or by a tyrannical regime."²

As a solution he offered the organization of Lebanese democracy according to political parties as an urgent measure. He further invited the deputies not to bargain their votes for personal ends.³

On January 24, 1939 he evoked the reasons why the coalition cabinet of Abdallah Yafi had resigned and why Yafi had to form a new ministry composed of members of the National Union parliamentary group. He stated that he favored one party governments with a frank collaboration between supporters of the governments and a

¹ Majlis al Nuwab, Al-Jumhurriyyat al-Lubnaniyat, Al-Dawr Tashrii Al Rabi, Dawrat 1938-1939, pp. 17-20.

² Ibid., p. 20.

³ Ibid.

frank opposition, as could be seen in the parliamentary governments of the old English and French democracies.¹

As an Armenian Orthodox deputy Tutundjian assisted his community. During the examination of the budget of public health, he had the government pay the expense of five beds in the Armenian Sanatorium of Azounieh. He threatened the ministry of Yafi with an interpellation if an Armenian, who had come first in a competition for a state post, was discarded in favor of the second in the competition and he succeeded in having his compatriot appointed to the post. He had roads constructed in Bourj Hammoud where he had taken Minister of Health Rukoz Abi Nader and organized a public meeting demanding the construction of roads.² He had complained that the 20,000 inhabitants of the Nahr area were served by one mailman only.³ On December 21, 1938 he declared in Parliament that 6000 students in the Armenian schools had been granted only four teachers by the government to teach Arabic, and that the Armenian schools were receiving no government subsidies. He further advocated the creation of evening schools for the teaching of Arabic to the Armenian workers.⁴

¹ Journal Officiel de la Republique Libanaise, Chambre des Deputes, Quatrieme Legislature, 1938-1939, p. 95.

² Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian, March 1962.

³ Journal Officiel de la Republique Libanaise, Chambre des Deputes, Quatrieme Legislature, 1938-1939, p. 63.

⁴ Ibid., p. 55.

He participated in parliamentary debates intervening when he judged it necessary. On May 11, 1939 in a speech in the Chamber of Deputies he declared that the government must take all necessary measures to put an end to the strike of taxi drivers.¹

Tutundjian acted as a Tashnag deputy and member of the National Union parliamentary group, whose leader in parliament was Habib Abi Chahla. He voted his confidence to the governments of Khairaddin Ahdab, and Abdallah Yafi, refusing confidence to the government of Emir Khalid Chehab.²

In November 1937, the Kataebs demonstrated against the regime of Edde. The High Commissioner sent a note to the government asking whether it was able to restrain the movement or not. Tutundjian claims that the local police force was unable to match the demonstrators, and he, on behalf of the Tashnag party, promised Minister of Interior Habib Abi Chahla³ to have 2000 men ready to support the government against the 500 demonstrators. Upon his assurance, given solemnly to President Emile Eddé and Khairaddin Ahdab, the government replied to the High Commissioner that it was able to meet the situation.⁴

¹ Ibid., p. 273.

² Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian, March 1962.

³ Khosrov Tutundjian during an interview in August 1962 told the present writer that Tashnag leaders Garo Sassuni and Kaspar Ipekian had accompanied him to visit Habib Abi Chahla to declare their party's support of the government.

⁴ Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian, March 1962.

Tutundjian told the present writer that he was about to be the first Armenian Orthodox Minister in Lebanon in November 1941, but failed. He gave the following explanation for his failure:

"The cabinet of Ahmed Daouk was about to be formed and the French Authorities informed me that I was going to be a Minister representing the Armenian Orthodox community. However, the English and the Lebanese Communists, who were on friendly terms since the Soviet Union had joined the Allies in June 1941, declared that they were against my candidacy considering me a fascist. Communist leader Artin Madoyan publicly declared at the twenty-first anniversary celebration of Soviet Armenia, that he had been late because he had been working to prevent a Tashnag-Fascist becoming a minister and had succeeded."¹

After the fall of Daouk in 1942 Tutundjian claims that, during an interview with Paul Epicier of the High Commissioner's office, he had recommended the appointment of Sami Solh as Prime Minister.² Sami Solh formed his Ministry after the fall of Daouk on July 27, 1942.

Hratchia Chamlian (1943 - 1947)

Hratchia Chamlian served as a deputy in the first Parliament which achieved independence. He was the President of the Commission of Industry, and a member of the Commission of Justice and Administration and the Commission of Petitions.³

¹ Ibid., August 1962.

² Ibid., March 1962.

³ Interview with Hratchia Chamlian, August 1962.

As an independent deputy he actively participated in the Parliamentary debates in Arabic.

As a member of the Commission of Justice and Administration he spoke in Parliament on September 11, 1944 about joint-stock companies, giving the historical background of such companies, and stating that in the past joint stock companies (société anonyme) of all countries sought authorisation from the government but many countries including Lebanon had annulled this, and contented themselves with establishing a strict control on the formation and activity of the companies. In Lebanon the law of March 24, 1942 had annulled this obligation. The government of Riad Solh fearing that this might harm the economy of the country, had proposed that joint stock companies seek authorisation from the government and choose one third of their administrative councils from the Lebanese. Chamlian explained the advantages of this amendment for the defence of the national economy, and proposed to increase the proportion of Lebanese councillors from one third to one half adding that for this reason they had decided this increase in the Commission of Justice and Administration. To allay any apprehensions, he stated that this obligation referred only to joint stock companies organized in Lebanon and had no relation with companies formed in foreign countries which had branches in Lebanon, adding that there was no danger of retaliation by foreign states.

After long debates the Chamber of Deputies passed the amendment.¹

He also assisted the Armenian community. In an interpellation, he asked the government on what basis the educational subsidies were distributed as he felt the Armenian community did not receive its equal share. The Prime Minister orally told him to go and arrange matters with the Minister of Education.²

In 1940 after the influx of Armenian refugees from the Sandjak of Alexandretta, the Mandatory power occupied and gave the Armenians some land in Tyre. After the achieving of independence, the Lebanese Parliament could expropriate these lands and occupy them. The matter was of great concern to the Armenian deputies. Chamlian had Catholicos Karekin I of Cilicia invite President Khoury, Speaker Sabri Hamadé and Prime Minister Sami Solh to an official dinner held on October 12, 1945 at the Catholicossate in Antelias. Also were present deputies Hratchia Chamlian, Movses Der Kaloustian, Archbishops Khat and Ardavazt, Dajad Srabian and Kevork Papazian, respectively Chairman and Secretary of the National Central Civil Council of the See of Cilicia. During dinner it was agreed that the Armenian community was to pay a nominal price on the basis of the 1940 value of the land during a span of 20 years.³

¹ Aztarar, 2nd year, September 23, 1944, No. 99, p. 4-5.

² Interview with Hratchia Chamlian, August 1962.

³ Ibid.

Chamlian, deputy of the Independent - Ramgavar alliance, did not join any parliamentary political group and acted independently.

The Riad Solh ministry wanted to complete the independence of Lebanon by freeing the administration from French intervention, and creating a national army and amending the Lebanese constitution of 1926 so as to eliminate all references to the mandatory and remove all restrictions. On the afternoon of November 8, 1943, despite warnings from the French Delegate who was in Cairo, the Parliament removed provisions of the Constitution inconsistent with the sovereignty of independent Lebanon. Chamlian voted in favor of these amendments.¹

On September 21, 1943 during the election for President of the Republic, with 49 other deputies he voted for Sheikh Bshara Khoury, who was elected. During his term he voted in favor of the sanctions the government had proposed on Emile Eddé, and voted confidence in the governments of Riad Solh, (twice) Sami Solh, and Saadi Mounla. Upon the request of Riad Solh he and Movses Der Kaloustian absented themselves from Parliament for the vote of confidence of the Ministry of Abdul Hamid Karame in 1945.²

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

Movses Der Kaloustian (1943 -)

Movses Der Kaloustian, as a deputy of the Lebanese Parliament since 1943, has been constantly a member of the Commission of Public Works and sometimes a member of the Commissions of National Education, Tourism, National Economy, Posts Telegraph and Telephone. Since 1960 he has been the chief of the group of Armenian deputies who meet periodically to discuss matters of interest and decide on joint action.¹

During 1943 and 1944 the Armenian schools lacked teachers of Arabic. Through his efforts the government of Riad Solh gave more than 80 teachers to Armenian Orthodox and Protestant schools.²

The land problem of the Armenians of Tyre was viewed differently by Der Kaloustian. During this time Armenian repatriation was declared by the Soviet Authorities, and the majority of the Armenians of Tyre were registered for repatriation. Der Kaloustian tried to delay the repatriation of the Armenians of Tyre by one year so that the land could be legally owned by them and could be sold on their departure. A project was presented by Der Kaloustian and approved by the Parliament by which a committee was formed which would allot the land to the Armenians and hand over to them the

¹ Interview with Movses Der Kaloustian, September 1962.

² Ibid.

certificates of ownerships. However this project was not realised as the Armenians of Tyre repatriated en masse in 1946 to Armenia.¹

Until 1952 the district of Bourj Hammoud was subject to the authority of the Municipality of Jedeydé and according to Der Kaloustian, Bourj Hammoud was not well attended so he applied to President Chamoun to separate Bourj Hammoud from the Municipality of Jedeydé and the creation of an autonomous Municipality. The non-Armenians of the area, and some Armenians, amongst whom was deputy Dikran Tosbath, were against such a separation. However the separation was carried out in December 1952.²

In 1953 Dikran Tosbath joined Der Kaloustian and through their joint efforts the problems of providing drinking water, a loan of two million pounds to the Municipality of Bourj Hammoud and electricity for the area were solved. As a member of the Commission of Public Works, when by chance attending a meeting, he heard that the commission was discussing the possibility of renewing on long term the contract with the company providing drinking water for Bourj Hammoud. He had the matter postponed for a year as the water was not of good quality and after the testimonies of Dikran Tosbath as deputy of the area and Father Boghos Ariss as President of the

¹
Ibid.

²
Ibid.

Municipal Council, it was decided to provide drinking water to Bourj Hammoud from the waters of Nahr el Kelb.¹

Der Kaloustian also had roads built in Ainjar and electricity brought to the village. In 1961 through the efforts of the Armenian deputies, 450,000 lebanese pounds were allotted for five years to improve the condition of the irrigation canals, and to provide drinking water and electricity to the Armenian quarter of Shtora.

Der Kaloustian also invited Emir Maurice Chehab, Director of the Lebanese Museum, to carry out excavations in Ainjar because of its past history. In 1961 the government granted 300,000 Lebanese pounds for this project and a city of the Ommayad period was discovered upon ancient Roman ruins.²

Der Kaloustian also has assisted the Catholicosate of Antelias, especially since 1956.

Movses Der Kaloustian, as an influential Tashnag leader, has always followed the policy of the Tashnag party within the Lebanese Parliament. Since 1943 he has not voted against any government of the regimes of Bshara Khoury, Camille Chamoun or Fuad Chehab.³

¹ Ibid.

² Interview with Movses Der Kaloustian, September 1962.

³ According to Hratchia Chamlian, in 1945 Der Kaloustian and he, both absented themselves upon the request of Riad Solh from Parliament so as not to participate in the vote of confidence on Abdul Hamid Karame. This event Der Kaloustian claimed he was unable to recall, during an interview in September 1962.

On November 8, 1943 with two other deputies, Der Kaloustian was absent from the session of Parliament which removed all provisions from the Constitution of 1926 inconsistent with the sovereignty of independent Lebanon.¹ In 1944 Der Kaloustian with five others voted against² a motion introduced condemning the cooperation of former President Eddé with the French during November 1943 and calling for a severe punishment. However the motion was passed.³ In 1943 he voted for Bshara Khoury as President, in 1952 for Camille Chamoun and in 1958 for Fuad Chehab accompanied by the Tashnag deputies of the period. On April 3, 1957 Der Kaloustian,

¹ During an interview in September 1962 Der Kaloustian told the present writer that on November 8, 1943 he had fever and was in bed. Second, the Armenian Orthodox Community Administration under the Presidency of Archbishop Khat Atchabahian had decided that Chamlian would vote the amendments and Der Kaloustian would absent himself. However Chamlian in an interview in September 1962 told the present writer that Der Kaloustian did not want to alienate the French Authorities and consequently absented himself after the community decision to leave every deputy free to act as he thought fit.

² Der Kaloustian told the present writer during an interview in September 1962, that he had voted against this law, as it was a dangerous precedent to create a law to punish someone after he had committed a crime, and also as a friend of the Armenians, he felt it a moral duty. He claims that when the law was passed according to which a president of the Republic could not be a deputy as well he voted in favor of the law.

³ Majlis al Nuwwab, al-Jumhuriyyat al Lubnaniyyat, Al Dawr al Tashri'i Al Khamis Dawrat, 1943-1944, p. 70.

and Tosbath voted in favor of a Parliament of 66 rather than 88 members.¹ On April 5, 1957, Der Kaloustian and Tosbath voted in favor of the foreign policy of the Ministry of Solh based on the Eisenhower doctrine.²

After the legislative elections in 1960 the Group of Armenian deputies demanded a ministry for one of its group, and obtained a ministry for Babikian.³

In 1961 the U.S.S.R. decided to replace its ambassador in Lebanon by Souren Tovmassian, former secretary of the Communist Party of the Armenian S.S.R., and requested Lebanon to approve the request. The Lebanese Foreign Ministry was not in favor of a Soviet Minister of Armenian origin settling in Lebanon for many reasons one among which was "The acceptance of this ambassador is sure to meet with extremely fervent opposition from the Armenian people in official posts most of them deputies, and one of them a minister, who are all extreme rightists."⁴ The Lebanese Foreign ministry did not reply to the Soviet request, and the U.S.S.R. appointed another ambassador.

¹ Zartok, 20th year, April 4, 1957, No. 160 (5778).

² Zartok, 20th year, April 7, 1957, No. 163 (5781).

³ Interview with Movses Der Kaloustian, September 1962.

⁴ Beirut Weekly, 3rd year, April 10, 1961, No. 105, p. 8.

Among the past and present Tashnag deputies Movses Der Kaloustian is considered by all anti-Tashnag groupings as their arch enemy and is the most criticised. His Armenian political opponents call him "The silent one" as they claim he has never spoken in Parliament.¹ His opponents blame him for creating the present division within the Armenian church and community and for perpetuating it and for not protecting the rights of the Armenian community for fear of alienating successive governments against the Tashnag party and himself.² The Tashnag party considers that Der Kaloustian has "had a past rich and pure in service, and, directed by the interest of the people his correct, unbribed attitude has won the praise of Armenian and Arab circles."³

Dr. Melkon Hairabedian (1947 - 1953)

Dr. Melkon Hairabedian during his two terms as member of Parliament was a constant member of the Commission of Health and Public Assistance as well as other commissions.⁴

¹ Ararad, (23rd year, June 1, 1960, No. 160 (5537)) termed Der Kaloustian "as famous for showing sterility for 30 years in the Parliaments of Syria and Lebanon."

² Zartok, (23rd year, June 19, 1960, No. 222 (1735)) considered Der Kaloustian as responsible for the division of the Armenian Community and Church, for the atmosphere of crime in the Armenian quarters and for political adventures in the service of foreigners.

³ Aztag Shapatoriag, 4th year, May 23, 1947, No. 13 (168).

⁴ Interview with Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, September 1962.

With Movses Der Kaloustian he worked for the creation of the Municipality of Bourj Hammoud. He was appointed by the Minister of Interior to take the opinion of the people of the area on the separation of their suburb from the Municipality of Jedeydé. As the majority of the people were in favor of separation, in December 1952 the members of the Municipal Council of Bourj Hammoud were elected.¹

He was a member of a Commission headed by the Minister of Health Dr. Elias Khoury and Pharmacists Nakhoul and Baroudy to prepare the Constitution of the order of Pharmacists.²

Dr. Hairabedian assisted the Catholicossate of Cilicia on various occasions. As a deputy he tried to increase the subsidies given to the Armenian schools. He had the construction of roads cutting through Amanos quarter stopped, as its inhabitants would be forced out of their dwellings.³

Dr. Hairabedian in Parliament acted according to the Tashnag policy. During the Palestine crisis, when the Arab governments wanted Jerusalem to be declared as a free city, President Bshara Khoury requested a letter supporting the Arab view from the Catholicossate

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

of Cilicia. Dr. Hairabedian and Der Kaloustian visited Catholicos Karekin I and obtained the desired document.¹

Dikran Tosbath (1951 - 1960)

Before his election Dikran Tosbath stated his aims in his French daily newspaper as the following:

"First, he would play another role than that of blindly supporting all governmental initiatives in Parliament. Second, he would know how to defend the interests of his community, regularly ignored until now. Third, he would know to prove in Parliament, - as he had proved during his long career as a journalist - that the Armenians are a part of the Lebanese family, that they have the rights and obligations of all the citizens."²

In his career as a deputy he tried to follow the above aims. During his three terms a member of Parliament he was constantly a member of the Commission of Foreign Affairs and sometimes member of the Commission of Health, Social Affairs etc.,. He was a member of all Lebanese Parliamentary delegations to the London, Helsinki, Warsaw and Nice Interparliamentary Conferences.³

As a deputy elected from the constituency of Bourj Hammoud, he tried to improve the condition of that area. In 1952 through his efforts and with the assistance of Selim Lahoud and Hydraulic Chief

¹ Ibid.

² Le Soir, 5th year, March 30, 1951, No. 1311.

³ Interview with Dikran Tosbath, August 1962.

Abdel Al, drinking water was brought to Bourj Hammoud from Nahr el Kelb instead of from the water of Bir Idriss. After 1953 through his efforts, the electricity which was weak in the area, was strengthened to cover to Jedeydé. During 1954-55 he had a semi-automatic telephone service established in his electoral constituency.¹

On January 21, 1957 through the efforts of Tosbath and Der Kaloustian the Council of Ministers under the Presidency of Prime Minister Sami Solh² decided to grant the Municipality of Bourj Hammoud a loan of 2 million Lebanese pounds. With this grant Tiro and Sandjak camps could be destroyed and 780 Armenian families live in a newly built modern labor suburb.³ On January 31, 1957 the Chamber of Deputies unanimously approved the doubly urgent bill and by decree No. 14839 the loan was transmitted to the Municipality of Bourj Hammoud. Later further provisions in the budget were voted to evacuate the region of Polycarpus and settle the inhabitants elsewhere.⁴

Through his efforts some Armenians were incorporated in the Lebanese Police Force⁵ and other administrative offices of the

¹ Interview with Dikran Tosbath, August 1962.

² Zartonk (March 13, 1957, No. 141 (5759), p. 2) in an editorial wrote that the loan was the work of the Prime Minister and the role of the two Armenian deputies was negligible.

³ Ayk, 4th year, January 22, 1957, No. 1198.

⁴ Ayk, 4th year, February 1, 1957, No. 1207.

⁵ Ayk, 4th year, May 12, 1957, No. 1289.

state.¹ He also secured work permits for Armenian refugees from different parts of the world.

He also took an active part in Parliamentary debates. He presented an insurance bill, and an interior security bill trying to reorganize the staff. With deputy Dr. Hashim Husseini he had a health center for lepers established in Hermel.²

In March 1958, Sami Solh formed a new Ministry with 14 ministers including Joseph Chader, an Armenian Catholic. Dikran Tosbath publicly protested by writing an article entitled "Our Sin"³, in Le Soir and Ayk. In it he stated that the Armenian Orthodox community with its three deputies should have been represented in the new ministry and added that because they supported the highest authority "the weakness of conceding" had caused them to leave their "holy rights to others". The article was concluded with the remark that "it seems that our friendship and loyalty will be exploited forever."⁴

¹In this respect Tosbath presented "Memorandum on the rights of the Armenian Community", to President Chamoun on November 15, 1952, (see Ayk, 1st year, November 5, 1953, No. 214).

²Interview with Dikran Tosbath, August 1962.

³Zartok (21st year, April 10, 1958, No. 162 (6085), p. 3) in an article entitled Dikran Tosbath's 'Sin' gave excerpts of Tosbath's article, adding that Tosbath, without uttering a word in Parliament gave his vote of confidence, accompanied by Der Kaloustian and Babikian, to a cabinet of 14 ministers in which 4 Druze deputies had two ministers and three Armenian Orthodox deputies had none.

⁴Ayk, 4th year, March 18, 1957, No. 1245.

Although elected as a candidate of the anti-Tashnag Armenian Front in 1951, and as Tashnag candidate in 1953 and 1957, he acted independently.

During the presidency of Sheikh Bshara el Khoury he voted against all the successive governments of Abdallah Yafi, Sami Solh, Rashid Karame, Saeb Salam etc., as a member of the opposition National Front of Socialists led by Camille Chamoun with the participation of deputies Ghassan Tueni, Kamal Jumblat, Emile Boustany, Abdallah Hajj, Pierre Eddé.¹ He was one of the signatories of a memorandum addressed to the President of the Republic in September 15, 1952 by the Popular Front, which included the National Congress, the Kataebs, and the National Committee. The memorandum which reiterated former demands for reform stimulated the developments which ushered in the resignation of President Khoury after a crisis known as the Septemberist Movement.²

After the election of Camille Chamoun as President of the Republic, the National Front of Socialists broke down but Tosbath remained a collaborator of President Chamoun. However on April 21, 1953 Dikran Tosbath along with Emile Lahoud and Hamid Frangie attacked

¹ Interview with Dikran Tosbath, August 1962.

² Ziadeh, Nicholas A. Syria and Lebanon, London 1957, p. 120-121.

the government of Emir Khaled Chehab, when the governmental policy of administrative reorganization was under debate. He demanded the resignation of the Chehab ministry in bitter terms and when the Prime Minister asked him to moderate his words, he retorted "If you have blood in your veins you must resign".¹ On April 28, 1953 the government resigned.

During the Presidency of Chamoun he only refused his vote of confidence to the government of Sami Solh in 1954, and voted in favor of all the other ministries. As a governmental deputy in Parliament and in the Commission of Foreign Affairs, he supported the foreign policy of President Chamoun. During a Parliamentary debate in which President Nasser of the United Arab Republic was involved he shouted "What? is he a god"? thus infuriating the opposition.² During the crisis of 1958, as a member of the Commission of Foreign Affairs, on May 22 he voted with five others against three approving the decision of the government of Solh to complain against the United Arab Republic before the Arab League or the United Nations Security Council whenever it judged necessary.³

¹Ayk, 1st year, April 23, 1953, No. 45.

²The statement of Tosbath was attributed by Beirut el Massa to an "Armenian deputy" which became Movses Der Kaloustian in Zartonk (22nd year, January 1, 1959, No. 69 (6290). The Ramgavar Azadagan organ blamed him for making an irresponsible statement endangering the Armenian communities of both regions of the United Arab Republic by insulting its president.

³Le Jour, 24th year, May 23, 1958, No. 7481.

On July 31, 1958 when Parliament was summoned to elect a new President of the Republic, he voted in favor of Raymond Eddé, on the first and second ballots.¹

He remained a close collaborator of former President Chamoun and his National Liberal Party during his term as deputy under the rule of President Chehab. On October 21, 1958 he voted in favor of Adel Osseiran, who was elected Speaker by 31 votes against the 26 votes received by Sabri Hamade.

Khatchig Babikian (1957 -)

Khatchig Babikian during his two terms as a deputy has been a member of the Commissions of Justice and Administration (he had been its reporter from 1957 to 1960), Health and Public Assistance, National Education and Fine Arts, National Economy, and in 1961 Reporter of the Commission of the Plan.²

As an influential member of the Commission of Justice and Administration, he succeeded in getting the Lebanese Laws of inheritance reformed. Before 1958 the laws on inheritance for all moslem or non moslem communities had been based on the islamic laws according to which women were deprived of their rights as conceived

¹ Interview with Dikran Tosbath, August 1962.

² Interview with Khatchig Babikian, August 1962.

by modern Christian ethics. In 1958 in a unique article the Parliament passed the proposed bill.¹

From 1957 to 1960 he was the President of the Superior Commission of Circulation for the Capital and the Suburbs (Commission Superieur de Circulation pour le Capital et le Banlieue). The commission which met twice a week also included Major Aziz Ahdab and the successive Administrators of Beirut Rizkallah, then Yanni. This commission introduced all the traffic reforms within Beirut and its suburbs. Upon the decision of the Commission, Italian Traffic policemen were invited to Lebanon to teach the local police methods of improving the circulation. The establishment of the Green zone (zone vert), the red and green lights controlling traffic of vehicles and pedestrians, special nailed passages for pedestrians on all main streets, the shift of the so called service cars from the center of Beirut and many other changes were decided by this commission.²

In 1958 Babikian visited Saudi Arabia as a member of a Lebanese Parliamentary mission. There he realized the fact that Lebanon lacked skilled workers. During the rule of President Chehab a plan for technical and professional schools was prepared through his

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

efforts and an Italian Religious Brotherhood. After the plan was studied the government applied to the United Nation Funds and obtained U.S. dollars 750.000 and when Babikian became a minister in 1960 he continued the work. As a result Lebanon today has twenty two technical schools and eight others are in the plan.¹

On August 3, 1960 Babikian became the first Armenian Orthodox in Lebanon to serve in the government as a minister. As Minister of State charged with administrative reform, he served in the Ministry of Saeb Salam until May 25, 1961 when the ministry resigned.

Babikian told the present writer that before his appointment as minister, legislation laws and regulations to reform the Lebanese administration were set down on paper but nothing had been implemented adding "that is why I was told by President Chehab to take charge of this work".²

His aim as Minister of State charged with Administrative reform was:

First, to depoliticise the administration.

Second, to decentralise the administration.

Third, to realise the maximum possible efficiency saving by introducing modern methods of work.

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

To realise his aims he formed bodies for technical application, a committee for the research of methods and organisation of work, a commission of inquiry, and from a juridicial point a high commission for reform with the participation of the heads of the principal administrative departments to keep legislation and regulations up to date. To keep the needs of the Lebanese Administration up to this level, he assumed the leadership of the whole administrative corps, and all government officers were responsible to him for their administrative functions.¹

Some of his plans for administrative reform were carried out during his ministership, others met obstacles.

An Arabic weekly Kol Shay in November 1960 in an article entitled "Will Babikian be able to remedy" wrote that numerous commissions for reform have elaborated decree laws often far from the reality of the Lebanese situation aiming to protect the state fonctionnaires from all exterior pressures. However personal and regional interests predominate in the government, where all ministers have their partisans appointed to administrative posts contrary to the interest of the state, under the cover of decree laws. The article added that Babikian "still hopes to execute the decree laws of reform but certainly he won't be able to do much in this vicious circle."²

¹Ibid.

²Kol Shay as quoted by Le Soir (14th year, November 22, 1960, No. 4289, p. 5).

With ministers Joseph Skaff, Rafik Shahine, and Hussein Mansour, Babikian was a member of a ministerial commission which dealt with strikes that troubled the country. This commission proposed to the Cabinet an increase of 15% by law on the salary of all fonctionnaires. The cabinet accepted the proposal and it became a law.¹

During his term of office as Minister of State Babikian was in constant touch with the President of the Republic who handed him other duties such as the problem of professional teaching, the organisation of the publication of postage stamps, technical schools, and decentralization of public works.

On April 20, 1960 Babikian accompanied by Der Kaloustian, Tosbath and Chader presented to the Parliament for approval a project, granting 100000 Lebanese pounds to the victims of an accident in April, 1960 which had claimed the lives of twenty three students. The Parliament granted the sum.²

On January 7, 1963, during the examination of the budget for 1963, Babikian in a speech in Parliament stressed two points. First, the effects of the complete execution of the provisions of the budget on the economic condition of the people. Second, the necessity of the complete execution of the provisions of the budget as it

¹ Interview with Khatchig Babikian, August 1962.

² Ibid.

supposed equal distribution of the national wealth. He then defended the government of Rashid Karame and blamed the administration for being unable to realize the complete execution of the budget. Then he criticised the behaviour of government officials who only think of themselves as the representatives of the authorities and not as public servants.¹

On January 16, 1963 in another speech Babikian demanded the increase of the number of official schools and teachers. He demanded the amelioration of the quality of teaching so he stressed the development of professional teaching. He then pointed out the necessity of adopting free and obligatory primary education.²

With the other Armenian deputies he worked for the organisation of a committee responsible for the building of proper dwellings in the Armenian quarters of Beirut and its suburbs.

His political orientation in Parliament has been to follow the policy of the Tashnag party although he is not a member of the party.

Babikian with his fellow Armenian deputies is accused by his political opponents of having used his political position as member of Parliament to further the partisan interests of the Tashnag party

¹Hraztan, "Desagtsutiun Me Bedagan Hay Yerespokhan Metr Khatchig Babigiani Hed", Nor Guiank, January 20, 1963, No. 29, pp. 6-8.

²L'Orient, 39th year, January 17, 1963, No. 11430.

and to have neglected the protection of the legitimate rights of the Armenian Orthodox community.¹

Vartkes Chamlian (1960 -)

Vartkes Chamlian was one of the youngest members of the parliament elected in 1960 and as such a member of the Bureau of the parliament. He is a member of the Commission of Justice and Administration, the Commission of the Assembly and the Commission of Interior Regulation.²

As a member of the Commission of Justice and Administration he presented a bill which provided for the right of the victim of an accident or his inheritors to open a case directly against the Insurance company if the offender was insured. Chamlian claims that present legislation is too slow in repairing damages. This bill based on a law promulgated in France 1930, is under study.³

¹Zartonk (23rd year, March 9, 1960, No. 136 (6649)) terms Babikian, Tosbath and Der Kaloustian as "clever in having a church closed (alluding to the Rmeil Church closed since 1957) but unskilled in defending the rights of the community." During 1962 when the Shiite deputies threatened to resign if the rights of their community were not recognized, Zartonk (25th year, July 18, 1962, No. 7371) in an editorial entitled "Who will defend the rights of the Lebanese Armenian Community?" blamed Der Kaloustian, Babikian, Chamlian and Khanamirian for not attempting to protect the rights of the Armenian community.

In an article by Albert Temirian, former policeman for the press, in Zartonk (Special 25th anniversary issue pp. 474-476) Babikian was blamed to have furthered partisan interests by exploiting his position.

² Interview with Vartkes Chamlian, September 1962.

³ Ibid.

Chamlian tried to have luxurious buildings also subject to reduction of rent during the preparation of the 1962 law on rents but did not succeed.¹

As deputy of the Metn he has concentrated his efforts not only on Bourj Hammoud but also on other parts of Metn. He has worked for the creation of popular dwellings in Bourj Hammoud, for the drying of the Beirut River and the creation of an artificial lake by bringing sea water inland.²

As a member of the Group of Armenian deputies he has joined his colleagues in joint efforts, proposals and actions. On political grounds he has followed the political orientation of the Tashnag party. He always participates in parliamentary debates and intervenes as he is proficient in Arabic. During the debate of the 1962 Law on Foreigners when deputy Nouhad Boueiz termed the Armenians as "refugees", Chamlian and Babikian rejected the term and stressed that Armenians are Lebanese citizens with equal rights and obligations.³

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

Souren Khanamirian (1960 -)

Souren Khanamirian is a member of the Commission of Finance. In this capacity, in 1961 during the examination of subsidies with the cooperation of the other Armenian deputies he succeeded in having a special sum allotted to the Armenian village of Anjar, and the Armenian quarter of Shtora for the construction of new roads and to provide electricity.¹

With his Armenian colleagues he proposed to the Ministry of Education to receive instead of government paid teachers, the money allotted to them so as to get "more efficient teachers" for the Armenian Orthodox community schools. However the existing laws were against such a proposal and it was turned down.²

Upon the proposal of Khanamirian and his colleagues, in 1962, the Minister of Interior Kamal Jumblat appointed Hagop Ashdjian as President of the Municipality of Bourj Hammoud "to give a more efficient leadership to the Municipality of the area."³

His efforts are also concentrated on the problem of building healthy popular dwellings in the Eastern Entrance of Beirut and Bourj Hammoud.⁴

¹ Interview with Souren Khanamirian, August 1962.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Ibid.

His political orientation in parliament is that of the Tashnag party on whose list he was elected as an independent candidate.

Joseph Chader (1951 -)

Joseph Chader was elected Reporter of the parliamentary Commission of Finance and Budget in 1951 and then its President from 1953 to 1958. In 1961 he was reelected as President of the Commission of Finance and Budget. Since 1951 he has been also a member of the Commission of Justice and Administration.¹

He is one of the most active members of the Lebanese Chamber of Deputies and has rendered great services to his country. The present writer has presented below the most important of these.

He promoted the project of Litani which was opposed by Pierre Eddé. Upon his insistence the government borrowed 27 million dollars from the Bank of International Rural Development and in 1956 the Litani project was realised.²

He dealt extensively with the Law on rents as a member of the Commission of Justice and Administration. Many of the laws put in the Law on rents of 1956 were suggested by him. He wanted to help

¹ Interview with Joseph Chader, January 1962.

² Ibid.

the poor landlords as many tenants had an income tenfold the rent they paid to the landlord.¹

To solve the crisis of tenants he suggested the building of popular dwellings and prepared a project. According to his project apartments may be bought and the indemnity of retirement of employees may be used with a view to acquiring these apartments.²

As President of the Commission of Finances and Budget he annually allotted supplementary credits to the backward regions of the country. Since 1955 when he first promoted the idea, progress and an increase in the standard of living has been noticed. He believes that all the citizens and regions of Lebanon feel that they have equal rights, so that the Lebanese Fatherland may be based on solid grounds.³

In the early months of 1958 when deputy Adib Ferzli declared in the Chamber of Deputies that the Jewish minority could not be considered as Lebanese as they were spies and that special measures must be taken against them, Chader disagreed. He declared that the Lebanese Constitution guaranteed equality to all of its citizens irrespective of their origin, religion or sect so everyone had

¹ Ibid.

² Ibid.

³ Ibid.

rights and obligations and if individuals were proved to be spies the law punished them.¹

On March 14, 1958 he became Minister of the Plan in the Cabinet of Sami Solh. From March 14 to May 8 he started the negotiations with Tapline, and the reorganization of the Ministry of Plan by preparing various projects, also to prevent encroachment of buildings on the seacoast from Tyre to Tripoli he drew up a plan. From May 8, the outbreak of the crisis of 1958, to September 23, 1958, he became the link between President Chamoun and Kataeb leader Pierre Gemayel. In August 1958 when Pierre Eddé resigned from the Ministry he replaced him as Minister of Finances.²

Joseph Chader made a study of the financial policy of Lebanon on the monetary situation, the expenses of the state, taxes and loans. He found out that the expenses of the government were increasing as there were great projects to be realized such as social insurance of which he is an advocate, and administrative and judiciary reform. Until present the source of income for the government are the taxes. He believes that it is in the interest of Lebanon to maintain a light fiscal policy and to have recourse to interior and exterior loans to complete any eventual shortage. He

¹
Ibid.

²
Ibid.

adds that fiscal policy is not just today, as the present generation is bearing all the expenses relative to the equipment of the country which will last many decades and only our children and grand children will benefit. He demands the suppression of the tax on incomes and suggests its replacement by direct and indirect taxes.¹

As the Vice-President of the Kataeb party he acts in Parliament according to the policy of his party. He is not a member of the Group of Armenian Deputies but if the need arises for joint action or collaboration he cooperates with them.²

Notable amongst his political attitudes in the Chamber of Deputies are his support of a Chamber of 88 deputies in 1957 and his absence with a group of other ministers from the Parliament on July 31, 1958 for the election of the new President of the Republic.³

He actively participates in all Parliamentary debates as he is proficient in Arabic.

¹Ibid.

²Ibid.

³Ibid.

CONCLUSION

During 1921 - 23 when the survivors of the Armenian massacres came to Lebanon as refugees they were in a very poor condition. Instead of being a burden to Lebanon they have been an asset, as not only they have ameliorated their situation but are contributing to the welfare of Lebanon, bringing their share as other communities do. Seen in all fields particularly in economy, industry, education, medicine and public health, cultural activities, and sports.

Armenians, as Lebanese citizens since 1924, have taken an active part in politics, profiting from the sectarianism of the Lebanese Administration. They have participated to all legislative elections since 1925. Starting from 1934 the legislative elections took a special meaning for the Armenians as they were allotted seats in the parliament.

The existing Armenian political parties have tried and still try to get control over the Armenian Orthodox community administrative bodies from the Catholicossate of Cilicia to the most remote local council of an insignificant locality, and a school as wide lay representation is stipulated by the Armenian National Constitution of 1863. The same is true for all other cultural, sports, etc. Organizations. As a result of this activities the political and religious life of this community has so far presented a picture of division which has been echoed from time to time in the form of

intestinal feuds. The picture is different in the Armenian Catholic and Protestant communities. In the first there is no lay participation to the community Administration, while the second by their strict regulation of limited membership have excluded undesirable and troublesome elements.

The legislative elections of 1937, 1947 and 1957 have been considered by a great number of people as fraudulent while the election of 1951 have been acknowledged by all to be on the whole free. While the rest of the electing have attracted protests from the opposition. Another point to note is that while for the native politicians the issues were different for the Armenians the issues were their views on Armenian and the Armenian church and its administration.

The Tashnag party candidates have always been accepted on the so-called government lists, especially since 1947, possibly for the party's staunch anti-communist policy, and discipline. While the anti-Tashnags in one way or another have been forced or have willingly joined the opposition of the day, as they have refused to participate on one list with the Tashnag candidates on equal basis, as it has been the case since 1947.

The anti-Tashnag groups have presented themselves in the elections of 1934, 1947, 1953, 1957 and 1960 as one united front, however they have failed to achieve such front in 1937, 1943 and 1951 due to disputes among each other. The Tashnag have always presented

to the elections along except in 1943 when they were allied with the Huntchags. In 1937 and 1953 there have been serious disputes regarding the legislative election within the Tashnag party, as in 1951 a serious division existed within the Huntchag party.

Since 1934 the Tashnags have had 2 partisans and 4 pro-Tashnag deputies elected on their ticket, the anti-Tashnags have had 3 independent deputies one of whom later allied with the Tashnags and the Kataeb one Armenian deputy.

Throughout the Mandatory period (1934 - 1943) and the regimes of presidents, Khoury, Chamoun, Chehab, the Tashnag deputies have always supported the government of the day.

The Armenian of Lebanon are attached to their adopted country but they do not want to be assimilated but desire to preserve their language and traditions.

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