

ARMENIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE LEBANESE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS DURING THE PRESIDENCY OF CAMILLE CHAMOUN 1952-1958

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Bishara Khoury, the first President of an independent Lebanon in 1943, was re-elected to the post of head of state in 1949 after a special amendment of the Lebanese constitution, which usually restricts the incumbent to a single, six-year term of office. However, Khoury was forced to resign in September 1952, three years before the end of his second term. The Lebanese Parliament next elected one of Khoury's main political opponents, Camille Chamoun, a leading member of the so-called September Movement,¹ as the next President of the Republic.

Two legislative elections were held during Chamoun's six-year term in office – in 1953 and 1957. The first of these two general elections was more or less accepted as fair. The second, however, turned out to be immensely controversial. In this article, these two legislative elections will be analyzed with emphasis on Armenian participation in the electoral districts of Beirut and Bourj Hammoud, where seats had been pre-allocated to the Armenian community.

This study is the continuation of two earlier articles by this author on Armenian participation in the Lebanese legislative elections during the French Mandate and the presidency of Bishara Khoury, which were published in volumes 21 and 22 of the *Haigazian Armenological Review* respectively.²

THE ELECTIONS OF 1953

Soon after assuming the presidency in September 1952, Chamoun appointed Emir Khaled Chehab as Prime Minister, who would govern the country with emergency powers. A few weeks later, on 4 November 1952, the Law for the Election of Members of the Chamber of Deputies, promulgated under Khoury on 10 August 1950, was amended by Legislative Decree No. 6. Under this amended law, women were granted

the franchise for the first time in Lebanon's history, while voting was made compulsory for men with a fine of LL. 50 for non-compliance without valid reasons. The total membership of Parliament was reduced from 77 to 44, and the territory of Lebanon was divided into 33 electoral districts, most of which would return, contrary to previous practice, only a single deputy.³ The Armenian Orthodox community was allotted two seats, in the First (Beirut I – Mudawar) and Eighth (Metn – Bourj Hammoud) Constituencies. The Armenian Catholics lost the seat they had been allocated by the electoral law of 1950, but they could now run instead for the seat allotted to the Minorities in the Fifth Constituency (Beirut V – Minet el Hosn).

Prime Minister Chehab resigned on 29 April 1953, after bitter attacks on his government by deputies Hamid Frangié, Emile Lahoud, Dikran Tosbath, Yacoub Sarraf, and Rashid Beydoun.⁴ Chehab's cabinet was succeeded by a government led by Saeb Salam. The new Prime Minister also headed the Ministry of the Interior.⁵

The new government dissolved Parliament on 30 May, accusing it 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."⁶ The new elections were to take place in three stages: in Beirut and Mount Lebanon on 12 July; in South Lebanon and the Bekaa on 19 July; and in North Lebanon on 26 July.⁷

Within the Armenian community many changes had occurred since the elections of 1951. Karekin I, Catholicos of the See of Cilicia, had passed away on 21 June 1952, opening the door for a fierce struggle for his succession. The three Armenian political parties active in Lebanon backed different candidates, but only the candidates acceptable to the Tashnag party had a real chance to get elected as Tashnag party members and supporters dominated the communal councils of most Cilician dioceses in Lebanon, Syria and Cyprus.⁸ After the passing away of Karekin I, the Cilician congregation had elected Archbishop Khat Atchabahian as *locum tenens* and the latter seemed determined not to call an election until a consensus was reached over the succession issue.

On the international scene, Armenians were stunned to hear that the Soviet government had presented on 30 May 1953 a note to the Turkish

Ambassador in Moscow announcing that "the Georgian and Armenian Soviet Republics had renounced the territorial claims on Turkey" made in 1945, and that in consequence the USSR had "no territorial claim whatsoever on Turkey."⁹ The anti-Soviet Tashnag party jumped on this incident to criticize the Soviet government, the local Armenian Communists and all those who had hoped that the Soviets would solve the question of Armenian territorial demands by exerting pressure on Turkey.

On the eve of the 1953 elections, there were internal difficulties within the Tashnag party (see below), while the Huntchag party split of 1951 was now over, with the achievement of a reconciliation between the party's right and left wings. During 1951-52, the Ramgavar Azadagan party had also encountered some difficulties within its affiliate youth organization, and some members of the latter had joined *en masse* the Veraznount Association.¹⁰ By a decision of the 32nd Ramgavar Azadagan party convention in Lebanon, Hagop Shirinian and Prof. Haroutiun Kalayan were expelled from the party for having supported and led the movement against the party leadership within the youth organization and the party at large.¹¹ To demonstrate to its ranks and supporters that the expulsions had not weakened the party, the Ramgavar leadership organized a swearing in ceremony on 25 May, when twenty-seven new members joined the party by taking an oath in the presence of its honorary president, Eugene Papazian, who was visiting Beirut again, just like the period preceding the elections of 1947.¹² On 7 June, the annual festival of the Antranik Youth Organization of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (a philanthropic organization close to the Ramgavars) was held with great fanfare at the Beirut public park, in the presence of Prime Minister Salam. This event, too, was publicized in such a way as to show that the Ramgavars had not been affected by the defections mentioned above.

On 1 March, the Armenian Orthodox Deputy Tosbath started publishing an independent Armenian language daily newspaper, *Ayk*, with the moral support of some non-partisan Armenian activists, members of the Veraznount Association, as well as Shirinian and Kalayan.

Tashnag-supported candidates had won both in Beirut and Bourj Hammoud during the municipal elections of December 1952 and the election of *mukhtars* (headmen) in March 1953, but there had been protests

from the opposition on both occasions.¹³ Hence, the parliamentary elections were going to be held in a tense atmosphere.

On 20 June, *Ararad*, the Huntchag daily, named Karnig Malikian, Hratchia Setrakian, Hmayag Kranian, Noubar Nokhoudian, Movses Der Kaloustian, Puzant Giligian, Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, Hovhaness Kassardjian, Dadjad Srabian and Hratchia Chamlian as the probable Armenian candidates for the First Constituency of Beirut, while for the Eighth Constituency, the name of Tosbath, as the "popular Armenian candidate," was mentioned.¹⁴

Tosbath, who was elected deputy from Metn as the candidate of the anti-Tashnag "Armenian Front" in 1951, was a close friend of President 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 the candidate of both Tashnags and anti-Tashnags.¹⁵ Since the traditional policy of the Tashnag party was to be loyal to the government of the day, Tosbath was adopted as the party's candidate for Bourj Hammoud. The Ramgavar and Huntchag parties and the Group of Independents (see below) refused to accept Tosbath as their candidate in Bourj Hammoud so as to avoid any form of cooperation with their rival, the Tashnag party.¹⁶

The Tashnag party itself faced, as mentioned above, internal difficulties. Some local committees preferred to back a candidate other than the incumbent deputy, Der Kaloustian. The popular Tashnag leader Tro (Trasdamad Ganayan) arrived from Paris, and the party's highest executive body worldwide, the Bureau, and the party's Central Committee in Lebanon succeeded in having Der Kaloustian adopted as the party's official candidate.¹⁷

On 29 June, the Tashnag party formally declared Der Kaloustian its candidate for the Mudawar district in Beirut and Tosbath for Bourj Hammoud.¹⁸ Nikola Schahgaldian mentions that the surprise was great among the ranks of Tashnag party members and sympathizers, when it was revealed that Tosbath, whom the Tashnag had earlier accused of "immorality" and "opportunism," was to be their candidate in Bourj Hammoud.¹⁹ *Aztag*, the Tashnag daily, endeavored to explain this fact in

an article entitled "Our Neutral Candidate for Bourj Hammoud is Dikran Tosbath":

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.²⁰

In its editorial the next day, *Aztag* also explained why the Tashnags were participating in the elections with candidates of their own:

Now it is necessary more than ever 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 through their social ideology and psychology are with the democratic world.²¹

On 1 July, the Central Committee of the Independents of the Armenian Community published an official communiqué to the effect that it had decided to put forward a candidate in the First Constituency of Beirut, and that its unanimous choice was the multi-millionaire Karnig Malikian. The latter and his brothers were the official agents of Philco Electrical Appliances in Lebanon. Malikian had never held any formal office within the Armenian community, however. The communiqué described him as "the only candidate of the Independents" in the forthcoming legislative elections. It further stated that Malikian's candidacy was backed by the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag parties and by other cultural and sports associations such as Homenmen (affiliated to the Huntchag party), Veraznount, and Antranik.²² The next day, Tosbath's *Le Soir* and *Ayk* questioned the existence of the so-called Group of Independents and described it as a "ghost entity."²³ However, a second official declaration by the Group of Independents was published on 6 July, as if in reply to the doubts raised by Tosbath. The announcement clarified that "the great majority of the notables of the Armenian community of Beirut" had met periodically during the past six months or more, either at the Alumni Club of the American University of Beirut or at the residence of Dr. Yervant Djidedjian to discuss the possibility of holding elections for the

catholicossal succession in a spirit of concord and conciliation amongst all elements in the Armenian community. At almost the same time, *Zartouk, Ararad* and *L'Orient* disclosed the names of the participants in these discussions: Dr. Djidedjian (Chairman of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox community, member of the Beirut Municipal Council and the Head Surgeon at the American University Hospital), Dadjad Srabian (member of the Communal Council of the Armenian Orthodox community and inspector at *Banque de Syrie et du Liban*), Yervant Demirdjian (businessman and Vice-Chairman of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox community), Karnig Minassian (businessman and a member of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox community), Kevork Tchatalbashian and Kegham Dantzian (manufacturers and members of the Communal Council of the Armenian Orthodox community), Hratchia Chamlian (former member of the Lebanese Parliament), Dr. Hovsep Yenikomshian and Dr. Karekin Tabourian (professors at the American University of Beirut), Dr. Antranik Tchavoushian, Dr. Matheos Kalbian, Hagop Seferian (banker), Abro Abroyan, Dikran Kalbian, Hovhaness Kassardjian, Avedis Manougian and Dikran Zawzawatjian (manufacturers), Haig Zawzawatjian (industrialist), Levon Nazarian, Karnig Malikian, Karnig Tufenkdjian, Sarkis Shekerdjian, Hagop Abadjian, Ghazaros Beylerian, Seropé Beylerian, Khoren Tahan, Yervant Vishabian, Garabed Tedjirian, Aram Khatchadourian, Krikor Boutchakdjian, Takvor Palandjian, Garabed Kassardjian and Boghos Parseghian (businessmen), Yetvart Barsoumian and Haroutiun Kazandjian (engineers), Hagop Kalpakian (pharmacist), Dr. Hovhaness Srabian and Dr. Levon Kardjian (dentists), Dr. Khoren Yeretsian (municipal doctor) and others.²⁴

The second declaration of the Group of Independents (issued on 6 July) also stated that the personalities mentioned above had elected a central committee to deal with the legislative elections of 12 July and maintain unity and harmony within the Armenian community. The declaration further stated that the establishment of the Rally of Lebanese Armenians had been made possible because of the adherence of the Ramgavar and Huntchag parties, as well as many cultural and sports associations to the Group of Independents. All these organizations had accepted without reservation, said the declaration, Malikian's candidacy for the First Constituency of Beirut.²⁵

Aztag wrote that the Huntchag-Ramgavar Front was resorting to lies and fraud to push for Malikian's candidacy and was shamelessly exploiting the names of honest personalities for the same purpose.²⁶ To counteract the anti-Tashnag independents, a meeting of pro-Tashnag independents was held at the Tashnag club at 6 p.m. on 6 July. 150 persons reportedly attended this meeting, though their names were not disclosed. It was announced during this meeting that the names of Dr. Djidedjian and other independents were being exploited intentionally, and a denial by Tufenkdjian was read to the participants. Those present at the meeting expressed their indignation, protested and then elected a Central Committee of their own, consisting of Karnig Tufenkdjian, Roupen Mavisakalian, Yervant Sarafian, Khoren Tahan, Simon Tchitikian, Missak Azirian, Kegham Khanamirian, Onnig Tcherkezian, Hagop Tavitian, and Vahé Setian. This committee unanimously decided, in the name of all those who had attended the meeting, to support the candidatures of Der Kaloustian and Tosbath.²⁷

On 20 June, Tosbath announced in an article, published only in his French newspaper, that he had presented his candidature in the Eighth Constituency with the full support of Raymond Eddé's National Bloc, the Tashnag party, the Bloc of Armenians²⁸ and the people of Jedeidé, Baoushrié, Sed-Baoushrié, Dekouani, Sin el Fil and Bourj Hammoud.²⁹ On 28 June, Tosbath, together with the First Lady, Mrs. Zalfa Chamoun, as well as Pierre Eddé, Karnig Tufenkdjian, Boghos Nadjarian, Pakarad and Vazken Bakalian attended a banquet organized by the Veraznount Association.³⁰ On 26 June, the National Bloc announced that Tosbath was its candidate in Bourj Hammoud, and, three days later, the Tashnag party did likewise.³¹

The Ramgavar-Huntchag-Independent coalition concentrated its efforts in the First Constituency of Beirut.³² Although the newspaper *L'Orient* predicted that the anti-Tashnag candidate had a good chance of winning in the Eighth Constituency,³³ the probable anti-Tashnag candidate in that district, Nokhoudian, did not submit his candidature.³⁴ The Communist Party of Lebanon tried to profit from the absence of a Ramgavar-Huntchag-Independent Group candidate in the Eighth Constituency and

presented on 26 June the candidature of its main Armenian leader, Haroutiun (Artin) Madoyan.³⁵

The Tashnag party faced strong opposition in the First Constituency of Beirut. The party and its Armenian opponents had to face each other in this single-mandate constituency without any assistance from candidates from other communities. Both sides, therefore, embarked upon a fierce electoral campaign. *Aztag* 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 submit his candidature."³⁶ The newspaper criticized the Ramgavar and Huntchag parties for not submitting candidates of their own³⁷ and for supporting a man "devoid of Armenian spirit." *Aztag* also made personal attacks on Malikian; it said Malikian had never been active in public life and was "a tool in the hands of the Communists."³⁸

The Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag newspapers supported Malikian. *Zartouk* wrote that Malikian would, if elected, strengthen brotherly ties between Arabs and Armenians, champion the administrative and other rights of the Armenian community and support a "sane" national policy.³⁹ *Ararad* wrote that it could never imagine that the Tashnag party would act so immorally in front of the public for a single parliamentary seat.⁴⁰ The paper declared that the Huntchag party had accepted Malikian's candidacy so as to preserve national unity. It said that the Huntchags accepted that Malikian did not have experience in politics, but what had Der Kaloustian done in Parliament? *Ararad* underlined that Der Kaloustian had never spoken in Parliament or defended the rights of the Armenian community. The newspaper inquired further what services, if any, had Der Kaloustian rendered to Lebanon or to the Armenian community?⁴¹

At 7 p.m. on 6 July, 5,000 people attended an electoral rally organized by the Ramgavar-Huntchag-Independent Group. The rally was under the patronage of Dr. Djidedjian, although the latter was not present that evening. Nazareth Gharibian (Armen Gharib), Hratchia Setrakian, Antoine Saad, Vahridj Djeredjian, Ibrahim Jarra and Malikian addressed the gathering.⁴² On 8 July, Malikian and representatives of the Rally of Lebanese Armenians visited the *locum tenens*, Archbishop Khat, at the Armenian Catholicossate in Antelias. On behalf of the visitors, Dadjad

Srabian said that a non-partisan Catholicos must be elected for the vacant seat. Archbishop Khat replied that the Cilician See was open to all its children and that it could never be guided by political party interests.⁴³

Another public rally in support of Malikian was held under the patronage of Dr. Djidedjian at the Ramgavar Tekeyan Club on 9 July,⁴⁴ while the Tashnag party held its own public gathering opposite the Tashnag Club in Karantina (Quarantaine) on 10 July.⁴⁵

Both sides made last appeals prior to the election. Djidedjian asked Armenian voters to vote according to their preference, mentioning that Malikian was the candidate of the Armenian Independents and that their movement had found an enthusiastic reception among the Armenians.⁴⁶ Malikian, in turn, said that together they would try to develop the multiple resources of Lebanon and create employment for all. He underlined that he was independent, neutral and not a member of any political party.⁴⁷

Malikian also had to answer charges made in the newspaper *El-Yowm* (and reprinted in *Aztag*) that he had worked for Jewish companies.⁴⁸ Pamphlets in Arabic had also been distributed in Beirut, allegedly by Tashnags, making similar accusations.⁴⁹ *L'Orient*, which campaigned strongly for Malikian, stated that the agreement between Philco and Israel had been cancelled on 1 May 1953 through the efforts of Malikian, Philco's agent in Lebanon.⁵⁰

Ararad wrote that the Tashnags had distributed pamphlets freely to the people, in which they had said that the Huntchag and Ramgavar parties had exploited the names of neutral personalities. The presence at their public rallies of those neutral personalities had shown, however, that the electorate did not approve of the views of *Aztag* or the Tashnag party.⁵¹ The Huntchag paper also wrote that if the Tashnags were certain of their success in the election, they would not threaten their opponents.⁵²

On the other hand, *Aztag's* editorial – entitled “He Will Be Crushingingly Defeated” – alluded to Malikian when urging that no votes be cast for persons who enjoyed the support of suspicious elements.⁵³ *Ayk* and *Le Soir* also predicted in a very confident tone that Der Kaloustian and Tosbath would win.⁵⁴

Although Tosbath's election in the Eighth Constituency seemed certain,⁵⁵ Madoyan, the Communist candidate, who did not enjoy the backing of the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag newspapers, says in his memoirs that he was determined to struggle to the end despite being a 'reluctant' candidate, the party had put his name forward against his own wishes.⁵⁶ Just before election day, twenty-five of Madoyan's supporters were arrested by the constabulary in Bourj Hammoud, when they were distributing pictures of the Communist candidate. Upon Madoyan's protests to the Ministry of Justice, an inquiry was ordered.⁵⁷

Joseph Chader, the Vice-President of the Phalangist (*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, who eventually came second, enjoyed the support of the Syrian Catholic Patriarch, Cardinal Tappouni,⁵⁸ while Chader had the support of, among others, the Jewish community, which usually backed the Phalangists. The Armenian Catholic weekly, *Massis*, did not publish any propaganda on behalf of Chader during the pre-election period.⁵⁹

The elections were held on 12 July. In the First Constituency (Mudawar), 6,552 voters out of a total of 21,410 eligible voters cast their votes. In the Eighth Constituency (Bourj Hammoud), of the 15,985 eligible voters, only 4,696 cast their votes.⁶⁰ At around 30 percent, these were the lowest proportions of voter participation in the constituencies of Beirut and Mount Lebanon, despite voting being compulsory for men. Finally, in the Fifth Constituency, out of the 13,830 eligible voters, only 5,852 voted.⁶¹

The official results were as follows. In the First Constituency, Der Kaloustian received 3,729 votes; Malikian, 2,799. In the Fifth Constituency, Chader received 2,081 votes; Rabbath, 1,922; Nassif, 1,097; Jebran, 646; Attié, 55. Finally, in the Eighth Constituency, Tosbath received 3,929 votes; Madoyan, 709.⁶² Der Kaloustian, Chader and Tosbath were hence elected deputies in the next chamber.

Following the elections, *Zartonk* protested vehemently to the authorities, writing that "the compulsory (vote) for men was turned to ridicule because of Tashnag terrorism, disorders, and the complicity of

policemen.”⁶³ In a milder tone, *Ararad* wrote: “The Armenian people have no deputies in Parliament. The Armenians have the sons of the chivalrous Arab people as their deputies.”⁶⁴

In reply, *Aztag* wrote that the anti-Tashnag front was defeated because it consisted of Communists and their fellow travelers. It further stated that their opponents started complaining of terrorism only after having been defeated in the polls. Instead, they should have attempted to prevent any form of terrorism if it occurred on election day.⁶⁵ Tosbath wrote in his Armenian and French newspapers that he remained as always “the representative of the independent Armenians, in the service of all Armenians without distinction of party, denomination or clan affiliation, and in the service of all Lebanese.”⁶⁶

Criticism in the anti-Tashnag newspapers focused on the election in Mudawar; the issue of the elections in Bourj Hammoud did not come up in these papers. The complaints and criticisms regarding the elections in Mudawar can be summarized as follows. Many “suggestions” and threats were made to force Malikian to withdraw from the electoral campaign. When these measures did not produce any effect, the government altered, only two days before the elections and upon Der Kaloustian’s request, one of its former decisions, when it changed the women’s polling center from Hadjin, a predominantly Huntchag neighborhood, to Karantina, which was in a zone of Tashnag influence.⁶⁷ After this change, Der Kaloustian received 300 more votes than Malikian in Karantina, as it was easier to frighten women than men. Through this change of the location of the polling center, the government showed its preference for Der Kaloustian. So did the policemen on duty on election day. By 10 a.m. it was obvious that female voters for Malikian were in the majority. To upset this, the proxy 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 polling centers. Many supporters of Malikian had to return home without casting their votes. By 11 a.m. the Tashnags had started their “terrorism” before the eyes of policemen. *Aztag* had wrote that after 12 p.m. not a single voter for “Malikian could be found at Mudawar.” *Zartouk* claimed this was due to Tashnag “terrorism”; Malikian and his wife were attacked, while Sarkis and Krikor Tchouldjian were stabbed

with knives.⁶⁸ Malikian voters from Bourj Hammoud were not allowed to cross to Mudawar. Only in the eleventh hour, after the Tashnags had crossed all limits, did the army intervene. The army's intervention brought many Malikian voters back to the polling stations. Contrary to the order of the Ministry of Interior that voting would continue after 4 p.m. if there were voters assembled in the polling centers, all electoral centers were closed with few exceptions, and these were open only for the supporters of Der Kaloustian. Between 8 a.m. and 12 p.m. 2,799 people had voted for Malikian. Voting for Der Kaloustian, on the other hand, continued until 4 p.m., and he had received only 930 votes more than Malikian. Only 30% of the total number of eligible voters had voted, with Tashnags going to great lengths to bring their voters from their places of residence in Tripoli, Zahlé, Jounié, Bikfayya, Brummana, and even from Aleppo and Damascus in Syria. Thus, only 3,729 voters out of a total of 21,410, claimed the anti-Tashnag press, had been "duped" by the Tashnags to vote for them.⁶⁹

After the elections on 14 July, the re-elected deputies, Der Kaloustian and Tosbath, accompanied by members of the Central Electoral Committee of the pro-Tashnag Independents, led by Tufenkdjian, Tashnag notable Hagop Der Melkonian and the former Ramgavar Shirinian, visited Archbishop Khat at the Catholicosate of Antelias. The archbishop advised them to serve their country, Lebanon, and the Armenian community in the best possible way. In reply, Tufenkdjian wished that all disputes within the local Armenian community would end soon. His wish was reciprocated by Archbishop Khat.⁷⁰ On 15 July, the same group visited Bishop Khoren Paroyan, the Armenian Orthodox Prelate of Lebanon, at the latter's official residence, where they were also received by representatives of the Communal, Civil and Religious Councils.⁷¹ On 17 July, Der Kaloustian and Chader visited Cardinal Gregory-Peter Agagianian (Aghadjanian), the Armenian Catholic Patriarch, and received his congratulations.⁷² The Armenian deputies also visited other elected deputies Sami Solh, Abdallah Yafi, Alfred Naccache, Ghassan Tueni, Raymond and Pierre Eddé to offer their congratulations.⁷³

The anti-Tashnag Armenians wrote in a frustrated tone that they could never believe in promises of "free elections" and they now termed the whole September Movement of President Chamoun as "a fiasco."⁷⁴ The

split within the administrative bodies of the Armenian community also began during this period. On 3 August, six independents – Djidedjian, Demirdjian, Minassian, Tchatalbashian, Dantzigian and Srabian – resigned their seats in the Communal and Civil Councils after over six months of continual disputes with the pro-Tashnag members of these bodies.⁷⁵

Internal divisions within the Tashnag Party persisted after the election. Opposition within the party to the candidature of Der Kaloustian was manifested by the publication of *Aztarar* as a daily newspaper from September 1953. *Aztarar* had until then been a pro-Tashnag weekly published by Onnig Topouzian. From then on, *Aztarar*, while still published by Topouzian, was edited by a former Tashnag member of Parliament, Khosrov Tutundjian, and attacked the Tashnag leadership.⁷⁶

According to Schahgaldian, the Tashnag leaders were not moved by these internal divisions; instead, they became more determined to root out all “communist agents” from the party. Based on the Tashnag party’s Central Archives, Schahgaldian mentions that scores of otherwise honorable party veterans were purged in the ensuing months. In 1954 alone the Tashnag party’s Central Committee in Lebanon expelled 85 party members for various unspecified reasons. The number of members purged grew to 125 in 1957.⁷⁷

THE ELECTIONS OF 1957

The Parliament elected in 1953 served its full, four-year term. The months preceding the next elections, however, were turbulent in Lebanese politics. A few days after the British-French-Israeli aggression against Egypt was called to a halt in early November 1956, a meeting of the Arab Heads of State took place in Beirut. Hardly was this summit over than Prime Minister Abdallah Yafi and Minister of State Saeb Salam submitted their letters of resignation to President Chamoun. The two men had demanded the breaking off of diplomatic ties with the United Kingdom and France, but the President had rejected their request.

Chamoun then appointed Sami Solh as the next Prime Minister. Solh formed a new, staunchly pro-Western cabinet with Charles Malik, the former Lebanese Ambassador to Washington, D.C. and the United Nations, taking over the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The new cabinet also promised in its manifesto to raise the number of deputies in the next

Parliament.⁷⁸ General Fouad Chehab, the Commander of the Lebanese Armed Forces, was asked to serve as Minister of Defense as well. However, Chehab resigned from the cabinet early in January 1957 as he did not want to take sides in the question of electoral reform.⁷⁹

In January 1957, United States President Dwight Eisenhower sought authorization from Congress "to come to the aid of any Middle Eastern state which is the victim of Communist aggression." The Lebanese Government quickly expressed its readiness to adhere to what was dubbed as the Eisenhower Doctrine.

An opposition National Front, led by former Prime Ministers Yafi and Salam was organized to oppose the Solh government's pro-Western foreign policy and its new electoral bill. On 2 April, the opposition, in a public declaration addressed to the President, demanded, amongst other things, that the number of deputies in the next Chamber be increased from 44 to 88, and that a neutral government be formed, composed of ministers who would not run in the elections. An opposition delegation, consisting of Ahmed el Assaad, Saeb Salam, Fouad Khoury and Fouad Ammoun, which wanted to hand in the opposition manifesto, was not received by the President, on the grounds that it had already been published in the newspapers. In response, the opposition decided to boycott the President.⁸⁰

However, the Solh government, supported by the majority of sitting deputies, went ahead with its plans. On 3 April, the 44-member parliament elected in 1953 decided, by 24 votes to 11, with four abstentions and four deputies absent, to have 66 members rather than 88 in the next Chamber.⁸¹

Moreover, when the Solh government asked for a vote of confidence in parliament over its foreign policy, opposition deputies Abdallah Yafi, Hamid Frangié, Rashid Karamé, Sabri Hamadé, Ahmed el Assaad, Abdallah Hajj and Kamel el Assaad resigned in protest on 5 April, and the government won the vote of confidence by 30 votes to 1. The only vote against was cast by Dr. Hashim Husseini.⁸²

Former CIA operative Wilbur Crane Eveland detailed in his book, *Ropes of Sand*, the American involvement in these elections. He wrote that the American Ambassador, Donald Heath, "insisted on saturation financing to defeat seven powerful politicians who had resigned from

Parliament to protest President Chamoun's pro-American policies." Eveland himself carried out the financial transactions upon the insistence of President Chamoun, with the President himself later distributing the CIA slush funds.⁸³

The new electoral law, which increased the number of deputies to 66, was promulgated on 24 April. It also abolished the compulsory vote for men and divided Lebanon into twenty-seven electoral districts.⁸⁴ The Armenian Orthodox community was allotted three seats: two in Beirut and one in Bourj Hammoud. The Armenian Catholics were given a single seat in Beirut.

Beirut was divided into two constituencies. Constituency I, which comprised Museitbe, Mazraa, Ashrefieh, Rmeil and Seifi, had 110,022 inhabitants and would elect two Sunnite, one Maronite, one Greek Orthodox and one Armenian Orthodox deputies. Constituency II, which comprised Mudawar, Marfaa, Minet el Hosn, Ain Mraysé, Ras Beirut, Zokak el Blat and Bashura, had 109,927 inhabitants and would elect two Sunnite, one Shiite, one Armenian Orthodox, one Armenian Catholic and one Minority deputies.⁸⁵

Within the Armenian Orthodox community in Lebanon, a split had occurred after the election, on 20 February 1956, of Bishop Zareh Payaslian, the Prelate of the Armenians of Aleppo and the candidate of the Tashnag party, as the new Catholicos of Cilicia. Although the Lebanese, Syrian and Cypriot Governments had immediately recognized Zareh as the new Catholicos, the Ramgavar Azadagan⁸⁶ and Huntchag⁸⁷ parties, the Veraznount Association,⁸⁸ and the anti-Tashnag Group of Independents,⁸⁹ had announced officially that they would not recognize him as Catholicos.

The majority of members of the religious brotherhood of the Catholicossate of Cilicia, 11 clergymen out of 19, who had refused to recognize the Catholicossal election, met in the monastery of Bikfayya on 23 July 1956 and declared that the *locum tenens*, Bishop Khoren Paroyan, had been deposed "by a vote of no-confidence" and that they had elected Archbishop Khat Atchabahian as *locum tenens* in his stead.⁹⁰ Vazken I, the Catholicos of All Armenians based in Etchmiadzin in Soviet Armenia cabled President Chamoun on 13 August 1956 to announce his recognition

of Archbishop Khat as *locum tenens* of the See of Cilicia.⁹¹ These actions remained unheeded, however, by the Catholicos-elect and the governments concerned.⁹²

After the consecration of Bishop Zareh as the new Catholicos of Cilicia on 2 September 1956, the chasm within the community widened further.⁹³ Out of the 17 Armenian Orthodox churches in Lebanon, the opposition, led by Archbishop Khat, controlled only three: two in Beirut and the third in Zahle. After the monastery of Bikfayya, the stronghold of the opposition, was seized on government orders from the followers of Archbishop Khat and handed over to the Catholicossate of Cilicia under Zareh I, Khat and his followers among the clergy resided in the Summer Palace Hotel in Beit-Mery.

Archbishop Khat, his fellow clerics, the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag parties, the Veraznount Association, and the Group of Independents decided to separate themselves from the Catholicossate of Cilicia. They informed the Lebanese Government on 12 October 1956 that they had formed the religious and civil councils of what they called the Independent Community of the Catholicossate of Cilicia with Archbishop Khat as its head.⁹⁴ A petition signed by 8000 Armenian Orthodox families demanding the formal recognition of the "new independent community" was presented to the government.⁹⁵

Solh, who became Prime Minister, as mentioned above, in November 1956, had previously been the lawyer of Archbishop Khat and his supporters.⁹⁶ Former Minister Henri Pharaon, an influential Lebanese politician, paid a visit to Archbishop Khat and "the Civil Council of the Independent Community" on 27 December 1956.⁹⁷ The Prime Minister, accompanied by former President Alfred Naccache and former Minister Rashid Beydoun, also visited Archbishop Khat, his followers and "the Civil Council of the Independent Community" on 30 December 1956. About 3,000 supporters of Archbishop Khat were present during this visit on the grounds of the Summer Palace Hotel. The supporters of Archbishop Khat claimed the visit was of an official character and that it meant *de facto* recognition of their "independent" community.⁹⁸ However, Armenian

Orthodox deputies Tosbath and Der Kaloustian intervened on 4 January 1957,⁹⁹ and the government produced a written reply on 22 January, signed by Emile Tiyan, the Minister of Justice. It stated that the Prime Minister's visit was of a personal character. This clearly implied that the "independent community" did not have formal government recognition.¹⁰⁰

Meanwhile, on the occasion of the Armenian Christmas on 6 January, 12,000 Armenians filled the streets adjoining the St. Kevork Church in the neighborhood of Hadjin, where mass was being celebrated by clergymen opposed to the election of Zareh I. After the mass, Sheikh Alaya, the Mufti of the Republic, Yafi, Salam, Gabriel Murr, Mohammed Omar Turk and other opposition figures visited Archbishop Khat in Beit-Mery.¹⁰¹ It was apparent that the opposition was trying to woo Archbishop Khat's supporters.

On 2 and 3 February, incidents occurred in the Khalil Bedewi region, when two Archbishops from the rival Cilician congregations, Khat and Khoren, wanted to celebrate mass on the same day and at the same hour in St. Haroutiun Church. By government order the church was closed after the clashes.¹⁰² Arrests were made from among the supporters of Archbishop Khat, but they were released after a few days.¹⁰³ On 28 March, Deputy Abdallah Hajj asked the Prime Minister in Parliament to explain the reasons behind the closure of the church.¹⁰⁴ Solh promised to reply within a week. The church remained closed, however, from February 1957 to December 1963.

Realizing that it would be impossible to get official recognition from the Lebanese Government, Archbishop Khat next appealed to Shukri el Kouatly, the President of Syria, for recognition since the Armenian dioceses in that country were also under the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of Cilicia.¹⁰⁵ The Syrian Government of the time had pro-Egyptian and leftist inclinations and maintained close links with Chamoun's opponents in Lebanon. Archbishop Khat and his supporters wanted to profit from this situation, especially because the diocese of Damascus was loyal to them.

Meanwhile both Tashnags and anti-Tashnags looked for opportunities

to show that they enjoyed public support. The relics of St. Gregory the Illuminator, whose role was pivotal in converting Armenia to Christianity, had mysteriously disappeared from Antelias after the Catholicossal election of 10 February 1956. They had been stolen by opponents of the Catholicos-elect to discredit him and the *locum tenens*, Archbishop Khoren. The relics were thus not used, as tradition demands, during the consecration of Zareh I. On 1 April 1957, these relics were found in Amman and brought back to Lebanon by Archbishop Khoren Paroyan. Their return was greeted by a crowd of more than 25,000 people, mostly supporters of the Tashnag party, who had gathered at Khaldé International Airport in the suburbs of Beirut.¹⁰⁶

The anti-Tashnag front, on the other hand, held a "Pan-Armenian Festival" under the patronage of Archbishop Khat at the Municipal Stadium on 22 April 1957. Two thousand athletes of the Homenmen, Antranik, Pagramian, Veraznount and Tekeyan-Baykar associations marched in front of a crowd of 25,000.¹⁰⁷

New Armenian newspapers and associations also proliferated during this tense atmosphere. The Armenian Communists started publishing a weekly newspaper, *Haratch (Ila-l-Amam*, in Arabic), in January 1957. The Ramgavar Azadagan daily, *Zartontk*, began to publish a weekly, Arabic-language supplement, *Al-Yaqza*, from April 1957. Deputy Tosbath and his friends, with the support of pro-Tashnag independents, founded in March 1957 the Haig Club, with Dr. Karekin Tabourian as its president and Lucy D. Tosbath, the deputy's wife, as its secretary.¹⁰⁸ The official inauguration of this new club took place at the Hotel Bristol on 12 April 1957, in the presence of Prime Minister Solh, Speaker of Parliament Adel Osseiran, former President Alfred Naccache, Foreign Minister Malik, National Economy Minister Nasri Maalouf, Raymond Eddé, deputies Beshir Aouar, Ghassan Tueni, Clovis el Khazen, George Hraoui, George Akl, Joseph Chader, Colonel Jemil Lahoud, U.S. Ambassador Heath, British Ambassador George Middleton, Jemil Mekkaoui and other public figures.¹⁰⁹

After the promulgation of the electoral law on 24 April, both the Government and opposition tried to form lists of candidates from among their supporters in the various constituencies. There were rumors about the

possibility of a reconciliation between Solh and Yafi (if the latter agreed to the government's foreign policy) and the inclusion of both on the pro-government, "official list."¹¹⁰ However, no such agreement materialized.

Thereafter, both Solh and Yafi tried to get the support of the Armenian community. The Solh government had already secured Tashnag backing for the candidates supported by the regime.¹¹¹ Solh's son, Abdul Rahman, approached anti-Tashnag leaders and offered them on the "official list" one Armenian Orthodox seat out of the total four allotted to the Armenians.¹¹² Tosbath's newspapers, *Le Soir* and *Ayk*, were unhappy with Solh's proposal. They argued that the Premier's "dreams" about the Armenian candidate might cause his defeat as he would thus lose the votes of the Armenians of Rmeil and Ashrefieh. This implied that the Tashnags would not accept to vote for a list including an Armenian candidate proposed by the parties opposed to them. The newspapers concluded with the hope that Solh would not commit such a blunder.¹¹³ However, the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag leaders turned down Solh's proposal.¹¹⁴ They, together with other anti-Tashnag Armenian organizations, had been upset by the Government's refusal to give formal recognition to their Independent Community.

As the Tashnags had habitually supported the Government, and after the Ramgavars and the Huntchags had refused Solh's offer, the opposition leaders tried to get the support of the anti-Tashnag parties and organizations. The Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag parties expressed readiness to join the opposition in return for assurances from the latter that it would, after winning the elections, carry out the demands of the former concerning the Armenian Church.¹¹⁵ The opposition leaders agreed to this precondition, and the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag parties rallied to its support.¹¹⁶

On 8 May, Sabri Assali, the Prime Minister of Syria, informed Archbishop Khat, in letter no. 1/1891, that the Syrian Government "does not see any obstacle in establishing an independent community" in Syria. He also requested that the regulations of the community be sent for consideration.¹¹⁷ The jubilant *Zartonk* and *Ararad* interpreted this letter as

recognition by Syria of the "independent community."¹¹⁸ On 19 May, Archbishop Khat and his followers went to Damascus to establish the "Independent Catholicossate of Cilicia." The Catholicossate of Antelias published an official communiqué dated 10 May 1957 in *Aztag* and *Ayk*, declaring that the Syrian Premier's letter did not mean formal recognition of the "independent community."¹¹⁹

On 12 May, the opposition held a rally at Tarik Jédidé, during which Hamid Frangié, Saeb Salam, Hussein Oweyni, Abdallah Yafi, Abdallah Hajj and Nassim Majdalani addressed the crowd. An Armenian, anti-Tashnag delegation, consisting of 3,000 persons, attended this public gathering. The participants stressed their loyalty to the 1943 National Pact through which, they argued, Lebanese independence was maintained.¹²⁰

Solh was hospitalized on 29 April after suffering a heart attack. Despite his temporary absence from the political arena, the state of emergency, which also included censorship of the press, was lifted by decree no. 15734 on 7 May. Another decree issued on the same day fixed that the elections would take place in four stages from June 9 to June 30. The elections in Beirut would be held on 9 June and those in Bourj Hammoud on 16 June.¹²¹

Solh returned home after recovery on 12 May in a procession of 1000 cars.¹²² Thereafter, the supporters of the Government intensified their efforts to form a list. There had been rumors that Solh would run in the Second Constituency of Beirut. However, on 9 May, he finally decided to run against Yafi in the First Constituency.¹²³

For the Armenian Orthodox seat in the First Constituency, pro-Tashnag independents Dr. Karekin Tabourian, Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, Khatchig Babikian and Souren Khanamirian were mentioned as probable candidates on the Government list.¹²⁴ The choice of the Tashnag party eventually fell on Babikian.¹²⁵

The Maronite seat on Solh's pro-government list in the First Constituency initially went to Alfred Naccache, and the list was made public on 15 May. It consisted of Sami Solh (Sunnite), Khalil Hibri (Sunnite), Alfred Naccache (Maronite), Ghassan Tueni (Greek Orthodox)

and Khatchig Babikian (Armenian Orthodox).¹²⁶ Three days later, however, the National Bloc announced the candidature of Pierre Eddé for the Maronite seat in the First Constituency.¹²⁷ On 19 May, Naccache attended a public rally in support of Solh's list, held in Ras el Nabeh.¹²⁸ Babikian addressed this gathering in Arabic.¹²⁹ Three days later, however, it was announced that Eddé had replaced Naccache on Solh's list.¹³⁰ Thereupon, Naccache declared that he would continue his electoral campaign as an independent candidate and added that "the drama of the legislative elections of 1947 seems to be repeating itself."¹³¹ However, Naccache later on withdrew his candidature, as will be reported below.

Despite initial rumors that Der Kaloustian, the Tashnag candidate, would run in the First Constituency with Solh,¹³² he eventually joined the safer Mekkaoui list in the Second Constituency.¹³³ As for the Armenian Catholic seat in this constituency, the Phalangist party had already put forward the candidature of Joseph Chader.¹³⁴ Solh eventually announced the formation of a list he backed in the Second Constituency on 20 May. It included Jemil Mekkaoui (Sunnite), Faouzi Hoss (Sunnite), Rashid Beydoun (Shiite), Movses Der Kaloustian (Armenian Orthodox), Joseph Chader (Armenian Catholic), and Chafik Nassif (Minorities).¹³⁵

On the other hand, the leaders of the opposition, Yafi, Salam and Majdalani, tried to complete their rival list in the First Constituency with the addition of Maronite and Armenian Orthodox candidates. Louis Ziadé, a former deputy, would eventually run as the Maronite candidate.¹³⁶

As for the Armenian seat, since the anti-Tashnag Independents were initially reluctant to run against candidates supported by the Government with contenders of their own, the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag parties decided to put forward on the opposition lists in Beirut candidates from their respective party ranks.¹³⁷ Archbishop Khat received visits in Beit-Mery from opposition leaders Abdallah Hajj (on 15 May), as well as Abdallah Mashnouk, Sheikh Yamout and members of the Moslem

Supreme Council (on 16 May), all of whom promised their support to the Independent Community, which the opponents of the election of Zareh I were hoping to set up in Lebanon and Syria.¹³⁸ At noon on 22 May, Yafi, Salam, Majdalani and Ziadé met Hratchia Setrakian, the Chairman of the Lebanon District Committee of the Ramgavar Azadagan party, who declared that the Ramgavars would oppose Solh's list in the First Constituency.¹³⁹ The group of anti-Tashnag Independent Armenians soon changed their position, however, and decided to put forward a candidate of their own and to cover all electoral expenses – on condition that their candidate, Hratchia Chamlian, replace Setrakian, the presumed Ramgavar candidate, on the opposition list in the First Constituency. Thereafter, Setrakian agreed to withdraw from the race in favor of Chamlian so as "to consolidate the unity within the anti-Tashnag Front." This withdrawal caused some discontent, however, among some of the younger members of the Ramgavar party, despite the fact that *Zartouk* had not as yet formally announced Setrakian's candidature.¹⁴⁰ On 24 May, *Zartouk* and *Ararad* announced that the Central Electoral Committee of the anti-Tashnag Lebanese Armenian Rally had chosen its candidates: Chamlian, for the First Constituency; Nazareth Gharibian and Noubar Toursarkissian, for the Second Constituency; and Nokhoudian, for the Constituency of Bourj Hammoud.¹⁴¹

Thus, the opposition list in the First Constituency consisted of Abdallah Yafi (Sunnite), Saeb Salam (Sunnite), Nassim Majdalani (Greek Orthodox), Louis Ziadé (Maronite), and Hratchia Chamlian (Armenian Orthodox); while the opposition list in the Second Constituency comprised Abdallah Mashnouk (Sunnite), Rafik Naja (Sunnite), Mohammed Ali Rez (Shiite), Nazareth Gharibian (Armenian Orthodox), Noubar Toursarkissian (Armenian Catholic), and Farid Jebran (Minorities).¹⁴²

On 28 May, a group of Tashnags, from the Djagadamard Club, who opposed the party leadership, visited Yafi and Salam in a convoy of 30 cars, led by Souren M. Azirian, and announced that, because of the illegal and dictatorial conduct of the Tashnag leaders, they had broken away and formed their own independent club, which would support the opposition.¹⁴³

After the rival lists had been formed, public rallies were organized to garner support for the opposing camps. On 28 May, for example, in the Museitbe quarter in Beirut, the pro-government and opposition lists held parallel public gatherings only 200 meters apart from one another. Yafi, Mashnouk and Chamlian addressed the opposition rally. Chamlian defended, "on behalf of Armenian voters," the views and aims of the opposition National Front.¹⁴⁴

The opposition demanded the formation of a neutral government prior to the election.¹⁴⁵ *Zartouk* wrote in an editorial entitled "For Free and Democratic Elections" that members of the government, with the exception of one, were all candidates and that there was irrefutable evidence that the authorities were doing their utmost by various "means" to secure the success of their candidates.¹⁴⁶ On 27 May, the opposition cabled President Chamoun, demanding the resignation of Solh's cabinet within 48 hours and the formation of a neutral government.¹⁴⁷ Solh replied that his government was neutral and that he had no intention of resigning.¹⁴⁸

Mashnouk, the leader of the opposition list in the Second Constituency, attacked Chamoun in his newspaper, *Beirut al-Massa*, upon which the Government issued an arrest warrant against Mashnouk. The opposition declared, in retaliation, that Mashnouk had spoken in the name of the National Front and had expressed its views and that they all shared this stance and assumed collective responsibility.¹⁴⁹ As the President had refused by now its demand for the formation of a neutral cabinet, the opposition now called for a general strike and a demonstration to demand the resignation of the Solh government, so that elections could take place in an "unbiased" atmosphere.¹⁵⁰

On 30 May, despite a government ban on public gatherings, the opposition's demonstration march was held, heading from Museitbe. The constabulary intervened at 9:30 a.m. when the demonstrators, led by Yafi, Salam, Hamadé, Mashnouk, Ahmed el Assaad and other opposition candidates, began marching towards the center of Beirut. The police opened fire and the demonstrators were dispersed. Eight persons were

killed and a hundred injured, including Salam and Hamadé. The demonstrators, in turn, destroyed two tanks. 500 demonstrators were detained.¹⁵¹ Among them were Salam, Ziadé, and twelve Armenians, including candidate Chamlian.¹⁵²

The Government charged the opposition with attempting a coup d'état by inciting the mob to seize control of administrative buildings. The opposition, which officially called itself the National Union Front, claimed, however, that it had intended to protest "peacefully" against the electoral tactics and foreign policy of the Government.¹⁵³ On 1 June, Solh accused the opposition of using Syrian, Palestinian and other extraneous elements to instigate trouble in the capital. He claimed that there were many Syrians and two members of the Syrian *Deuxième Bureau* (Army Intelligence) among the detainees. On 2 June, the entry of all Egyptian newspapers and periodicals into Lebanon was banned by government order.¹⁵⁴

Zartouk wrote that the authorities, realizing that they would be defeated in free elections, had begun arresting many persons, including influential candidates, so as to crush the opposition.¹⁵⁵ The Ramgavar Azadagan, Huntchag, and Armenian Communist newspapers demanded the release of Chamlian from prison.¹⁵⁶

Aztag argued, on the other hand, that Armenians had no part in this internal crisis of Lebanon, and that their attitude showed that they wanted to be a factor striving for peace. If Armenians were participating in the struggle of lists that was because of purely electoral concerns. *Aztag* added that this fact was known to their opponents, but, as the latter were sure of their forthcoming defeat, they were trying to exploit the events so as to make the Tashnags lose face and appear as suspicious elements.¹⁵⁷ The next day, *Aztag* continued:

It is not our task to play the role of opposition or to go to extremes and participate in activities aimed at overthrowing the government. All these can only harm our community and destroy our reputation of trustworthiness achieved through years of faithful work.¹⁵⁸

At this juncture, former President Bishara Khoury, followed by the Maronite Patriarch, Archbishop Paul Meoushy, both criticized the domestic and the foreign policies of the government.¹⁵⁹ On 3 June, two neutral ministers, Dr. Joseph Hitti and Mohammed Ali Beyhum, were appointed by decree. In a second decree, all security measures taken during the period of the election, whether by the army, police or the constabulary, were declared to be subject to the final authority of General Chehab, whose impartiality was accepted by all.¹⁶⁰ Moreover, a Commission of Four was formed, composed of ministers Hitti, Beyhum, Majid Arslan and Mohammed Sabra, to examine all complaints regarding the elections.¹⁶¹ Thereafter, the opposition called off the general strike.¹⁶² Chamlian and fellow prisoners were released at 4:30 p.m. on 3 June.¹⁶³

On 6 June, Yafi, Salam, Majdalani, Ziadé and Chamlian contested before the Commission of Four the right of Babikian to submit his candidature on the grounds that he and his father had received Lebanese citizenship by decree only on 21 November 1953. The opposition candidates challenged Babikian's claims that he had been a Turkish citizen and had settled in Lebanon on 30 August 1924, which would enable him to become a Lebanese citizen according to the stipulations of the Treaty of Lausanne. The opposition candidates stated that Babikian was born in Cyprus in 1922 and had come to Beirut from Paris in 1929 and that his father had been an Italian citizen. Their complaint added that the French mandatory authorities had imprisoned Babikian as an Italian from 1940 to 1941, i.e. during the Second World War; that Babikian had an Italian passport issued by the Italian Embassy in Beirut on 25 April 1947, and that he was registered at the Bar as an Italian. The opposition candidates demanded that Babikian's candidature be rejected as the decision of the Metn court to grant him Lebanese citizenship was illegal.¹⁶⁴ The Commission of Four examined the complaint. Babikian argued that the decision of the Metn court could not be contested on legal grounds. The Commission found that, since this complaint was strictly legal, passing a judgment on this issue was not within its competence.¹⁶⁵

The Huntchags also lodged a protest and demanded from the Commission of Four to return to their original locations fourteen polling centers, which had initially been in the Camp Hadjin area, a neighborhood under strong Huntchag influence.¹⁶⁶

The opposition National Front, which supported the Egyptian President Gamal Abdel Nasser and his policies of positive neutrality and Arab nationalism, during the electoral campaign attacked both the internal and foreign policies of the Government. The opposition received support from the Egyptian, Syrian and Soviet press and radio.¹⁶⁷ The Communists in Lebanon were bitterly opposed to the Eisenhower Doctrine and intended "to save Lebanon from its claws."¹⁶⁸ Solh's government, on the other hand, enjoyed the full support of President Chamoun and the Western powers, especially the United States of America. The latter was reportedly "making little effort to disguise its support for Solh."¹⁶⁹ Just one day before the elections, the United States had flown to Lebanon from West Germany four aircraft, containing 37 jeeps and 12 recoilless rifles that could be mounted on jeeps as the first shipment of military assistance to the country under the terms of the Eisenhower Doctrine. That same day, the Arabic language broadcast of Radio Moscow opined that the arrival of arms on the eve of elections was part of an "outrageous game" being played by American diplomacy.¹⁷⁰

Although the Armenian community was "feeling the impact of strained inter-confessional relations in Lebanon,"¹⁷¹ the struggle within the community centered on the ongoing Armenian Church crisis and the ideological feud between the Tashnags and their opponents. Only *Ayk* and *Haratch* campaigned on issues related to international politics, in addition to the Armenian Church dispute. *Zartouk*, on the other hand, wrote that the Ramgavars 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 with their detrimental policy."¹⁷² *Ararad* wrote that, by voting for the opposition candidates, the electors would leave opportunists out of the Lebanese Parliament, secure the unity of the Armenian Church and liberate the latter

from destructive elements. This would also realize Lebanese national unity under the glorious flag of Lebanon.¹⁷³ The Lebanese Armenian Rally declared that the National Front was a loyal partner and the champion of the unbreakable brotherhood of Armenians and Arabs. It further stated that the Front had attracted the most powerful and qualified people, devoted to the supreme interests of Lebanon and to the defense of the national and ecclesiastical rights of the Armenians.¹⁷⁴

On 6 June, the Lebanese Armenian Rally organized a public gathering at the Sahagian playing field to honor the opposition list in the Second Constituency. 10,000 people, including the opposition candidates of both constituencies in Beirut, were present. Jirayr Nayiri, Gharibian, Toursarkissian (in Arabic), Yafi, Salam and Mashnouk addressed the rally. Salam reportedly declared that this time they did not want the Armenians to have an ineffective deputy in Parliament and that they would not permit the eventual division of the Armenian Church. Mashnouk declared that the injustice done to the Armenian Church would be repaired.¹⁷⁵

On the other hand, *Aztag* wrote that the efforts and the aim of Armenian voters must be geared towards securing the success of the candidates on the pro-government lists; it was a sacred duty to see that these forces, who would guarantee the independence and freedom of Lebanon "in these days," become the legitimate leaders of the country.¹⁷⁶

During the pre-election campaign, *Ararad* published a translation of an article published originally in the Damascene newspaper *Al-Sarkha* on 11 May 1957, entitled "The Tashnags Are a Danger for Armenians and Arabs as They Are Agents and a Tool in the Hands of Imperialism." *Ararad* also published a series of articles revealing and then bitterly criticizing the decisions of the 16th General Meeting of the Tashnag party held in Cairo in 1955.¹⁷⁷

Yeghia Nadjarian, the editor of Tosbath's *Ayk*, published a sharp rebuke, denying the charges made by *Al-Sarkha* and revealing, in turn, that the ultra-secret Tashnag document published by *Ararad* on 12 October 1955 had been made up by Soviet agents.¹⁷⁸ This document had also been published in *Zartouk* on 16 October 1955 and then interpreted in a series of editorials in the same newspaper from 25 October to 15 November

1955. The document referred to the 16th General Meeting of the Tashnag party, the party's participation in the anti-Soviet Paris Bloc, the forthcoming Catholicossal elections, the struggle against Tashnag dissenters, the formation of paramilitary contingents, etc. *Aztag* had termed this document at the time as "without foundation" and "imaginary." Nadjarian based his claims on some documents provided by Jean Touma (Tovmassian). He also accused the Huntchags of being Communist fellow travelers.¹⁷⁹ *Ararad* denied all these charges and wrote that Nadjarian and Tovmassian were "the Yassians of today."¹⁸⁰

Aztag and *Ayk* argued that foreign radio broadcasts in the Armenian language from Yerevan, the capital of Soviet Armenia, were tantamount to interference in the interior affairs of Lebanon. These broadcasts had described Der Kaloustian and Tosbath as "enemies of the Arab peoples and imperialist agents," while their non-Armenian colleagues on the candidates' lists had been labeled "reactionary and tools of the colonialists." The broadcasts had also encouraged people to vote for the "progressive candidates," Antoine Tabet, Gharibian and Mashnouk.¹⁸¹ *Aztag* concluded that the opposition candidates "enjoyed the total confidence and assistance of the Communist party."¹⁸² When the newspaper *L'Orient* had earlier made similar charges, however, *Zartonk* had replied that "the anti-Tashnag front had nothing to do with Communists."¹⁸³

Hagop Khoren Tahan, who had earlier submitted his candidature as an independent in the First Constituency of Beirut, withdrew in favor of Babikian on 6 June.¹⁸⁴ As polling day approached Georges Jahshan, Alfred Naccache, Toufic al-Masri (all from the First Constituency) and Anis el Saghri, Abdallah Hajj, Malik Kanbar and Henri Janji (from the Second Constituency) also withdrew their candidatures.¹⁸⁵ On 9 June, former deputy Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, Chairman of the Compatriotic Union of Adana, appealed to all his compatriots to vote for Babikian, whose family was also originally from Adana.¹⁸⁶

After these withdrawals, there remained one major candidate running independently. He was Antoine Tabet, the former President of the Trade

Union of Engineers and the candidate of the pro-Communist Partisans of Peace. He was running for the Maronite seat in the First Constituency of Beirut.¹⁸⁷ The Armenian branch of the Lebanese Communist party organized a public rally to honor Tabet at 5:30 p.m. on May 26 in the Khalil Bedewi quarter. The speakers, Dr. Haroutiun Latchinian and Karnig Attarian, invited the 8000 participants to vote for Tabet and the anti-Tashnag Armenian candidates.¹⁸⁸ *Haratch* also raised the possibility of electoral fraud. It quoted from another newspaper, *As-Sayyad*, that 14,000 identity cards had been removed from the office of the État Civil (Personal Status Department). This probably referred to the retained identity cards of the Armenians who had repatriated to Armenia from Lebanon in 1946-47. *Haratch* asked whether this act was the reason why the Government had allowed the use of identity cards without photos for voting purposes.¹⁸⁹

The situation inside the Armenian quarters was very tense before the elections. On 7 June, Toros Tchiftjdjian, a 26 year-old member of the Tashnag party, was shot dead in front of his house in Bourj Hammoud, during a quarrel about sticking photos of candidates on the walls.¹⁹⁰ *Aztg* claimed that the assassins were members of the Huntchag party.¹⁹¹

General Chehab stated just before the elections that the army was charged with maintaining order and not with controlling the electoral process.¹⁹²

The elections of Beirut were held from 7 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Sunday, 9 June. They proceeded in a calm but tense atmosphere. The exception was the Armenian quarters, where bloodshed occurred. Twenty "leftists" were arrested on polling day.¹⁹³

Out of the 74,944 eligible voters, about 34,500 (i.e. 48%) participated in the First Constituency of Beirut, while out of the 69,840 eligible voters about 31,000 (i.e. 44%) took part in the capital's Second Constituency.¹⁹⁴

The ballots were counted at the City Hall. The results of the Second Constituency were released at 10 p.m. It was announced simultaneously that the checking and counting of ballots in the First Constituency would continue in a restricted committee. It had earlier been proclaimed that the opposition list was leading the pro-government list by thousands of votes

in that constituency. The official results of the First Constituency were released only at 5:30 a.m. on 10 June.¹⁹⁵

The official results were as follows: In the First Constituency of Beirut, Sami Solh received 19,092 votes; Khatchig Babikian, 18,038; Khalil Hibri, 17,907; Pierre Eddé, 17,560; Nassim Majdalani, 16,567; Hratchia Chamlian, 16,341; Abdallah Yafi, 16,270; Saeb Salam, 15,725; Ghassan Tueni, 15,421; Antoine Tabet, 11,052; Louis Ziadé, 4,998; William Haoui, 2,579; Laure Tabet, 652; and Joseph Hayek, 217. In the Second Constituency of Beirut, Rashid Beydoun received 17,065 votes; Joseph Chader, 16,670; Movses Der Kaloustian, 15,611; Jemil Mekkaoui, 15,101; Chafik Nassif, 14,471; Faouzi Hoss, 13,803; Noubar Toursarkissian, 11,737; Abdallah Mashnouk, 11,639; Nazareth Gharibian, 11,198; Farid Jebran, 10,923; Mohammed Ali Rez, 10,309; Rafik Naja, 9,574; Adib Kaddoura, 3,398; Jemil Attié, 855; Robert Abela, 706; Ali Fakhreddine, 525; and Nouredine Mudawar, 181.¹⁹⁶

Members of the pro-government lists in both constituencies were thus all elected, with the exception of Tueni, who lost the Greek Orthodox seat to Majdalani. Tueni was defeated because some of the government supporters had voted for Haoui, the Phalangist candidate for the same Greek Orthodox seat. A member of the Ministerial Commission of Four declared that they had registered no complaints.

After the elections, the opposition National Front challenged the published results and alleged irregularities during the counting process. The opposition claimed that, at 11 p.m., when votes in 145 out of the 204 ballot boxes had been counted in the First Constituency, the count had indicated that the opposition was ahead of the pro-government list with some 4000 votes. Members of the pro-government list had panicked and left the polling center. The counting of votes had slowed down and results from additional boxes were not announced. A meeting had taken place, lasting two hours, while the official radio announced at midnight that the results of the First Constituency would be announced in the morning of 10 June.¹⁹⁷ On 11 June, Yafi declared that the National Front had lost the legislative elections in Beirut only because of "forgery and intrigue." On 17 June, Salam said that "no other election in Lebanon had been accompanied by so much terrorism and other malpractices."¹⁹⁸ On 2 July,

Salam declared again that despite obvious instances of vote-buying and all other opportunities for fraud under the government's disposal, the opposition had scored an advance of 3,500 votes, but the authorities had added eventually these vital, additional votes in support of Solh's list by forgery.¹⁹⁹

The pro-Communist candidate Tabet declared, in turn, that in the special case of the Nahr quarter, where the Tashnags had provoked incidents, it was difficult to speak of free elections. However, he agreed that, technically speaking, the ballot had on the whole been regular and the voting operations had been normal, with the exception of Nahr.²⁰⁰

Zartouk wrote that the elections were characterized in the Armenian quarters by many irregularities: an atmosphere of terror; Tashnag murders (see below); the omission of the names of about 2000 non-Tashnag Armenians from the electoral lists; the partiality of the authorities towards the Tashnags; the shift, despite protests, of polling centers from Camp Haddadin to Karantina, without any reason or justification; 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 – with the irrefutable connivance of the Government – so as not to allow anti-Tashnags to vote; and various forms of pressure. *Zartouk* added that the counting of votes and the published results were a puzzle and that the Lebanese National Union Front would continue its struggle for the defense of law, justice and the supreme interests of Lebanon.²⁰¹ *Ararad* commented that from the moment the Solh government had declined to give its place to a neutral cabinet to conduct the elections, it had become evident that the government was determined not to lose its control of the country.²⁰²

All the opposition papers reported the murder of Krikor Vrtanessian and the brothers Bedros and Levon Kdjoyan at noon on election day in front of the Communist Paganian Club by machine gun bullets “fired by Tashnag gunmen in speeding cars.”²⁰³ *Zartouk*, added that these murders had caused hundreds of anti-Tashnag voters to stay in their homes and refrain from voting.²⁰⁴ The funeral of the first two victims, who had died instantly, was held at the St. Kevork Church in Haddadin on 10 June in the

presence of the Lebanese Armenian Rally leaders, as well as Salam, Hakim, Tabet, Rez and Mashnoug. The funeral procession to the Armenian cemetery of Furn Shebak was accompanied by four tanks, five armored cars, each followed by a jeep of five soldiers, and two groups each of policemen and constabulary. Mashnoug, the Rev. Knel Djeredjian, Hrant Kankrouni, Garo Sarrafian and Karnig Attarian addressed the mourners gathered at the cemetery.²⁰⁵

All the opposition papers also alleged fraud and attacked the Government. Nasib Metni's *Telegraph* wrote that votes had been bought for a total price amounting to one million Lebanese pounds; journalists were not allowed to witness the counting of votes, and the names of more than 2,000 Armenians, who had signed the petition handed to the government requesting the establishment of an Independent Community, were omitted from voters' lists. Some pro-Tashnag ladies had voted as much as five times on polling day, 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 arrested on 30 May were still in prison.²⁰⁶ *Beirut al-Massa* wrote that not a single Jew had voted for the opposition list. It also claimed that 7000 voters could not vote, and that it was impossible to approach the polling centers in Nahr because of Tashnag "terror." Mashnoug's proxies could not attend the counting of votes in Nahr.²⁰⁷ Yafi's *Al-Siasa* wrote that seventy per cent of the names of Armenian voters were omitted from the lists and that the Tashnags created an "atmosphere of terror."²⁰⁸ The newspaper *Al-Diar* of former President Khoury's Constitutional (*Destouri*) Bloc also alleged fraud, reiterating reports that, at 10 p.m. on 9 June, the opposition had an advantage of 3-4 thousand votes in the First Constituency. Thereafter, a two hour-long meeting had taken place and it had been announced that the results would be broadcast the next day.²⁰⁹ In response, the Government took legal action against both *Al-Diar* and *Telegraph*.²¹⁰

Aztag, on the other hand, wrote that the elections had been completely calm and had been held "in an atmosphere of absolute freedom." It added that the elections showed that the majority of Armenians supported the

Catholicossate of Cilicia and its head.²¹¹ Commenting on the remarks made by their opponents, the Tashnag newspaper argued that if their opponents had the courage and honesty to bow to the truth, they should then accept their weakness.²¹² *Ayk* wrote that its Armenian opponents were defeated by the voters, who did not approve their separation from the Catholicossate of Cilicia.²¹³ *Zartonk's* editorial replied that during both the Catholicossal elections of 1956 and the legislative elections of 1957 the highest authorities in Lebanon had desired the success of their opponents, i.e. the Tashnags and their supporters.²¹⁴

L'Orient, Le Soir, An-Nahar, Al-Bayrak, Al-Jarida, Al-Amal and all other pro-government newspapers argued 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, which was, according to the newspaper, "without any gravity."²¹⁵ The Phalangist leader Gemayel and National Bloc leader Eddé described the elections as normal. Gemayel, however, stressed the immensity of vote-buying.²¹⁶

After Radio Moscow's Arabic language broadcasts had described the Lebanese legislative elections as a political conflict between pro-Western elements and those favoring positive neutralism and friendship with the other Arab countries, Foreign Minister Malik alleged that, the "parties opposing the government's foreign policy were under Soviet influence." On 11 June, the Soviet embassy in Beirut handed a note from the Soviet Foreign Ministry to the Lebanese Foreign Ministry, stressing that it had not in any way sought to influence Lebanese political groupings during the legislative elections.²¹⁷ On 24 June, the Lebanese Government replied to this note, accusing the Soviets of "regrettable interference in the Lebanon's private affairs." The Lebanese Foreign Ministry pointed out that the Soviet broadcasts had alleged that the Lebanese people did not support the foreign policy of its government.²¹⁸

As for the election of the Armenian Orthodox deputy from the constituency of Bourj Hammoud, there was hardly any serious campaign. *Ayk* wrote that the Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag newspapers had

ignored the existence of Nokhoudian, Tosbath's rival. Nokhoudian had not signed the opposition manifesto supporting Mashnouk, and had even cabled President Chamoun in support of the foreign policy of Lebanon so that he would be considered as a pro-government candidate.²¹⁹ Tosbath was the official candidate of the Tashnag party.²²⁰ He also enjoyed the support of the Phalangists, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and the National Bloc,²²¹ but was confronted with what he termed "local intrigues."²²²

At midnight on 12 June, Nokhoudian, the candidate of the Lebanese Armenian Rally for Bourj Hammoud withdrew his candidature. The Lebanese Armenian National Rally declared that they had withdrawn the candidature of Nokhoudian, taking into consideration the tense atmosphere caused by the bloody incidents of 9 June when innocent Armenian voters had been killed, and the fact that not only conditions for a free and democratic election were lacking, but that various kinds of irregularities would make it impossible to have authentic results after the election.²²³

Nokhoudian declared that he had quit the electoral race upon the express wishes of Armenian and Arab notables of the district in order "to spare our people new victims."²²⁴ Tosbath was thereafter declared elected as deputy as he had no other competitor.²²⁵

Zartouk argued in two separate editorials that the boundaries of the constituency of Bourj Hammoud were wrongly drawn; the murderers of 9 June were not prosecuted; and as the Tashnags had not allowed the inhabitants of Bourj Hammoud to cross to Beirut on 9 June, the reverse would have probably happened during the elections on 16 June. Finally, *Zartouk* claimed that Tosbath "can never represent the people but only the person who 'elected' him," an implicit reference to President Chamoun.²²⁶

Ararad explained that the partiality of the government and the criminal atmosphere in the Armenian quarters had forced Nokhoudian to withdraw his candidature.²²⁷ *Aztag* reported, on the other hand, that Nokhoudian had withdrawn as a consequence of the serious defeat of the two candidates of the Lebanese Armenian Rally in Beirut. In an editorial, *Aztag* proclaimed

that the "victory of the Armenian people was complete with the election of Dikran Tosbath."²²⁸

After the elections in Mount Lebanon (including Bourj Hammoud) which had resulted in a total victory for all pro-government candidates, the two neutral ministers, Hitti and Beyhum, who had been appointed to allay the apprehensions of the National Front, both resigned.²²⁹ They addressed a brief note to Prime Minister Solh, stating that although the elections were held, from the administrative viewpoint, in a precise and correct manner, "the general atmosphere and certain implications" did not encourage them to continue with their mission.²³⁰

Salam declared on 2 July that the opposition would stop its activities if only the 1957 legislative elections were annulled, the electoral law was modified and the government returned to the traditional, balanced foreign policy of Lebanon.²³¹ When these suggestions were not accepted, the tension increased, leading to an open armed conflict from May 1958.²³²

Within the Armenian community the situation deteriorated too in the wake of the legislative elections. In August 1957, the General Assembly of the Religious Brotherhood of the Catholicosate of Cilicia, which had admitted new members after the ordination of seven celibate priests, officially expelled Archbishop Khat, two other bishops, and eight celibate priests, who had all failed to recognize the legality of the election and consecration of Zareh I. Occasional vendettas were also registered. In September, Jirayr Madaghdjian, a person of anti-Tashnag convictions, was murdered, allegedly by Tashnags. These persistent Armenian rivalries pushed both camps within the community to participate actively in the Lebanese Civil War of 1958.

CONCLUSION

During the elections of 1953, President Chamoun demanded from Tosbath, the independent deputy elected in 1951 against the Tashnag candidate Vahan Papazian, that he now be the candidate of the Tashnags and, if possible, simultaneously of the non-Tashnags. The Tashnags accepted Tosbath as their candidate. They said that their acceptance was based on realism and "sacrificing party interests." Despite Tosbath's

efforts, the anti-Tashnags refused to accept him as their candidate, and hence lost an opportunity to be represented, albeit concomitantly, in the Lebanese Parliament for a long time. During the next four legislative elections in Lebanon, the Tashnag candidates would win all the Armenian seats on offer, and the other Armenian parties would not secure any representation, either singularly or jointly.

The legislative elections of 1957 took place in an intense Cold War atmosphere. The superpowers, the United States and the Soviet Union tried to influence these elections in Lebanon in various ways; at stake was Lebanon's continuing commitment to the Eisenhower Doctrine. Eveland mentioned that "in the name of fighting Communism and Arab nationalism, both suspect to John Foster Dulles, Secretary of State, and his brother Allen, the CIA Director, the CIA financed the 1957 Lebanese legislative elections."²³³ Eveland personally carried out the financial transactions with the Lebanese president. In 1976, William Colby, then the CIA Director, testified before Congress that "the agency had provided arms and money to the Phalangists and the Armenian Tashnag party in the 1950's. Those CIA activities were part of a Cold War policy of using pro-Western minorities in the anti-Communist struggle."²³⁴

Whatever the truth, the 1957 elections further consolidated Tashnag power within the Armenian community as, just as in 1953, all candidates nominated by the party were elected deputies in Parliament.

The 1957 elections were boldly rigged. Raymond Eddé, whose brother, Pierre, had been elected on the government-sponsored list of Prime Minister Solh, said years later that "the rigged elections of 1957 were one reason behind the civil strife of 1958 and crash of Chamoun."²³⁵ The Armenian community was also involved in the civil strife of 1958 for reasons arising from intra-communal disagreements which had started in 1956 and had continued during the legislative election campaign of 1957, as well as the anti-Chamoun resentment among the anti-Tashnag parties.

ENDNOTES

¹ The term 'September Movement' was coined after the opposition Popular Front presented a memorandum to President Khoury on 15 September 1952, reiterating its demands for reform. The Popular Front consisted of the National Front of Socialists (led by Chamoun),

the National Congress, the Phalangist Party, the National Committee and deputies Ghassan Tueni, Kamal Joumblat, Emile Boustany, Abdallah Hajj, Pierre Eddé and Dikran Tosbath. The presentation of the memorandum stimulated the developments which ushered in Khoury's eventual resignation later that month; see Nicholas Ziadeh, *Syria and Lebanon*, London, 1957, pp. 120-121.

² This article is also an updated version of part of my thesis, which was submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in the History Department of the American University of Beirut in October 1963.

³ *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, September 26-October 3, 1953, p. 13159B.

⁴ *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4561, 24 April 1953.

⁵ *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4569, 2 May 1953.

⁶ *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, September 26-October 3, 1953, p. 13159B.

⁷ *Ibid.*

⁸ The Communal Council, elected by the Lebanese Armenian Orthodox community, functioned according to the provisions of the National Constitution of the Armenian *miliet*, approved originally by the Ottoman government in 1863. The Communal Council, in turn, elects two separate, Civil and Religious, Councils, as well as Educational and Economic Committees. In 1953, the Communal Council of the Armenian Orthodox Diocese of Lebanon consisted of three religious and 18 lay representatives.

⁹ *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, August 22-29, 1953, p. 13101C.

¹⁰ The Lebanese Armenian Veraznount (Renaissance) Association was, as mentioned in our article in volume 22 of *Haigazian Armenological Review*, an independent, though in general an anti-Tashnag, organization which aimed at establishing closer links between Armenian and Arab cultures. It had a club in Beirut.

¹¹ *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4574, 9 May 1953.

¹² Zaven Messerlian, 'Armenian Participation in the Lebanese Legislative Elections during the Presidency of Bishara Khoury 1943-1952', *Haigazian Armenological Review*, Vol. 22, 2002, p. 276.

¹³ During the municipal elections in Bourj Hammoud, the anti-Tashnag candidates had withdrawn from the race at noon, complaining of "Tashnag terrorism." Out of the 5,640 eligible voters, only 1,132 persons voted, with 790 votes cast for the Tashnag candidates. Tosbath, the Armenian deputy from Bourj Hammoud in the Lebanese parliament elected in 1951, wrote in an editorial entitled 'J'accuse l'Emir Khaled Chéhab' published in his newspaper, *Le Soir*, 6th year, no. 1836, 8 December 1952: "comme aux pires heures du Destour les Tachnaks ont fait régner 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 bienveillant des autorités et avec la collaboration des

agents de l'état et de la force publique. Même atmosphère et mêmes pratiques à Medawar." The Destour Bloc was the political grouping of former President Khoury, who had resigned a couple of months before. Tosbath persisted in demanding the annulment of the results as late as 15 February 1953; see *Le Soir*, 6th year, no. 1892, 15 February 1953.

¹⁴ *Ararad*, 16th year, nos. 3673-74, 20 June 1953. Hairabedian was also mentioned as the Armenian Orthodox candidate in the First Constituency by the Armenian Catholic weekly *Massis*, 7th year, no. 24 (338), 17 June 1953. *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3676, 26 June 1953 announced that Hairabedian had withdrawn from the electoral campaign on 25 June. Hairabedian told this author in an interview in December 1961 that he was financially unable to meet the electoral campaign expenses. During another interview in September 1962, he added that the Tashnag party had asked him not to submit his candidature and Chamoun had promised him a seat in the Senate, which the President was planning to establish in the near future.

¹⁵ Tosbath told this author in an interview in July 1962 that the Ramgavar leaders blamed him for publishing *Ayk* as a competitor to *Zartouk*. One Ramgavar leader later confirmed this piece of information to the author.

¹⁶ Hratchia Setrakian, a Ramgavar leader, told the author in an interview in March 1962 that Tosbath had insisted on being the candidate of the two rival groupings and had added that this would not harm his friendly relations with the Ramgavars and their allies. Setrakian and others had tried to dissuade him, explaining to him the impossibility of cooperation with the Tashnags in the Eighth Constituency and competing against them in the First. They also pointed out that a deputy elected through the efforts of both sides would be of no use to either grouping. After having two unfruitful meetings with the Ramgavar leaders, Tosbath distanced himself from the anti-Tashnag bloc.

¹⁷ Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian, February 1962; *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4624, 6 July 1953.

¹⁸ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 101 (6330), 1 July 1953; *Le Soir*, 7th year, no. 2009, 30 June 1953.

¹⁹ Nikola Bagrad Schahgaldian, 'The Political Integration of an Immigrant Community into a Composite Society: the Armenians in Lebanon, 1920-1974', unpublished doctoral dissertation, Columbia University, 1979, pp. 210-211. See also Antranig Dzarougian, *Medzere yev Miusnere* (The Eminent and the Others), Beirut, 1992, pp. 252-253.

²⁰ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 103 (6332), 3 July 1953.

²¹ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 104 (6333), 4 July 1953.

²² *L'Orient*, 29th year, no. 8035, 3 July 1953, p. 2; *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3679, 2 July 1953; *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4621, 3 July 1953. A Ramgavar Azadagan leader, who preferred to remain anonymous, told this author during an interview in February 1962 that their choice fell on Malikian only because no other person was willing to undertake the electoral campaign expenses.

- ²³ *Le Soir*, 7th year, no. 2011, 2 July 1953 wrote: "Qui sont ces Indépendants de la communauté arménienne qui se cachent derrière une signature anonyme et qui sonne vraiment un peu faux: "Comité Central"...? "Comité Central" de quoi? De quels partis?" After questioning the authority of such a group to represent the mass of Armenian independents, the same newspaper expressed the hope that "que ces 'Indépendants' aient le courage de signer de leur nom les manifestes qu'on distribue ou les communiqués qu'on publie ici et là."
- ²⁴ *Zartok*, 16th year, no. 4622, 4 July 1953; *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3681, 6 July 1953; *L'Orient*, 29th year, no. 8038, 6 July 1953. Both Tufenkdjian and Tahan immediately denied having participated in these discussions; see *L'Orient*, 29th year, no. 8039, 7 July 1953; *Zartok*, 16th year, no. 4626, 9 July 1953. Tufenkdjian mentioned that he had participated in only one meeting and that he had supported the candidatures of Der Kaloustian and Tosbath. On 9 July, however, *Zartok* and *Ararad* insisted again that Tufenkdjian had been present at the meetings and had agreed on the candidature of Malikian.
- ²⁵ *Zartok*, 16th year, no. 4622, 4 July 1953; *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3681, 6 July 1953; *L'Orient*, 29th year, no. 8038, 6 July 1953.
- ²⁶ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 106 (6335), 7 July 1953.
- ²⁷ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 107 (6336), 8 July 1953. *Ayk*, 1st year, no. 111, 9 July 1953. On the other hand, a letter by Djidedjian, dated 9 July and addressed to the Tashnag Lebanon District Committee was published in *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 109 (6338), 10 July 1953, p. 4. Djidedjian stated that "he was and is chairman of a group of neutrals".
- ²⁸ Formally, there was no such entity known as the Bloc of Armenians. What Tosbath had in mind was probably the pro-Tashnag Independent Group.
- ²⁹ *Le Soir*, 7th year, no. 2001, 20 June 1953. *Zartok*, 16th year, no. 4620, 2 July 1953 published the Armenian translation of Tosbath's article, under the title "Tosbath's Case," and asked why it had not been translated into Armenian and published in *Ayk*, as all his other articles usually were.
- ³⁰ *Ayk*, 1st year, no. 104, 1 July 1953.
- ³¹ *Ibid.*; *Le Soir*, 7th year, no. 2009, 30 June 1953.
- ³² Interview with Setrakian, March 1962.
- ³³ "Les Tachnaks, qui autrefois tiraient leur force de l'appui des autorités et du fait qu'ils empêchaient leur adversaires de voter, se trouvent actuellement en minorité dans la masse d'électeurs que le vote obligatoire va amener aux urnes." The paper also added that the anti-Tashnags had contacted the Kataeb Party for an electoral alliance, with the anti-Tashnags promising to assist to the Kataeb candidate Maurice Gemayel in Ashrefieh and

the Kataeb supporting the anti-Tashnag candidates in Mudawar and Bourj Hammoud; see *L'Orient*, 29th year, no. 8033, 1 July 1953, p. 2.

³⁴ Interview with Setrakian, March 1962.

³⁵ *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4616, 27 June 1953.

³⁶ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 103 (6332), 3 July 1953.

³⁷ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 105 (6334), 5 July 1953.

³⁸ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 111 (6340), 12 July 1953.

³⁹ *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4622, 4 July 1953.

⁴⁰ *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3684, 10 July 1953.

⁴¹ *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3685, 11 July 1953.

⁴² *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4626, 9 July 1953; *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3682, 8 July 1953.

⁴³ *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4627, 10 July 1953; *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3684, 10 July 1953.

⁴⁴ *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4626, 9 July 1953.

⁴⁵ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 109 (6338), 10 July 1953.

⁴⁶ *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4627, 10 July 1953; *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3683, 9 July 1953; *L'Orient*, 29th year, no. 8041, 9 July 1953.

⁴⁷ *L'Orient*, 29th year, no. 8043, 11 July 1953.

⁴⁸ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 107 (6336), July 8, 1953.

⁴⁹ *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4628, 11 July 1953. Der Kaloustian told the author during an interview in January 1962 that "the Tashnags cannot allow themselves to do such mean things."

⁵⁰ *L'Orient*, 29th year, no. 8041, 9 July 1953.

⁵¹ *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3682, 8 July 1953.

⁵² *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3684, 10 July 1953.

⁵³ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 111 (6340), 12 July 1953.

⁵⁴ *Ayk*, 1st year, no. 112, 10 July 1953; *Le Soir*, 7th year, no. 2019, 11 July 1953.

⁵⁵ *Le Jour*, 19th year, no. 5830, 5 July 1953.

⁵⁶ Haroutiun Madoyan, *Gyank Me Badneshin Vra: Husher Yev Vgayutiunner* (A Life on the Barricade: Memoirs and Testimonies). Beirut, 1988, p. 358.

- ⁵⁷ *L'Orient*, 29th year, no. 8044, 12 July 1953. We could not find in the Armenian newspapers of the time or in Madoyan's published memoirs any report on the result of this inquiry.
- ⁵⁸ *L'Orient*, 29th year, no. 8039, 7 July 1953.
- ⁵⁹ However, later on, once Chader was elected, *Massis* published on its last page his photograph with the following caption: "The newly elected Armenian Catholic deputy, Lawyer Joseph Meguerditch Chader." The weekly gave no other details; see *Massis*, 7th year, no. 28 (342), 15 July 1953, p. 8.
- ⁶⁰ Mudawar had 10,376 male and 10,848 female voters; Bourj Hammoud, 7,855 male and 8,023 female voters.
- ⁶¹ *Zartok*, 16th year, no. 4632, 16 July 1953; *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 112 (6341), 14 July 1953.
- ⁶² *L'Orient*, 30th year, no. 8045, 13 July 1953; *Zartok*, 16th year, no. 4631, 15 July 1953. According to *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 112 (6341), 14 July 1953, however, the results of the First Constituency were as follows: Der Kaloustian, 3,732 votes; Malikian, 2,703.
- ⁶³ *Zartok*, 16th year, no. 4631, 15 July 1953.
- ⁶⁴ *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3687, 15 July 1953.
- ⁶⁵ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 114 (6343), 16 July 1953.
- ⁶⁶ *Ayk*, 1st year, no. 115, 14 July 1953; *Le Soir*, 7th year, No. 2020, 13 July 1953.
- ⁶⁷ *Le Jour*, 19th year, no. 5833, 9 July 1953 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 transférés de la Quarantaine à l'Ecole Arménienne Nationale (Sahaguian). 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'Ecole 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'Ecole Arménienne Nationale et de l'Ecole Arménienne Evangélique à la Quarantaine."
- ⁶⁸ *Zartok*, 16th year, no. 4633, 17 July 1953.
- ⁶⁹ *Zartok*, 16th year, no. 4631, 15 July 1953; *Ararad*, 16th year, no. 3687, 15 July 1953.
- ⁷⁰ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 114 (6343), 16 July 1953; *Ayk*, 1st year, no. 117, 16 July 1953.
- ⁷¹ *Ayk*, 1st year, no. 119, 18 July 1953.

- ⁷² *Massis*, 7th year, no. 29 (343), 22 July 1953.
- ⁷³ *Aztag*, 27th year, no. 116 (6345), 18 July 1953.
- ⁷⁴ *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4646, 1 August 1953.
- ⁷⁵ *Zartouk*, 16th year, no. 4648, 3 August 1953. Minassian, the anti-Tashnag candidate during the 1947 legislative elections, would later cooperate, however, with the Catholicosate of Cilicia when the anti-Tashnags began to boycott it from 1956. He would serve as the Chairman of the Central Civil Council of the Cilician See in 1959-1963.
- ⁷⁶ Interview with Khosrov Tutundjian, November-December 1961.
- ⁷⁷ Schahgaldian, pp. 213-214 mentions as his sources the Tashnag Party Central Archives, File 1965/87, Report of Activities 1955-1959, p. 31; Central Committee of Lebanon, File 900/22, Report of Activities 1951-1955, pp. 21-22.
- ⁷⁸ Ambassador Jean Malha (compiler), *Hukumat Lubnan: 65 Hukumah fi 60 Sanah: Al-Bayanat al-Wizariyyah wa-l-Wuzara' 1943-2003* (The Cabinets of Lebanon: 65 Cabinets in 60 Years: The Government Manifestoes and the Ministers), Fourth Edition, Beirut: Librairie du Liban, 2003, p. 165.
- ⁷⁹ *Aztag*, 30th year, no. 256 (7397), 3 January 1957. Chehab's resignation was accepted on 1 March. Thereafter, Prime Minister Solh took over the Defense portfolio as well, but he relinquished to Emile Tiyan the Justice portfolio, which he had held till then; see Malha, p. 163.
- ⁸⁰ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 159 (5777), 3 April 1957.
- ⁸¹ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 160 (5778), 4 April 1957.
- ⁸² *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 163 (5781), 7 April 1957.
- ⁸³ Wilbur Crane Eveland, *The Ropes of Sand* (1980), quoted in Jonathan Randal, *Going All The Way*, 1984, p. 161.
- ⁸⁴ Republic of Lebanon. Chamber of Deputies. *Law. Amendment of the Electoral Law of Lebanon for Members of Parliament*, Beirut, 1957, p. 2.
- ⁸⁵ According to *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9433, 9 June 1957, the number of eligible voters in Constituency I was as follows:
- | | | |
|-----------|-------|--------|
| | Male | Female |
| Ashrefieh | 9721 | 9873 |
| Muscitbe | 9199 | 8639 |
| Mazraa | 9346 | 9321 |
| Rmeil | 7047 | 6948 |
| Seifi | 2347 | 2503 |
| Total | 37660 | 37284 |

While, the number of the eligible voters in Constituency II was as follows:

	Male	Female
Mudawar	12240	11588
Bashura	6021	6426
Zokak el Blat	4960	5385
Ras Beirut	4399	3928
Ain Mraysé	2079	2124
Minet el Hosn	3644	3951
Marfaa	1582	1521
Total	34925	34923

⁸⁶ Zartouk, 19th year, no. 137 (5447), 6 March 1956.

⁸⁷ Ararad, 19th year, no. 246 (4263), 21 March 1956.

⁸⁸ Zartouk, 19th year, no. 140 (5450), 9 March 1956.

⁸⁹ Ayk, 4th year, no. 934, 13 March 1956.

⁹⁰ Ararad, 19th year, no. 351 (4368), 25 July 1956; *Le Matin*, 4th year, no. 969, 3 August 1956, p. 10. In October 1955 Archbishop Khat had resigned as *locum tenens* of the Catholicosate of Cilicia and Bishop Khoren Paroyan had been elected to succeed him.

⁹¹ Zartouk, 19th year, no. 284 (5594), 28 August 1956.

⁹² From the four dioceses under the jurisdiction of the Catholicosate of Cilicia, only Bishop Shavarsh Kouyoumjian, the Prelate of Armenians in Damascus, and the Armenian Orthodox Communal Council of Damascus recognized Archbishop Khat as *locum tenens*.

⁹³ Schahgaldian, p. 213 writes that Bishop Zareh's election as Catholicos divided Lebanon's Armenian Apostolical community into "two hostile camps."

⁹⁴ Ararad, 20th year, no. 492 (4509), 9 January 1957.

⁹⁵ According to Ararad, 20th year, no. 492 (4509), 9 January 1957, 2,800 signatures of family heads were handed to the Government in October 1956 and about 6000 new signatures of family heads were to be registered at the Ministry of the Interior.

⁹⁶ On 9 December 1956, the Catholicosate of Cilicia gave a reception at Antelias to honor the new Prime Minister. The Minister of Planning, Mohammed Sabra, deputies Raymond Eddé, Ghassan Tueni, Movses Der Kaloulstian, Dikran Tosbath and former Foreign Minister Henri Pharaon were amongst those attending this reception.

⁹⁷ Zartouk, 20th year, no. 82 (5700), 29 December 1956. The members of the Civil Council of the Independent Community were Dr. Yervant Djidedjian (Chairman), Dadjad Srabian, Hovhaness Kassardjian, Abro Abroyan, Yervant Demirdjian, Sarkis Shekerdjan, Levon

Nezarian, Pakarad Bakalian, Dikran Zawzawatjian, Hagop Beylerian, Kevork Tchatalbashian, Mardiros Altounian and Karnig Malikian.

- ⁹⁸ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 83 (5701), 1 January 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 487 (4504), 1 January 1957.
- ⁹⁹ *Aztag*, 30th year, no. 258 (7399), 5 January 1957.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Aztag*, 30th year, no. 279 (7420), 31 January 1957.
- ¹⁰¹ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 88 (5706), 9 January 1957.
- ¹⁰² *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 111 (5729), 5 February 1957 and no. 112 (5730), 6 February 1957; *Aztag*, 30th year, no. 283 (7424), 5 February 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 515 (4532), 5 February 1957.
- ¹⁰³ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 119 (5737), 11 February 1957 and no. 122 (5740), 14 February 1957.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 156 (5774), 30 March 1957.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Ayk*, 4th year, no. 1195, 18 January 1957.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 25 (7471), 2 April 1957; *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1258, 3 April 1957.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 177 (5795), 25 April 1957.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1240, 13 March 1957.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1267, 14 April 1957.
- ¹¹⁰ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 59 (7499), 8 May 1957.
- ¹¹¹ The editorial of *Aztag*, 30th year, no. 255 (7396), 1 January 1957, entitled "The Wise President," supported Chamoun's policy and actions during the political crisis in the country in the wake of the Suez war in November 1956.
- ¹¹² Interview with Setrakian, July 1962.
- ¹¹³ *Le Soir*, 11th year, no. 3191, 25 April 1957; *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1276, 26 April 1957.
- ¹¹⁴ The author was shown by Setrakian, Chairman of the Lebanon District Committee of the Ramgavar Azadagan party, the minutes of the District Committee dated 8 May 1957 which said that they had turned down Solh's "last proposal a week ago."
- ¹¹⁵ This position was written down, *inter alia*, in the minutes of the Lebanon District Committee of the Ramgavar Azadagan Party of 8 May 1957 shown to the author by Setrakian.

- ¹¹⁶ Ibid.
- ¹¹⁷ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 188 (5806), 10 May 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 593 (4610), 11 May 1957.
- ¹¹⁸ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 187 (5805), 9 May 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 592 (4609), 10 May 1957.
- ¹¹⁹ *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1288, 11 May 1957; *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 63 (7503), 12 May 1957.
- ¹²⁰ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 191 (5809), 14 May 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 595 (4612), 14 May 1957; *Haratch*, 1st year, no. 20, 19 May 1957, p. 3.
- ¹²¹ *L'Orient*, 33th year, no. 9400, 7 May 1957.
- ¹²² *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 64 (7504), 14 May 1957.
- ¹²³ *Le Jour*, 23rd year, no. 7123, 10 May 1957.
- ¹²⁴ *Le Soir*, 11th year, no. 3191, 25 April 1957; *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1276, 26 April 1957.
- ¹²⁵ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 69 (7509), 19 May 1957; *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1296, 21 May 1957.
- During an interview in August 1962, Khanamirian told the author that the Tashnag party sought the advice of some twenty leading pro-Tashnag independents before selecting Babikian as the Armenian Orthodox candidate in the First Constituency.
- ¹²⁶ *L'Orient*, 33th year, no. 9408, 15 May 1957; *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 67 (7507), 17 May 1957.
- ¹²⁷ *Le Jour*, 23d year, no. 7132, 19 May 1957.
- ¹²⁸ *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9413, 20 May 1957.
- ¹²⁹ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 70 (7570), 21 May 1957. *Aztag* apparently made a mistake on 21 May in registering the overall sequence numbers of its issues, printing 7570 instead of 7510; the Sunday, 19 May issue of the newspaper is numbered as 69 (7509), while the next, Tuesday, 21 May issue's sequence number is 70 (7570).
- ¹³⁰ *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9415, 22 May 1957; *Le Soir*, 11th year, no. 3211, 21 May 1957.
- ¹³¹ *Le Jour*, 23rd year, no. 7141, 28 May 1957. For the irregularities during the notorious elections of 25 May 1947 see Zaven Messerlian, 'Armenian Participation in the Lebanese Legislative Elections during the Presidency of Bishara Khoury 1943-1952', *Haigazian Armenological Review*, Vol. 22, 2002, pp. 274-286.
- ¹³² *Le Soir*, 11th year, no. 3191, 25 April 1957; *Le Jour*, 23rd year, no. 7122, 9 May 1957.
- ¹³³ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 73 (7573), 24 May 1957.

- ¹³⁴ *Le Soir*, 11th year, no. 3191, 25 April 1957.
- ¹³⁵ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 73 (7573), 24 May 1957; *Le Jour*, 23rd year, no. 7134, 21 May 1957; *Le Soir*, 11th year, no. 3212, 22 May 1957.
- ¹³⁶ *L'Orient*, 33d year, no. 9415, 22 May 1957.
- ¹³⁷ Interview with Setrakian, July 1962.
- ¹³⁸ *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 598 (4615), 17 May 1957 and no. 599 (4616), 18 May 1957.
- ¹³⁹ *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9416, 23 May 1957; *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 74 (7574), 25 May 1957.
- ¹⁴⁰ Interview with Setrakian, July 1962.
- ¹⁴¹ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 200 (5818), 24 May 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 605 (4622), 25 May 1957. Nazareth Gharibian, better known through his pen-name, Armen Gharib, was an educator and one of the leaders of the Huntchag party in Lebanon since 1937. He was the founder and principal of the New High School. Nokhoudian, a Ramgavar Azadagan, was a merchant and a landowner with warm relations within local, non-Armenian political circles.
- ¹⁴² *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 211 (5829), 6 June 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 615 (4632), 6 June 1957.
- ¹⁴³ *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 608 (4625), 29 May 1957.
- ¹⁴⁴ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 205 (5823), 30 May 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 609 (4626), 30 May 1957; *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9423, 29 May 1957.
- ¹⁴⁵ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 78 (7578), 30 May 1957.
- ¹⁴⁶ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 204 (5822), 29 May 1957.
- ¹⁴⁷ *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 608 (4625), 29 May 1957; *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 78 (7578), 30 May 1957. The cable was signed by Saeb Salam, Abdallah Yafi, Ahmed el Assaad, Fouad Ammoun, Louis Ziadé, Hassan Bohsali, Farid Jebran, Maarouf Saad, Fouad Khoury, Nassim Majdalani, Mohammed Safieddin, Hratchia Chamlian, Sabri Hamadé, Ali Bazzi, Abdallah Mashnouk, Hussein Oweyni, Philippe Takla, Hamid Frangié, Rafik Naja, Mohammed Ali Rez, Adnan Hakim and Dr. Bishara Dahan.
- ¹⁴⁸ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 79 (7579), 31 May 1951; *Le Jour*, 23rd year, no. 1141, 26 May 1957.
- ¹⁴⁹ *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 610 (4627), 31 May 1957; *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 206 (5824), 31 May 1957. This second declaration was signed by Saeb Salam, Abdallah Yafi, Ahmed el Assaad, Kamel el Assaad, Fouad Ammoun, Louis Ziadé, Hassan Bohsali, Farid Jebran,

Maarouf Saad, Fouad Khoury, Nassim Majdalani, Mohammed Safieddin, Hratchia Chamlian, Sabri Hamadé, Ali Bazzi, Nassim Majdalani, Abdallah Mashnouk, Hussein Oweyni, Philippe Takla, Hamid Frangié, Rafik Naja, Dr. Ali Saad, Mohammed Ali Rez, Adnan Hakim, Dr. Bishara Dahan, Noubar Toursarkissian and Nazareth Gharibian.

¹⁵⁰ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 206 (5824), 31 May 1957; *L'Orient*, 33th year, no. 9424, 30 May 1957.

¹⁵¹ *Keessing's Contemporary Archives*, August 3-10, 1957, p. 15696A.

¹⁵² *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 206 (5824), 31 May 1957; *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 80 (7580), 1 June 1957.

¹⁵³ *Keessing's Contemporary Archives*, August 3-10, 1957, p. 15696A.

¹⁵⁴ *Asian Recorder*, July 27-August 2, 1957, p. 1564.

¹⁵⁵ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 207 (5825), 1 June 1957.

¹⁵⁶ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 208 (5826), 2 June 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 613 (4630), 4 June 1957; *Haratch*, 1st year, no. 22, 2 June 1957.

¹⁵⁷ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 82 (7582), 4 June 1957.

¹⁵⁸ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 83 (7583), 5 June 1957.

¹⁵⁹ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 209 (5827), 4 June 1957.

¹⁶⁰ *Keessing's Contemporary Archives*, August 3-10, 1957, p. 15696A.

¹⁶¹ *Le Jour*, 23rd year, no. 7141, 3 June 1957; *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 209 (5827), 4 June 1957.

¹⁶² *Keessing's Contemporary Archives*, August 3-10, 1957, p. 15696A.

¹⁶³ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 209 (5827), 4 June 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 614 (4631), 5 June 1957.

¹⁶⁴ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 213 (5831), 8 June 1957, p. 3; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 618 (4635), 9 June 1957, p. 3.

¹⁶⁵ *L'Orient*, 33d year, no. 9432, 8 June 1957, p. 2. Babikian told the author, during an interview in December 1961, that he had been Lebanese since 1924.

¹⁶⁶ *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 615 (4632), 6 June 1957.

¹⁶⁷ *Keessing's Contemporary Archives*, August 3-10, 1957, p. 15696A.

¹⁶⁸ *Haratch*, 1st year, no. 19, 12 May 1957.

- ¹⁶⁹ *Time* (International edition), 24 June 1957, p. 28.
- ¹⁷⁰ *Ibid.*: *Asian Recorder*, July 27-August 2, 1957, p. 1564.
- ¹⁷¹ Schahgaldian, p. 216.
- ¹⁷² *Zartok*, 20th year, no. 214 (5832), 9 June 1957.
- ¹⁷³ *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 616 (4633), 7 June 1957.
- ¹⁷⁴ *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 618 (4635), 9 June 1957.
- ¹⁷⁵ *Zartok*, 20th year, no. 213 (5831), 8 June 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 617 (4634), 8 June 1957.
- ¹⁷⁶ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 85 (7585), 7 June 1957.
- ¹⁷⁷ *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 610 (4627), 31 May 1957.
- ¹⁷⁸ *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1307, 2 June 1957 and no. 1308, 4 June 1957. Yeghia Nadjarian later resigned from the editorship of *Ayk* and in an open letter, dated 24 August 1957 and published first in *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 682 (4699), 25 August 1957, declared that everything that he had written in *Ayk* had been first made up by the Tashnag party's Bureau and only later edited by him. Thereafter, Nadjarian published a book, *Tashnag Ghagavaroutune Odari Dzarayutian Metch* (*The Tashnag Leadership in the Service of Foreigners*), which was translated into Arabic and published in Beirut in 1958 under the title, *Isabat al-Tashnag fi Khidmat al-Isti'mar*. Nadjarian finally emigrated to Soviet Armenia, fleeing Tashnag wrath, and stayed there until the 1990s. Prof. Parounag Tovmassian, the long-time chairman of the Central Committee of the Ramgavar Azadagan party says Nadjarian "had falsified some documents to show that the Tashnag party had betrayed Armenia"; see his *Hayrenagan Orakrouitun* (*Diaries of the Homeland*), edited by Dr. Vatche Ghazarian, Waltham, 1994, p. 347.
- ¹⁷⁹ Touma was later condemned to death in the United Arab Republic in 1961 and hanged on 21 December 1962. The authorities in Cairo found him guilty as the leader of an espionage ring working for Israel; see *Zartok*, 26th year, no. 75 (7505), 22 December 1962.
- ¹⁸⁰ *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 616 (4632), 6 June 1957. Arshavir Yassian was a notorious Armenian informer, who had worked for the Turkish Government during the Armenian Genocide in World War I. He was later shot by Armenian gunmen.
- ¹⁸¹ *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1310, 6 June 1957 reported that this commentary was broadcast on 2 June, while *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 93 (7593), 16 June 1957 wrote that it was transmitted at 10 p.m. on 6 June Beirut time.
- ¹⁸² *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 87 (7587), 9 June 1957.

¹⁸³ *Zartouk*, 20th year, no. 190 (5808), 12 May 1957.

¹⁸⁴ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 85 (7585), 7 June 1957; *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1311, 7 June 1957, p. 4.

¹⁸⁵ *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 616 (4633), 7 June 1957.

¹⁸⁶ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 87 (7587), 9 June 1957; *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1313, 9 June 1957.

During an interview in December 1961, Hairabedian told the author that there had been rumors that Armenian voters originating from Adana were disappointed because he had not been chosen as the Armenian candidate in the First Constituency and, consequently, many claimed that Hairabedian was against Babikian's candidature. Hairabedian had issued this declaration to set things straight and reassure the 1000 Armenians families (5000 persons) originating from Adana.

¹⁸⁷ *Haratch*, 1st year, no. 18, 5 May 1957.

¹⁸⁸ *Haratch*, 1st year, no. 22, 2 June 1957.

¹⁸⁹ *Haratch*, 1st year, no. 23, 9 June 1957.

¹⁹⁰ *L'Orient*, 33d year, no. 9432, 8 June 1957.

¹⁹¹ *Aztag*, 30th year, no. 91 (7591), 14 June 1957.

¹⁹² *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9433, 9 June 1957.

¹⁹³ *Asian Recorder*, July 21-August 2, 1957, p. 1564.

¹⁹⁴ *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9435, 11 June 1957.

¹⁹⁵ *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9434, 10 June 1957; *Le Soir*, 11th year, no. 3229, 10 June 1957.

¹⁹⁶ *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9435, 11 June 1957; *Le Jour*, 23rd year, no. 7155, 11 June 1957; *Le Soir*, 11th year, no. 3229, 10 June 1957; *Aztag*, 30th year, no. 88 (7588), 11 June 1957 reported that Babikian had received 18,400 votes.

¹⁹⁷ *Haratch*, 1st year, no. 24, 16 June 1957. *Haratch*, 1st year, no. 26, 30 June 1957 quoted *As-Sayyad* that the First Constituency had 204 ballot boxes, of which 100 were in the largely-Christian Eastern section of the city and the remaining 104, in the Western section. According to the Government figures, 15,061 votes had been cast in the Eastern section, while the Phalangist activists, who were campaigning for Haoui, had calculated only 12,000 votes, of which 9,000 had gone to the pro-government list and 3,000 to the opposition. *As-Sayyad* had written that the Phalangist leader, Pierre Gemayel, had confirmed these results and stated that the addition of these approximate 4,000 votes had secured the "election" of the pro-government list.

¹⁹⁸ *Asian Recorder*, July 27-August 2, 1957, p. 1564.

- ¹⁹⁹ *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9457, 3 July 1957.
- ²⁰⁰ *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9434, 10 June 1957.
- ²⁰¹ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 215 (5833), 11 June 1957. *Zartonk* named Setrakian, the Ramgavar candidate during the legislative elections of 1951 as one of those unable to vote as his name did not appear on the list. Meguerditch Messerlian, another Ramgavar candidate during the elections of 1943, told this author during an interview in April 1961, that he too could not vote in 1957 as his name did not appear on the electoral lists either.
- ²⁰² *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 619 (4636), 11 June 1957.
- ²⁰³ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 215 (5833), 11 June 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 619 (4636), 11 June 1957. *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 91 (7591), 14 June 1957 wrote that the opponents of the Tashnag party were exploiting the deaths of "the victims by unknown bullets during a fight caused by Huntchag and Bolshevik agitators." The Tashnag newspaper added that it had not written anything on the murder of Tchiftjdjian in order not to disturb order and peace. *Aztag* also reported that an unnamed mother of four children was injured by gunmen while passing through Hadjin.
- ²⁰⁴ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 215 (5833), 11 June 1957.
- ²⁰⁵ *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 619 (4636), 11 June 1957.
- ²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*
- ²⁰⁷ *Haratch*, 1st year, no. 24, 16 June 1957.
- ²⁰⁸ *Ibid.*
- ²⁰⁹ *Ibid.*
- ²¹⁰ *Le Soir*, 11th year, no. 3231, 12 June 1957.
- ²¹¹ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 88 (7588), 11 June 1957.
- ²¹² *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 90 (7590), 13 June 1957.
- ²¹³ *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1314, 11 June 1957.
- ²¹⁴ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 216 (5834), 12 June 1957.
- ²¹⁵ *Le Jour*, 23rd year, no. 7154, 10 June 1957.
- ²¹⁶ *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9434, 10 June 1957.
- ²¹⁷ *Asian Recorder*, July 27-August 2, 1957, p. 1564; *Le Soir*, 11th year, no. 3231, 12 June

- 1957; *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9437, 13 June 1957.
- ²¹⁸ *Asian Recorder*, July 27-August 2, 1951, p. 1564.
- ²¹⁹ *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1311, 7 June 1957.
- ²²⁰ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 69 (7509), 19 May 1957.
- ²²¹ *Ayk*, 5th year, no. 1317, 14 June 1957.
- ²²² *Ayk*, 5th year, No. 1287, 10 May 1957.
- ²²³ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 219 (5837), 15 June 1957; *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 624 (4641), 16 June 1957.
- ²²⁴ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 218 (5836), 14 June 1957.
- ²²⁵ *Le Soir*, 11th year, no. 3233, 13 June 1957.
- ²²⁶ *Zartonk*, 20th year, no. 220 (5838), 16 June 1957 and no. 221 (5839), 18 June 1957.
- ²²⁷ *Ararad*, 20th year, no. 622 (4639), 14 June 1957.
- ²²⁸ *Aztag*, 31st year, no. 92 (7592), 15 June 1957.
- ²²⁹ *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9442, 18 June 1957; *Le Jour*, 23rd year, no. 1162, 18 June 1957.
- ²³⁰ *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9442, 18 June 1957; *Le Jour*, 23rd year, no. 1162, 18 June 1957.
- ²³¹ *L'Orient*, 33rd year, no. 9457, 3 July 1957.
- ²³² *Time* (International Edition), 27 June 1960, p. 28 wrote that in 1957 the "pro-Western President Camille Chamoun boldly rigged the parliamentary elections in Lebanon and brought on an insurrection by his Nasser-minded opponents."
- ²³³ Wilbur Crane Eveland, *Ropes of Sand* (1980), quoted in Jonathan Randal, *Going All the Way* (1984), p. 161.
- ²³⁴ Randal, p. 160.
- ²³⁵ *The Daily Star* (Beirut), no. 6384, 18 August 1969, p. 1.

**ՆԱԽԱԳԱՀ ՔԱՄԻՆ ԵԱՄՈՒՆԻ ԺԱՄԱՆԱԿԱՇՐՁԱՆԻՆ
ՀԱՅՈԾ ՄԱՄԱԿՑՈՒԹԻՒՆԸ ԼԻՐԱՆԱՆԻ
ԽՈՐՀՐԴԱՐԱՆԱԿԱՆ ԸՆՏՐՈՒԹԻՒՆՆԵՐՈՒՆ (1952-1958)
(Ամփոփում)**

ԶԱԽԷՆ ՄՍԸՐԸԱՆ

Հեղինակը՝ հիմնուելով ժամանակակից լիբանանահայ, առաւել՝ Լիբանանի մէջ լոյս տեսնող մի քանի արարատառ ու ֆրանսատառ լրագիրներու նիւթերուն, ինչպէս նաեւ լիբանանահայ քաղաքական գործիչներու յատուկ ասուլիսներու ընթացքին հաղորդած բանաւոր վկայութիւններու վրայ, հանգամանօրէն կը ներկայացնէ լիբանանահայ քաղաքական տարրեր խմբաւորումներու կեցուածքը Պաղ Պատերազմի տարիներուն, 1956ի Մեծի Տանն կիլիկիոյ կաթողիկոսական ընտրութիւններուն առթիւ յառաջացած տագնապը եւ յատկապէս՝ 1953ին եւ 1957ին կայացած երկրի խորհրդարանական ընտրութիւններուն ընթացքին հայ առաքելական ու կաթողիկէ համայնքներուն յատկացուած երեսփոխանական անդամներուն շուրջ ծաւալած պայքարը, այս կապակցութեամբ Լիբանանի միւս համայնքները ներկայացնող թեկնածուներու հետ հայ քաղաքական հակամարտ հոսանքներուն հաստատած ընտրական դաշինքները, ընտրութեանց ընթացքին պետական մարմիններու կողմէ կատարուած միջամտութիւնները:

Եօդուածը կարելի է շարունակութիւնը համարել հեղինակին Հայկազեան Հայագիտական Հանգչի իԱ. եւ իԲ. հատորներուն մէջ լոյս ընծայած աշխատասիրութեանց: