

ARMENIAN PARTICIPATION IN
THE LEBANESE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS
DURING THE PRESIDENCY OF
BISHARA KHOURY
1943-1952

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INTRODUCTION

During the presidency of Bishara Khoury (1943-52), two legislative elections were held in Lebanon: in 1947 and 1951. The elections of 1947 were fraudulent; "terror and forgery" fixed "the electoral results."¹ They have been termed as the worst elections in the history of Lebanon – before or after independence. The elections of 1951, on the other hand, have been generally accepted as free, and the neutrality of the Prime Minister of the day during the election process has been widely noted.

In this study, these two legislative elections are analyzed with emphasis on the Armenian participation in the electoral districts of Beirut and Metn, where seats had been pre-allocated to the Armenian Orthodox and Catholic communities. In that sense, this article is the continuation of the study on Armenian participation in the Lebanese legislative elections during the French mandate, which was published in volume 21 of the *Haigazian Armenological Review*.²

ARMENIANS AND POLITICAL DEVELOPMENTS IN LEBANON AND
THE MIDDLE EASTERN REGION 1943-47

After the Constitutional Bloc (the *Destouris*) of Bishara Khoury, together with its allies, had won the majority of seats in the parliamentary elections of 1943, its leader was elected President of the Republic by the new Parliament. Khoury is considered to be the co-father of the National Pact on power sharing between the Christians and Muslims in Lebanon. He appointed his chief ally, Riad Solh, an Arab nationalist, as Prime Minister. The President and Prime Minister proceeded to amend the Lebanese constitution and remove any mention of the mandatory power of France to formalize Lebanon's quest for full independence. After they had succeeded in doing so, the French Delegate-General, Jean Helleu, ordered the arrest of the President, Prime Minister and several leading ministers in the Lebanese government. Helleu had them jailed in the fortress of Rashaya, and appointed Khoury's

rival, Emile Eddé, President. Those members of the Lebanese government who had not been arrested declared the French decisions null and void. Popular demonstrations against the French and strong pressure from the British eventually led to the release of the prisoners on 22 November 1943. This date was henceforth accepted as Lebanese Independence Day. Eddé not only lost face with his ten-day presidency, but was also expelled from the Lebanese Parliament on 31 March 1944.

The two Armenian members of the Lebanese Parliament elected in 1943, Movses Der Kaloustian and Hratchia Chamlian, followed different paths inside Parliament during the crisis. Both had voted for Khoury in his bid for the Presidency. Chamlian also supported the above-mentioned amendments of the constitution, while Der Kaloustian, representing the Tashnag party, absented himself from that historic session. Later, Chamlian again voted for Eddé's ouster from Parliament, while Der Kaloustian voted against.

In a secret report to British Foreign Secretary Anthony Eden, Major-General Edward Spears, Prime Minister Winston Churchill's chief emissary to Syria and Lebanon, commented as follows on the implications of Der Kaloustian's absence from Parliament on the day references to the French mandate were removed from the Lebanese constitution:

V- Armenians and the Franco-Lebanese Crisis, November 1943.

Der Kaloustian showed himself loyal to the French and, as the author of a pro-French statement immediately after his election and as one of the five members of the Chamber who abstained from voting for the amendment of the Constitution, became one of the most unpopular figures of the day. As he was considered by many to represent Armenians as a whole, much of the indignation aroused against him at the time of the arrest of the Government was visited also upon his community. *Agents provocateurs* exploited this situation in an attempt to widen the breach between Armenians and Lebanese by an intensive propaganda campaign calculated to inspire fear and hatred on both sides.

28. Fortunately for themselves, the Armenians were genuinely shocked by the French "Putsch," and many of them took an early opportunity of showing it. The Communists issued an anti-French tract, Armenian women of all parties went in deputations to condole with Ministers' wives on their husbands' arrest, and when the Government was released the Armenians took their full share in the rejoicings. Der Kaloustian, whose pro-French conduct was subsequently repudiated by the Tashnag Central Committee in Cairo, was obliged, much against his will, to join other Armenian notables in congratulating the Government on their release.³

After the end of World War II and pressure from the United Nations Security Council, Britain and the National Congress of Lebanon⁴, the French forces left Lebanon on 31 December 1946.

In the meantime, the end of World War II had offered hope to the survivors of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 and their descendants, now spread all over the globe, for a successful outcome of the Armenian territorial demands from Turkey. On 19 March 1945, the Soviet government denounced the existing Soviet-Turkish Treaty of Friendship. A few months later, on 22 June, the Soviet Ambassador in Ankara informed the Turkish government that Moscow would conclude a new treaty of friendship if only Turkey agreed to return its eastern districts of Kars, Artvin and Ardahan to the Soviet Union. The Soviets argued that these territories had belonged in the past to Armenia and Georgia, both of which were now Soviet republics. The Soviets also made several other demands to Turkey concerning the Dardanelle's.⁵ On 17 January 1946, the Armenian National Council in Syria and Lebanon, consisting of representatives of the majority of the Armenian political parties, telegraphed to the Chairman of the United Nations General Assembly demanding "in the name of 200,000 Armenian refugees in both countries" the return to the Soviet Union of Armenian territories seized by the Turks in 1920-21.⁶

The Soviet Union had also declared, in November 1945, that Armenians living in the Diaspora could return and settle in Soviet Armenia. All returning Armenians would automatically become Soviet citizens. Their families would get a government loan of 30,000 rubles each to construct their new houses. Thousands of Armenians, mostly sympathizers of Soviet Armenia and opponents of the Tashnag party, began leaving Lebanon for Armenia in the summer of 1946.⁷

In time, Turkey refused to succumb to Soviet territorial demands. President Harry Truman of the United States of America issued a statement on 12 March 1947, which became known as the Truman Doctrine. Truman declared, in response to Soviet pressures on Turkey, that the United States stood ready to support nations who were "resisting attempted subjugation by armed minorities or outside pressure."⁸

The Truman Doctrine was an important landmark in the intensification of the Cold War. Thereafter, the Tashnag party resumed its anti-Communist policy, which had been watered down during the latter stages of the Second World War. The Tashnags became increasingly pro-Western, making bitter attacks on Soviet Armenia.⁹ On the other hand, all anti-Tashnag parties and organizations in Lebanon, which fervently supported the repatriation effort to Armenia, criticized the Tashnag party for adopting a pro-Western policy.

They expected the Soviet Union to push for a favorable solution to the question of Armenian territorial demands.

Such was the situation within the Armenian community in Lebanon when the country went to the polls in May 1947.

THE ELECTIONS OF 1947

The Parliament elected in 1943, having terminated its four-year mandate, was dissolved on 3 April 1947. Elections for the new legislative assembly were scheduled for 25 May on the basis of the electoral law as amended in 1943.¹⁰ Hence, the number of seats reserved for the Armenian Orthodox community remained unchanged – two, both in Beirut. Together with the two Armenian, three Sunnite, one Shiite, one Greek Orthodox, one Maronite and one Minority deputies would be elected from the same constituency. According to government statistics, Beirut had 49,954 male voters, of whom 11,263 were Armenian Orthodox; and 1,913 Armenian Catholics.¹¹

The politically dominant Constitutional Bloc intended to stay in power by all means at its disposal. Khoury's presidency had been marked with the ascendance of the political influence of his brother, Selim Khoury. The latter was persistently accused of corruption. Most Lebanese newspapers questioned the government's stated commitment to carry out free and fair elections.

According to Nikola B. Schahgaldian, the Tashnag party in Lebanon was largely split on the eve of the 1947 parliamentary elections on the issue of cooperation with the other Armenian political parties. By April 1947, the supporters of Der Kaloustian had come to control the party's daily newspaper, *Aztag*. A few weeks later, they announced the collapse of the United Front of all Armenian organizations even before it had actually occurred. Finally, they announced the candidacy of their leader to the forthcoming elections. They also nominated Dr. Melkon Hairabedian for the second Armenian Orthodox seat in Beirut without consulting any other Armenian group. Schahgaldian writes that a number of non-party Armenian community leaders were disgusted by the divisive tactics of the Tashnags and organized, in response, a Lebanese-Armenian Democratic Front, calling for the nomination of two independents, Karnig Minassian and Hratchia Chamlian, who, according to Schahgaldian, enjoyed the confidence of all factions.¹²

This study will provide a more detailed chronological exposé of political developments during the pre-election campaign period, on the elections in the Lebanese capital in general and among the Armenian political groupings

and voters in particular. This article is largely based on newspaper reports and private interviews this author conducted with a number of Armenian public figures who were closely involved in these activities.

On Tuesday, 15 April, a number of leading Beirut politicians, including Sami Solh, Abdallah Yafi, Hussein Oweyni (all Sunnites), Habib Abi Chahla (Greek Orthodox), Dr. Raef Abellama (Maronite) and Der Kaloustian (Armenian Orthodox) met to form the pro-government list of candidates in Beirut. No agreement was reached on the Shiite and the second Armenian Orthodox candidates. For the candidate representing the Minority faiths, the meeting decided to include Joseph Chader, the Secretary-General of the Phalangist (*Kataeb*) party, and, in case of failure, Moussa de Freige on the pro-government list.¹³

The pro-government list wanted to have all or the vast majority of Armenian voters on its side. Der Kaloustian, the Tashnag candidate, was accepted for this purpose, and efforts were made to include a second candidate acceptable to the anti-Tashnags, preferably a Huntchag or a non-partisan personality enjoying the support of all anti-Tashnag parties and organizations.¹⁴ Der Kaloustian's inclusion can be explained by the pro-government list's wish to have the vast majority of Armenians – Tashnags and, if possible, non-Tashnags – on its side. Despite his stand during the Lebanese crisis of November 1943, Der Kaloustian was the Tashnag party's only candidate, and the party's leadership had formally repudiated his stand in 1943. *Aztag's* editorial of 23 April mentioned that Der Kaloustian declared on every occasion that the Tashnags had one candidate and were willing to cooperate with the second candidate, whoever he might be, on condition that he enjoy, through honesty, the trust of the Armenians.¹⁵ The Tashnag daily also wrote that the second Armenian candidate would be announced within the next few days and that the Huntchags had left the United Front to join the first, or pro-government, list.¹⁶ About a week later, on 29 April, *Aztag* reported that the second Armenian candidate on the pro-government list had not yet been chosen and that the Huntchags had applied to Solh and Yafi to admit Armen Gharib (Nazaret Gharibian), a Huntchag leader, as candidate on their list.¹⁷ Meanwhile, Solh, Yafi, Oweyni, Abi Chahla, Der Kaloustian, Abellama and de Freige met in Solh's residence on 28 April. They signed a declaration announcing the formation of the Popular List, which would be completed, they said, with the addition of a second Armenian Orthodox and one Shiite candidate.¹⁸

A reliable anti-Tashnag source asserts, however, that the anti-Tashnag organizations sent delegates to Solh and Yafi only to inform them that they would refuse to be on any list together with a Tashnag candidate.¹⁹

Accordingly, the District Committee of the Social Democratic Huntchag party in Lebanon appealed to the Armenians on 30 April "in the name of the prosperity of independent Lebanon and Armenian-Arab brotherhood" and invited all Armenian organizations not to nominate partisan candidates for the elections and to vote for neutrals who enjoyed the confidence of all.²⁰

On 1 May, an official statement was communicated to the press that a Lebanese-Armenian Democratic Front had been constituted by the Social Democratic Huntchag, Ramgavar Azadagan (Democratic Liberal) and Communist parties, as well as Veraznount and other associations.²¹ The communiqué said that the Front, inspired by the common and higher interests of the Lebanese Armenians and Arabs, had decided in its last meeting to participate *en bloc* in the forthcoming legislative elections. It invited the Armenian voters to vote for the two neutral Armenian candidates that it would appoint and who would join an electoral list composed of candidates willing to serve democratic Lebanon and the interests of the Lebanese people.²²

Aztag replied on 3 May that the Democratic Front was led by "Armenian Bolsheviks" who were continuing their conspiracies in the hope of finding a place on any list, but had been refused by all. The Tashnag daily added that the Ramgavar leader, Eugene Papazian, had arrived from Egypt and was interfering in the internal affairs of Lebanon by visiting government officials and statesmen to accuse the Tashnags.²³ The next day, *Aztag* reported again that the Huntchags had applied to the leaders of the first list and had told them that they were ready to leave the Democratic Front and join the first list if the leaders of the latter were still willing to accept them.²⁴

Zartok, the Ramgavar daily, had earlier quoted, on 1 May, from Mohieddin Nsouli's newspaper, *Beirut*, that Solh and Abi Chahla had decided to amend their list and omit Der Kaloustian. They had made this decision after having taken into consideration the union of the Armenian political parties and organizations, which had refused the candidature of a Tashnag. Having one Tashnag candidate on their list, opposed to two neutral Armenian candidates, Solh and Abi Chahla were reported to have concluded would neutralize their hopes for success.²⁵ Actually, Abi Chahla presided over and Yafi was present at the 26th anniversary celebration of Homenmen, the Huntchag sports organization, at the Sahagian Playing Field on Sunday, 4 May. The anthems of Lebanon and Soviet Armenia were played during the celebration. Then, Huntchag leaders Gharib and Yervant Babayan gave speeches in Armenian, while Noubar Toursarkissian spoke in Arabic. *Ararat*, the Huntchag daily, published the next day an official denial by the party's District Committee of Lebanon of the above-mentioned report in *Aztag* that

the Huntchags were ready to leave the Democratic Front and run together with Der Kaloustian on the first list.²⁶ The Huntchag District Committee had already stated that the Democratic Front was not under the patronage of the Bolsheviks; the Huntchag party did not follow Communist or Tashnag orders but was guided by its sixty year-old ideology. The Huntchag party had not applied anywhere to have its own separate candidate, but had responded to various invitations in accordance to the views it had clearly expounded.²⁷

Zartok wrote in an editorial that a centralized effort and harmonious cooperation were necessary among the various Armenian factions and organizations to select the Armenian candidates. It denied *Aztag's* charges that the Ramgavars and their allies were "Bolsheviks"; "the Democratic Front is not Communist and is not under their leadership but forms the rallying front of all patriotic elements including the Armenian Communists."²⁸

The Armenian Democratic Front announced its candidates on 7 May. They were the incumbent deputy, Chamlian, and Karnig Minassian, a capitalist and a former Chairman of the Civil Council of the Armenian Orthodox Community of Lebanon. Both candidates were not members of any Armenian political party and had a good command of the Arabic language.²⁹

Aztag later reported that a delegation representing the Democratic Front and composed of Artin Madoyan (Communist), Tedjirian, Haroutiun Djeredjian (Huntchag) and Hratchia Setrakian (Ramgavar), had applied to Sami Solh on May 8, and had "begged" in vain that its "neutral" candidates be included on the Solh-Yafi list. The Huntchags had also applied to the same list separately, said *Aztag*, but had been unsuccessful as well.³⁰ On 10 May, *Ararat* explained that negotiations between the representatives of the Democratic Front and leaders of the first list had failed.³¹ The next day, the Huntchag daily maintained that "the Democratic Front is one and inseparable;" the leaders of the first list invited the Huntchags to join them but the latter stayed away to maintain Armenian national unity.³²

Meanwhile, Hairabedian was officially named as the second Armenian candidate on the first list on 10 May.³³ He was not a member of any political party but had pro-Tashnag political inclinations. He had been counselor since 1941 of the municipal council of the district of Jedeidé, north of Beirut, as well as a member of various Armenian community bodies in Lebanon and chairman of the Adana Compatriotic Union.³⁴

Two independent and well-known personalities, Dr. Henri Arslanian³⁵ and the former deputy Vahram Leilekian³⁶ also registered their candidacies as independents.

Meanwhile, Deputy and former Minister Saeb Salam, a potentially strong, independent Sunnite candidate, withdrew – in a surprise move – his candidature from the electoral race in Beirut, citing “various considerations.” The opposition claimed that Salam’s withdrawal was due to government pressure.³⁷ Thereafter, it was evident that the majority of Muslim voters in Beirut would support the first list. This conviction hindered the formation of complete lists by various factions of the opposition.

Under these new circumstances, *Aztag* wrote: It is very clear and obvious that the overwhelming majority of Beirut voters will elect the Solh-Yafi list, as the members of the list enjoy without exception the confidence and sympathy of the people and government of Lebanon.³⁸

From 9 a.m. to the early hours of the afternoon of 11 May, more than one thousand Tashnag supporters drove around Beirut and the Armenian quarter of Bourj Hammoud in a convoy of 240 cars. They called on the Prime Minister, Riad Solh, Minister Henri Pharaon and pro-government candidates de Freige, Oweyni, Abi Chahla, Yafi, Hairabedian and Sami Solh to assure them of their support.³⁹ That same evening, 15,000 people attended a pro-government rally held in the Zeydani quarter. Candidates de Freige, Yafi, Solh, Abellama, Oweyni and Abi Chahla all addressed the rally, with the latter presenting the Armenian candidates on their list. At the rally, Prime Minister Riad Solh declared that President Khoury and his government supported the first list; its members had been the loyal guardians of the national-liberation struggle and the post-independence regime in Lebanon.⁴⁰

The rival Armenian candidates were also active. Minassian and Chamlian presided at 4 p.m. on the same day, 11 May, over the athletic contests organized by the Apkarian School and held at the Sahagian Playing Field under the patronage of Catholicos Karekin I of the Holy See of Cilicia.⁴¹

At 5 p.m. the next day, 12 May, 250 cars carrying supporters of the Democratic Front drove around those quarters, where there was strong support for Chamlian and Minassian. This caused tensions to rise. As the convoy was passing through the neighborhood of Nor Sis in the area of Bourj Hammoud, bystanders, allegedly Tashnags, destroyed the loudspeaker of one car and opened fire on other cars from the rooftops of houses. Boghos Naterian, an Armenian Communist and one of the participants in the convoy, was seriously wounded. Sissag Tellalian, Joseph Terzian, Garabed Svadjian, an old lady and the driver of one of the cars were also injured.⁴²

Despite this incident and despite the pouring rain, the Democratic Front went ahead at 7 p.m. that day with a rally at the Sahagian Playing Field. Candidates Chamlian, Minassian, Chader, Amin Beyhum and Mustafa Aris

attended the event. This was certainly an early indication that they were in the process of formalizing an opposition list. Gharib, Chamlian, Aris, Madoyan, Setrakian and Minassian were among the speakers at the rally.⁴³ At the end of the rally, a procession of 100 cars passed at 10 p.m. in front of the residence of Prime Minister Riad Solh to protest and "demand the arrest of the criminals", who had opened fire on the convoy earlier that day.⁴⁴

A tense atmosphere had thus been created within the Armenian community. On 10 May, Tashnags at the Nor Marash neighborhood in Bourj Hammoud had beaten Yeghia Atchabahian, the distributor of Ararat.⁴⁵ The Tashnags acknowledged this beating and declared that they would punish the person responsible for this incident.⁴⁶ On 14 May, however, the Democratic Front announced the death of Naterian, who had been injured three days before. Naterian's funeral was held the same day at St. Kevork Church of Nor Hadjin. It was attended by 20,000 mourners, including Beyhum, Aris, Chader, Minassian and Chamlian.⁴⁷ Upon the instructions of the Vicar-General, Archbishop Khat Atchabahian, all Armenian schools were closed, and students and teachers attended the funeral. Hovhanness Aghbashian (Communist), Mihran Seferian (Hunchag), Nerses Shirinian (Ramgavar), and Attarian (Veraznount) gave speeches at the cemetery. So did the Lebanese Communist leader Farajallah Helou and the Syrian Communist leader Khaled Begdash.⁴⁸ At 10 a.m. on 17 May, Hrant Devedjian, a former Tashnag activist, who was now the Chairman of the Armenian Repatriation Committee and the director of the anti-Tashnag newspaper, *Aravod*, was attacked by four unidentified people and seriously wounded.⁴⁹ The Tashnags labeled this "an inhuman crime." They also expressed regret, declaring that they had nothing to do with the crime and demanded that the government find the assailants.⁵⁰ Finally, a few anti-Tashnag women attacked the shop of Baronian, a Tashnag, on 17 May, while other men opened fire on and wounded Garabed Dombourian, also a Tashnag.⁵¹

On the broader scene, students representing various shades of political opinion demonstrated in Beirut on 15 May and demanded the government guarantee the freedom of the forthcoming elections.⁵² That same day, a number of independent opposition candidates – Alfred Naccache, Soubhi Mahmassani, Amin Beyhum, Joseph Chader, Philippe Tamer and Ramez Sarkis – also met to demand freedom of elections.⁵³

The opposition Democratic List was formally announced on 17 May, at the end of a three-day official mourning period to mark the assassination of Naterian. It was composed of Alfred Naccache (Maronite), Amin Beyhum, Mustafa Aris (Sunnites), Hratchia Chamlian and Karnig Minassian (Armenian Orthodox)⁵⁴. At noon on 19 May, members of the Democratic

List met again at the residence of Naccache, a former President of the Republic. They decided to compete with an incomplete list and to leave their voters the right to choose the other candidates. The public was informed of these decisions through an official declaration.⁵⁵

A second, incomplete opposition list was formed on 20 May. The Reformist List consisted of George Tabet (Maronite), Philippe Tamer (Greek Orthodox), Soubhi Mahmassani (Sunnite), Mohsen Slim (Shiite) and Joseph Chader (Minorities).⁵⁶

A number of election rallies quickly followed the formation of the three lists. The first list organized a massive rally at Ashrefieh at 8 p.m. on 17 May. 25,000 people attended it.⁵⁷ The Tashnag party organized another rally at 8 p.m. on 22 May. 5,000 supporters were present at the Beirut headquarters of Homenetmen, the Tashnag sports organization. The speakers included Tashnag leaders Garo Sasouni, Aram Sahagian, candidates Der Kaloustian, Solh, Yafi, Oweyni, Abellama, Rashid Beydoun, Abi Chahla, de Freige and Hairabedian.⁵⁸ Beydoun had recently been added to the first list as the Shiite candidate.

The Democratic List, in turn, organized a massive rally from 5 to 7 p.m. on 18 May. 20,000 people, including the candidates on the list, were present at the Sahagian Playing Field. Setrakian, Madoyan, Hovsep Djerian (Huntchag), Aris, Chamlian and Naccache were the speakers. The electoral program that the opposition Armenian candidates presented stated, "We will work to have the rights of the Armenians respected, [we are] in favor of the laborers, and for the preservation of the present democratic republican regime of Lebanon."⁵⁹ At 7:30 p.m. on 21 May, another public rally was held at Mazraa, before the residence of candidate Aris, who was also a leading trade unionist. 15,000 persons attended. Beyhum, Naccache, Aris and Chamlian addressed the crowd. The Democratic List also lodged a protest with President Khoury against the existing climate of terrorism and insecurity.⁶⁰

Even Catholicos Karekin I published an official announcement on 21 May to the effect that he had spoken to both President Khoury and Habib Abi Chahla, the Speaker of Parliament, and had requested that they "put an end to the disorders, and guarantee the freedom of the elections, for such disturbances did not help the state or the Armenian community." Khoury had reportedly promised the Catholicos "to do what was necessary on Election Day."⁶¹

On Election Day itself, *Zartouk* called on its readers to vote for the Democratic List. The *Ramgavar* daily described Hairabedian as "a great unknown" and Der Kaloustian as the "author of two crimes in one week."⁶²

Meanwhile, *Aztag's* editorial, titled "Let's Vote for the Popular List", called on Armenian voters to "vote for the Popular List in its entirety, without any reservation, if you want the Lebanese people to continue to accept you and walk hand in hand with you as true brothers."⁶³ The pro-Tashnag weekly *Azatar* also asked its readers to vote for the pro-government list,⁶⁴ while most Lebanese newspapers, led by *L'Orient*, campaigned in favor of the opposition lists.⁶⁵

The government actually used every means at its disposal to ensure the victory of its preferred candidates,⁶⁶ although an official communiqué by the Council of Internal Security had assured that it would enforce the free and orderly running of the elections. This communiqué was published after a meeting at the presidential palace on 22 May, with the participation of members of government, the commanders of the Army and the Constabulary, as well as the Directors of the Police and Internal Security.⁶⁷

The most notorious elections in the history of Lebanon were held from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Sunday, 25 May 1947. Many incidents occurred during voting, despite the fact that the army had taken charge of the situation.

The opposition cited a number of irregularities. The Tashnag agents, it said, had red-white badges on their chests and closely cooperated with the police. Both prevented voters supporting the Democratic List from entering the polling stations.⁶⁸ Not a single opposition candidate could enter polling centers to supervise the election process. It was estimated that 80 percent of the voters supporting the Democratic List had been denied entry. The police even beat some of the Democratic voters. At 10 a.m., Hagop Adadjian, police bullets killed a Communist from Ashrefeh, during a commotion at St. Michel (Nahr quarter) when the Phalangist activists wanted to vote; three others, Simon Semerdjian, Avedis Apelian and Gaidzag Vanian, were wounded. In a separate incident, policemen in the Bashura police station beat Mihran Ohanian, when he wanted to vote for the Democratic List.⁶⁹

At 10 a.m. on election day, 23 opposition candidates (Naccache, Sarkis, Hussein Sejaan, Minassian, Beyhum, Adib Kaddourah, Nassif Majdalani, Mahmassani, Tamer, Anis Saghir, Chamlian, Slim, Chader, Adib Maalouf, Tabet, Abdel Salam Shatila, Ahmed Ahdab, Abdul Hafiz Mahmassani, Aris, Mahmoud Hajj, Ibrahim Khairallah, Jacques Lizmé and Zouheir Osseiran) visited President Khoury to protest against the irregularities and ask him to take the necessary measures to restore legality. Khoury denied having any previous knowledge of what was reported to him.⁷⁰

Three other candidates, Mustafa Soltani, Leilekian and Jean Misk, joined the above-mentioned 23 candidates at an emergency meeting at Amin

Beyhum's house, where all decided to boycott the elections. Within an hour, they had distributed a pamphlet among the people, which said:

You have seen with your own eyes the conspiracy, which has been, weaved to falsify the legislative elections. The pressure, aggression, terrorism, corruption of consciences, interdiction to voters to enter the polling booths, and mobilization of the public forces to stop all opposition, all these have led us to address a protest to the President of the Republic and demand the cancellation of the ballot.⁷¹

The Democratic List also cabled President Khoury protesting against open government intervention in favor of the list "that was formed in the presidential palace." The protest note also mentioned that both falsification and force had been used to forbid the voters from voting for any list other than the pro-government one. It demanded the annulment of the elections, as they had been anti-constitutional.⁷² The supporters of the Democratic List also boycotted the elections after 10:30 a.m.⁷³

At 2 p.m. in the afternoon, the 24 opposition candidates, who had asked their supporters to stop voting by 11 a.m., paid another visit to President Khoury, who was surrounded, on this occasion, by Riad Solh and Pharaon. Candidates Sarkis and Chader lodged a protest in the name of the opposition regarding persistent ballot stuffing. Chader proposed that they go to any polling office to see if the number of actual voters there was equal to the number of the registered voters. If it were, the opposition would admit defeat. However, this proposal was not accepted.⁷⁴

With the withdrawal of the opposition, the candidates supported by the government scored a big victory. In Bashura, Sami Solh received 2,000 votes more than the total number of voters registered in that precinct.⁷⁵ An enthusiastic Solh follower reportedly cast fifty bunches of votes in a single ballot box.⁷⁶

Members of the Popular List were thus declared the winners. The official tally of votes received by the successful candidates was as follows:

Number of registered voters	49953
Number of actual voters	21549
Voter turnout	43.2%
Habib Abi Chahla	17848
Abdallah Yafi	17852
Rashid Beydoun	17556
Sami Solh	17084
Hussein Oweyni	16657
Movses Der Kaloustian	16455
Raeef Abellama	16373

Meikon Hairabedian	16330
Moussa de Freige	15761

The other candidates had received the following tally of votes during voting from 8 to 10 am.⁷⁷

Hratchia Chamlian	3752	Mustafa Soltani	139
Karnig Minassian	3409	Jean Misk	118
Mustafa Aris	3294	Vahram Leilekian	112
Joseph Chader	3168	Hussein Sejaan	150
Alfred Naccache	3047	Anis Saghir	100
Amin Beyhum	2920	Agop Moussalian	56
Mohsen Slim	2569	Mahmoud Hajj	44
Soubhi Mahmassani	2547	Chafik Nassif	28
Philippe Tamer	2047	Antoine Chalfoun	21
George Tabet	1414	Toufic Mrad Rizk	17
Adib Maalouf	768	Meguerditch Barounian	7
Adib Kaddura ⁶	76	Farid Jebran	6
Zouheir Osseiran	627	Selim Maalouf	5
Ibrahim Khairallah	387	Boutros Dib	4
Henri Arslanian	250	Hassan Itani	2
Rafiq Baraj	230	Abdel Hafiz Mahmassani	2
Ramez Sarkis	212	Mohammed el Bakr	1
Ahmed Ahdeb	206	Rafiq Bart	1
Nassif Majdalani	206	Dr. Nahassian	1
Abdel Salam Shatila	158	Jean Hayek	1
Jacques Lizmé	153		

The opposition described these elections as "the crime of May 25, 1947."⁷⁸ Immediate reaction in the Lebanese press was, however, mixed. *Aztag*, *Le Jour*, *Al-Shark*, *Al-Nahar*, *Al-Joumhour*, and *Azatarar* said that the 25 May elections had been held "generally in order and calm."⁷⁹ *Zartouk*, on the other hand, published the following headline: "Tyranny and no elections. The government elected its deputies without the votes of the people. What happened was not an election, but the violation of civil rights, individual liberties and democratic principles."⁸⁰ *Le Soir* of Dikran Tosbath, in turn, wrote: "les election ont été truquées. Truquées, affreusement, honteusement."⁸¹ The opposition newspapers even "claimed that the government had used the identity cards of 3700 Armenians repatriated" to Soviet Armenia.⁸²

On Wednesday, 28 May, the Minister of the Interior, Kamal Jomblat, made public his resignation. He declared that he had submitted his

resignation 48 hours before the elections, after he had become aware that there would be cheating. He had kept this decision secret for a while, upon the insistence of his colleagues. Mgr. Ignace Moubarak, a Maronite Archbishop, distributed a pamphlet, strongly criticizing the President and demanding his resignation. Takiyeddin Solh, the President of the Union of Journalists, also declared that the elections had been fraudulent.⁶³ The aforementioned 23 opposition candidates, joined by Leilekian, Abdel Hafiz Mahmassani, Nassif, Baraj, Sejaan, Soltani, and Chalfoun, issued on 30 May an appeal for a general strike the next day. The strike was effective in Jemayze and the Jewish Quarter.⁶⁴ On 5 June, opposition candidates from Beirut presented a memorandum to President Khoury demanding the formation of a judicial committee to examine electoral fraud and its consequences.⁶⁵ The editors of 25 newspapers and magazines, including *Zartouk*, *Ararat*, *Joghovourti Tsayn* (Communist), Zouheir Osserian's *Hadaf*, Mohsen Slim's *Al-Jedid*, the Phalangist *Al-Amal*, the Communist *Sawt-al-Shaab*, *Beirut*, *L'Orient*, *Le Soir*, *Al-Diyar*, *Beshir*, *Al-Sayyad*, *Telegraph*, *Raouad*, *Al-Yowm*, *Lissan-ul Hal*, *Asia*, *Al-Joumhour*, *Beirut al-Massa*, *Al-Nida*, *Sawt-ul Ahrar*, forwarded on 8 June a letter to the President declaring that the 25 May elections had been "undeniably fraudulent" and hence the new Parliament did not represent the will of the nation. The editors demanded the dissolution of the new Parliament and made it clear that they would otherwise ignore its existence in their newspapers.⁶⁶ On 14 June, opposition candidates from Beirut demanded, in another protest to Khoury, the cancellation of the elections in the capital. Furthermore, they authorized the lawyers from amongst their own ranks, namely Soubhi Mahmassani, Chamlian, Chader and Slim, to present the opposition's viewpoint on the election. This assessment was eventually summarized in twelve points, of which the following were the more important:

- the ballot boxes were not opened at the set time;
- the ballot boxes were not examined and not sealed;
- the opposition candidates and their proxies were not allowed to be present during the counting process;
- the opposition was suppressed through terrorism;
- ballots pre-marked in favor of pro-government candidates were stuffed into ballot boxes in bundles;
- the names of many eligible voters were erased from the voter lists; and
- those who were going to vote against the government were not admitted to the polling stations.⁶⁷

The government declared, however, that the elections had been legal; Prime Minister Riad Solh reportedly said that they had been the best elections ever.⁸⁸

In the meantime, the new Parliament had elected from among its newly elected members a Validating Committee consisting of Pharaon, Abi Chahla, Dr. Joseph Hitti, Mohammed Safieddin and Ahmed Berjaoui.⁸⁹ The opposition held on 16 June at 5 p.m. a reception for the press at the residence of Alfred Naccache. Former Prime Minister Abdul Hamid Karamé was present at this event, during which Soubhi Mahmassani reported that the candidate-lawyers had presented the Validating Committee that morning the points they had enumerated in their written protest. They had also demanded the resignation of Pharaon from the committee since he had been a member of the government, which had organized the election. They had further argued that the validity of the committee itself was questionable since it was nominated by an illegal Parliament.⁹⁰

When no action was taken, the 24 opposition candidates of Beirut and other influential personalities addressed, late in June, another letter to the President. They demanded again the dissolution of the new Parliament. In a separate declaration, the National Bloc of former President Eddé condemned the 25 May elections as "corrupt". The bloc published a "black" book on this occasion.⁹¹

The opposition candidates met at 10 a.m. on Sunday, 29 June, for another protest meeting, this time at the house of Omar Beyhum. Karamé, Naccache, Nsouli, Emir Nouhad Arslan (National Bloc), Elias Rababi (Phalangist) and Dr. George Hanna (Partisans of Peace) again criticized the 25 May elections and demanded the dissolution of the newly elected Parliament.⁹²

On 30 June, the new Parliament met in the presence of 48 deputies. They accepted Bahij Takieddin's proposal not to read the report of the Validating Committee "as deputies were aware of its content." Pharaon, the committee's chairman, stated that although their report was not perfect, it still satisfied their conscience. The Parliament then approved the election of all deputies except one from outside Beirut.⁹³

Opposition newspapers continued their bitter attacks on the new Parliament even after it had formally convened. They reported that *The Times* of London, *The New York Times* and *Al-Ahram* had also criticized the elections.⁹⁴ The last important protest meetings of the opposition in this regard were held at Rashid Jomblat's residence in Sofar on 24 August⁹⁵ and Karamé's residence in Tripoli on 14 September.⁹⁶ Thereafter, it became gradually clear that pressure from the opposition would not be enough to

force the government to back down. The Parliament, elected on 25 May 1947, was destined to serve its full, four-year term.

Within the Armenian community itself, the post-electoral tensions and the frustration of supporters of the Democratic Front had led to further bloodshed. Two murders were committed on 14 June; Boghos Margossian (Tashnag)⁹⁷ and Atam Yeghiayan (anti-Tashnag)⁹⁸ were killed. On 15 June, another Tashnag sympathizer, Haroutiun Medzoyan, was attacked in his home.⁹⁹

Catholicos Karekin I, however, accepted the official results. On 5 July, he congratulated the newly elected Armenian deputies during a reception held at the Armenian Prelacy in Beirut. Immediately after this event, the Catholicos paid a visit to Riad Solh to offer his congratulations upon his re-appointment as Prime Minister. Karekin I was accompanied by Archbishop Khat, the Rev. Dadjad Ourfalian, deputies Der Kaloustian and Hairabedian, and Dadjad Srabian, Chairman of the National Central Civil Council of the Cilician See.¹⁰⁰

Only years later would a contributor to *Aztag* admit openly "the elections of May 25, 1947 constitute the climax of fraud and intervention, a black spot in Lebanese electoral history, to the extent that people do not hesitate to call it the "massacre of freedoms." The author quoted in this article from President Khoury's published memoirs: "Some officials wanted to win favor and voted in the name of absent people. This is why there were more votes in the ballot boxes than [the number of] names on the voters' list."¹⁰¹

THE ELECTIONS OF 1951

President Bishara Khoury consolidated his hold on power after the 1947 elections and continued to rule the country with the cooperation of his close ally, Prime Minister Riad Solh. The President's brother, Selim, maintained his corrupt methods, creating, in the process, a bad image for the regime.

The four-year term of the Parliament elected in 1947 witnessed a number of political developments of colossal significance both at home and in the Middle East region. The most important was the end of the British mandate in Palestine. The United Nations voted for the partition of Palestine on 29 November 1947. This decision was rejected by all Arab states, including Lebanon. The ensuing 1948-49 war in Palestine forced thousands of Palestinian Arabs to seek refuge in Lebanon, creating in the process a new demographic situation in their host country. The Palestinian refugees were not granted Lebanese citizenship and lived mostly in makeshift refugee camps. At home, the Lebanese government dealt severely with its political

opponents, the Syrian Social Nationalist Party and the Communists. Khoury also used his influence on Parliament to amend the Lebanese Constitution and get re-elected in 1949 for a second term as President.

As the term of the Parliament elected in 1947 was coming to an end, the government of Riad Solh resigned. On 14 February 1951, President Khoury appointed a neutral, interim government to oversee the general elections. Hussein Oweyni assumed the Premiership and the Ministry of the Interior. The rest of the ministerial portfolios were distributed between Ministers Boulos (Paul) Fayad and Edouard Noun.

The 1951 elections were to be conducted according to a new electoral law promulgated on 10 August 1950. This law had raised the membership of Parliament to 77. According to the new law, the constituency of Beirut was allotted thirteen seats, distributed as follows: four Sunnite, one Shiite, one Greek Orthodox, one Maronite, one Protestant, two Armenian Orthodox, one Armenian Catholic and one Minority. The district of Metn in the Governorate of Mount Lebanon, north of the Lebanese capital, was allotted nine seats: five Maronite, one Druze, one Shiite, one Greek Orthodox and one Armenian Orthodox. Hence, four seats had been allocated in all to the Armenians. The Armenian Orthodox community would have three deputies in the next Chamber: two, in Beirut; and one, for the first time, in Metn. For the first time, too, the Armenian Catholic community would have its allocated seat in Beirut. Armenian Catholic candidates had previously competed for the seat allocated to the Minorities in the Lebanese capital.

Prime Minister Oweyni prohibited mass rallies and the public display of pictures of the various candidates. He also gave instructions to the Lebanese Army to maintain order throughout the country, especially on polling day. Oweyni increased the number of polling stations, and, on the eve of the legislative elections, appointed trusted, high-ranking civil servants as inspectors at those centers. Each inspector was named in a district with which he had had no private connection. Oweyni also ordered the release from prison of candidates from Raymond Eddé's National Bloc and the Communist party.¹⁰²

After having witnessed fraudulent elections on many occasions in the past, many newspapers (*Al-Amal*, *Telegraph*, *Al-Sayyad*, *Al-Diyar*, *Al-Nidal*, *Le Soir*, and *Sawt-ul Ahrar*) initially questioned the government's commitment to hold free elections.¹⁰³ Oweyni tried to calm the skeptics by solemnly swearing on his honor that the elections would be free.¹⁰⁴ It was also fixed that the elections would take place on 12 April 1951, but the Parliament, elected in 1947, would end its term of office only on 2 June 1951.¹⁰⁵

Finally, after having attended Mass celebrated at the Armenian Catholic Church on 6 April, President Khoury stated, in the presence of the Armenian Catholic Patriarch, Cardinal Grégoire-Pierre Agagianian: "I swear before God and men that the elections of 15 April will be perfectly free."¹⁰⁶ Oweyni's government took strict precautions against the "violence, intimidation and corruption, which had marked the previous elections." All privately owned weapons were confiscated.¹⁰⁷

Efforts to forge electoral alliances began soon after the appointment of Oweyni's neutral cabinet. On 21 February, Henri Pharaon hosted a meeting with Abdallah Yafi, Habib Abi Chahla, Saeb Salam, Sami Solh and Rashid Beydoun. They discussed the electoral situation in Beirut and the possibilities of the formation of an electoral list. Pharaon reportedly insisted during the meeting that Amin Beyhum should be invited to join the list as the fourth Sunnite candidate. He refused, however, to have Raef Abellama as the Maronite candidate under any circumstances. Yafi and Salam, on the other hand, insisted on Mohieddin Nsouli as the fourth Sunnite and Abellama as the Maronite candidates.¹⁰⁸

Eventually, Pharaon's wish was carried out, and an agreement was reached in principle to form the so-called List of Giants under his leadership. In addition to Henri Pharaon (Greek Catholic), the list included Habib Abi Chahla (Greek Orthodox), Abdallah Yafi, Sami Solh, Amin Beyhum, Saeb Salam (Sunites), Rashid Beydoun (Shiite), Charles Helou (Maronite), Ramez Sarkis (Protestant) and Moussa de Freige (Minorities). It was expected that the incumbent Armenian Orthodox deputies, Movses Der Kaloustian and Melkon Hairabedian, would also be included. There was no initial agreement on the Armenian Catholic candidate of the list.¹⁰⁹

There had been a number of significant changes among the Armenians in Lebanon since the previous parliamentary elections in 1947. The repatriation of Armenians from Lebanon to Soviet Armenia had resumed during the summer of 1947, i.e. soon after the previous elections, but had been stopped by the Soviet government in 1948.¹¹⁰ On the other hand, the Arab-Israeli War of 1948-49 had forced many Armenians from Palestine to settle in Lebanon, increasing the local Armenian population. The Armenian refugees from Palestine were not accorded Lebanese citizenship, however, and could not therefore directly influence the outcome of the electoral race.

Two other changes were noted. First, a schism had emerged within the Huntchag party. The so-called right wing of the party had assembled around the *Ararat* daily, and its leaders, Armen Gharib, Kevork Yerevanian, Onnig Djambouljian and others, controlled the party's Lebanon District Committee. On the other hand, the so-called left wing of the party, led by Haroutian

Djeredjian, claimed control of the party's Local Executive Committee of Beirut. Both groups considered themselves the party's legitimate authority and had formally expelled each other from the party.¹¹¹ Secondly, the administration of the Armenian Orthodox community in Lebanon had passed fully into the hands of the Tashnags after the recent elections for local and communal councils. Anti-Tashnags claimed that these elections had been fraudulent.

Since it was expected that the Tashnags would join the List of Giants, the anti-Tashnag organizations tried to repeat their experience of 1947 and bring forth once again a united front. This attempt ended, however, in failure.¹¹²

At 9 p.m. on 22 February, several Armenian independent notables met at the home of Boghos Nadjarian. *Zartonk* gave the following list of participants: Dr. Yervant Djidedjian, Dr. Karekin Tabourian, Dr. Hovhanness Srabian, Dr. Haroutiun Tchblakian, Dr. Melkon Hairabedian, Hratchia Chamlian, Major Boghos Toursarkissian, Puzant Yeghiayan, Kevork Tchatalbashian, Takvor Palandjian, Dikran Zawzawatjian, Levon Nazarian, Dikran Tosbath, Pakarad Bakalian, Hagop Abadjian, Karnig Minassian, Boghos Nadjarian, Dr. Antranik Tchavoushian, Puzant Markarian, Avedis Manougian, Hovhanness Kassardjian and Yervant Demirdjian¹¹³. They aimed at creating a United Armenian Front to participate in the legislative elections. They also agreed to try and attain a few other goals, such as better living conditions and housing for the inhabitants of the Armenian camps north of Beirut; reform of Armenian community schools; better health conditions; and the construction of streets in the Armenian quarters; a seat allocated to Armenian Protestants in Parliament; and posts in the state administration for Armenians who were competent and had a good command of the Arabic language. Djidedjian was made the chairman of this group, while Srabian became its secretary. A five-member committee (Djidedjian, Tabourian, Tchblakian, Tchatalbashian and Major Toursarkissian) was also named to meet the heads of religious denominations and party leaders in the Armenian community. The spiritual heads of the three Armenian communities, Vicar General Archbishop Khat Atchabahian (Orthodox), Cardinal Grégoire-Pierre Agagianian (Catholic) and the Reverend Garabed Tilkian (Protestant) welcomed the idea. Among the political parties, the Ramgavars gave their consent, while the Huntchags put conditions on their cooperation.¹¹⁴ Djidedjian also approached the Tashnag party. He was informed, after a significant delay, that the Tashnag party had already made arrangements in this regard since the party was well positioned to represent the Armenian community.¹¹⁵

At 9 p.m. on 9 March, another meeting was held at the home of Zawzawatjian. Ramgavar and Huntchag representatives were present on this occasion. The Tashnag refusal to cooperate was communicated to those present. Furthermore, Tchatalbashian resigned and Zawzawatjian replaced him on the Electoral Committee of the Independents.¹¹⁶

On 12 March, the pictures of the Huntchag candidate, Krikor Khatcherian, were posted all over the town.¹¹⁷ Two days later, the Huntchag leaders declared their willingness to participate in the United Front, if it nominated a Huntchag candidate. They further stated that they could only pay the expenses of their own candidate. Moreover, the Huntchags preferred to join the List of Giants; serious consideration was necessary before joining the opposition list.¹¹⁸ These conditions were not accepted, and the Huntchags broke away from the Front.¹¹⁹

Meanwhile, an opposition list had been formed in Beirut. The Popular List was headed by Mohieddin Nsouli.¹²⁰

On 1 April, the pro-government *Le Jour* wrote: Beyrouth, les deux listes demeurent incomplètes. A la première, deux candidats arméniens manquent encore. Il est de même de la deuxième liste. Ce fait est dû aux divergences de vues qui empêchent les groupements arméniens de s'entendre sur la désignation de leurs candidats.¹²¹

Uncertainty persisted in spite of an *Aztag* report on 11 March that the Tashnag party's candidates, Der Kaloustian and Hairabedian, had joined the List of Giants in Beirut and that their candidate in Metn would be Vahan Papazian, a former member of the Ottoman Parliament from Van and a famed revolutionary better known as Goms.¹²² The leaders of the List of Giants had accepted Der Kaloustian on their list, but were still trying to nominate as the second Armenian Orthodox candidate a person who would enjoy the support of all anti-Tashnag organizations.¹²³ On 14 March, members of the List of Giants, Pharaon, Yafi, Solh and Abellama, attended the funeral of Minas Khatchikian, a Huntchag leader and the Chairman of the Central Committee of Homenmen.¹²⁴

By the second half of March, all efforts to bring the Huntchags into the so-called Armenian Front had failed. On 19 March, the right wing of the Huntchag party officially submitted Khatcherian's candidature.¹²⁵ The left wing of the Huntchag party reacted by presenting the rival candidature of Vahridj Djeredjian.¹²⁶

On 24 March, *Le Soir* reported that the "Armenian United Front" had joined the opposition in Beirut.¹²⁷ *Zartonk* confirmed this report only on 6 April, when the Front's candidates were formally declared.¹²⁸ They were Yetvart Barsoumian and Hratchia Setrakian for the Armenian Orthodox seats

and Noubar Toursarkissian for the Armenian Catholic seat.¹²⁹ Barsoumian was a young engineer, a poet, and the chairman of the local council of the Armenian General Benevolent Union in Beirut. Setrakian, the Ramgavar candidate, was a young lawyer, a former member of the Civil and Communal Councils of the Armenian Orthodox community in Lebanon, a former, three-term Chairman of the Association of Armenian University Students, a founding member of the Lebanese Scouts Federation and the Tekeyan Cultural Association, as well as a member of the Armenian Repatriation Committee in 1946-47.¹³⁰ Toursarkissian's candidature – "as the strongest Armenian Catholic candidate" – had already been announced on 31 March. He was a 29 year-old lawyer and the son of Major Boghos Toursarkissian.¹³¹ Finally, Dikran Tosbath was named on 7 April as the Armenian Front's candidate for the Armenian Orthodox seat in Metn.¹³² He had already made this decision public in his own French language newspaper, *Le Soir*, on 30 March.¹³³

The opposition Popular List was composed of Mohieddin Nsouli, Mohammed Jaroudi, Takiuddin Solh and Hussein Sejaan (Sunnites), Zouheir Osseiran (Shiite), Jean Jalkh (Maronite), Nassim Majdalani (Greek Orthodox), Nasri Maalouf (Greek Catholic), Anis Heneykati (Protestant), Benoit Aboussouan (Minorities), Yetvart Barsoumian and Hratchia Setrakian (Armenian Orthodox) and Noubar Toursarkissian (Armenian Catholic)¹³⁴.

Commenting on the formation of the opposing lists in Beirut, Gideon Tadmor wrote as follows:

The lists had little to do with ideological differences; they were based more on local interests and consideration of the prospects of winning at the local polls. Individual relations still govern the outcome of the vote in Lebanon. Accordingly, pro-Government lists included names of distinguished persons associated with the regime of President Bisharra el-Khoury. Deputies who had been antagonists in the old Chamber appeared together on the same list for the new Chamber because both were trying to get on the "strongest" lot, that is, the one with the best chances.

The first list, for example, consisted, on the one hand of men who were connected with the administration and were, one might say of aristocratic lineage, and on the other hand, with those strongly opposed to the five-year regime of Premier Riad al-Solh. These included Pharaon and Sami al-Solh. Relatively younger men who felt they were entitled to more important positions, but who had not yet succeeded in securing major governmental jobs formed the second list, of the opposition. Most of

them are now minor officials or journalists; they are progressive and are affiliated with various political parties.¹³⁵

Once the Armenian Front, which was nothing more than a Ramgavar-“Independents” alliance, made public its list of candidates, the Armenian Communists announced the candidature of Artin Madoyan for one of the Armenian Orthodox seats in Beirut. Mustafa Aris, another Communist, was also running in the same constituency.

After the failure to forge a united, anti-Tashnag Front had become evident, Der Kaloustian, the Tashnag candidate, honored his allies on the List of Giants with a luncheon. Der Kaloustian and Hairabedian had by now officially joined that list.¹³⁶

The question of the Armenian Catholic candidate was still unresolved, however.¹³⁷ There were four Armenian Catholic candidates (Joseph Chader, Elie Khayat, Kevork Baghdjian and Dikran de Chadarevian), who had not found places on any list.¹³⁸

On 6 April, the List of Giants further postponed the naming of its candidate for the vacant seat reserved for the Armenian Catholic community; it had proved impossible to reach a consensus.¹³⁹ A compromise was ultimately reached on the following basis: the official List of Giants would not include the name of any Armenian Catholic candidate, but the supporters of Yafi and Solh would vote for Khayat; and those of Pharaon, for Chader, who was the Vice-President of the Phalangist party.¹⁴⁰ Still, Chader attended a meeting of the List of Giants at the home of Mustafa Koleilat in Ras el-Nabeh on 10 April.¹⁴¹

After the opposing lists had been formally announced in Beirut, the newspapers of the opposing Armenian groupings began attacking one another. *Aztag's* editorial, titled “Useless Are the Masks,” claimed that the Communists and their fellow travellers had appeared again; the so-called Armenian Front was nothing but the same group that had damaged the Armenian community by exploiting the question of repatriation to Armenia in 1946-47. *Aztag* asked rhetorically where would Bolshevik propaganda and activity have reached had not the Tashnag party opposed this irresponsible current of opportunists and had created, through its struggle, a situation in which once again “the majority of Lebanese Armenians were recognized as loyal and honest citizens of this country and not as a tool in the hands of Communist propaganda and Soviet policy.”¹⁴² *Zartonk* replied that the Armenian Front had “no relation whatsoever with Communists” and that the Communists had their own candidate for the legislative elections.¹⁴³

Furthermore, both the List of Giants and the Popular List organized a series of public rallies as Election Day approached. A rally was held in

Mudawar in honor of the List of Giants at 8 p.m. on 8 April. 8,000 people attended and listened to speeches by Sasouni, Pharaon, Salam, Beydoun, Abi Chahla, Hairabedian and Der Kaloustian.¹⁴⁴

The same day, the Armenian Front held a gathering to honor the Popular List at the Zareh Noubar Club. Nsouli and the three Armenian candidates made speeches during the gathering.¹⁴⁵ The front organized another rally at 8 p.m. on 11 April, this time opposite the Baraj factory near the Nahr Bridge. 10,000 people attended it.¹⁴⁶ The Popular List as a whole held other rallies, too, in the ensuing days. The first was at the Zeydani quarter and was attended by a crowd of 7,000. The Armenian Catholic candidate, Toursarkissian was among the orators and spoke in Arabic.¹⁴⁷ The second rally was held in Mazraa.¹⁴⁸

The Huntchag party's Lebanon District Committee held a public rally at 3 p.m. on 8 April. Thousands were reportedly present at the Sahagian Playing Field. Seferian, Yerevanian, Gharib (in Armenian), Joseph Rezkallah, and Puzant Melkonian (in Arabic) addressed the rally. The right wing Huntchag candidate Khatcherian outlined his aims, the most important of which were the defense of the rights of the Armenian community within the state administration, the strengthening of the brotherly ties of the Arabs and Armenians and the maintenance of the sovereignty, political and economic independence of Lebanon. Khatcherian also vowed to try to increase the standard of living of the workers and people in general.¹⁴⁹

Setrakian, the Ramgavar candidate on the Popular List, had also vowed, in a separate campaign speech, to defend the ignored rights and interests of the Armenian community as well as those of the Armenian workers and businessmen.¹⁵⁰ A *Zartok* editorial of 17 April reiterated these points and added that the Tashnags wanted to dominate the Catholicosate of the Holy See of Cilicia in Antelias.¹⁵¹ *Aztag* replied that the Tashnags had always wanted the Catholicosate to be above party disputes. Furthermore, it was a lie to say that the rights of Armenian workers had not been protected; Armenians were not persecuted or ignored in Lebanon as far as the constitutional rights of the community were concerned.¹⁵² Another *Aztag* editorial added that all those who wanted to stir the Armenians into discontent against the leaders of the Lebanese government and wanted to see the Tashnags in the same position were dangerous evildoers.¹⁵³

On 13 April, Vahridj Djeredjian, the left-wing Huntchag candidate for one of the two Armenian Orthodox seats in Beirut, and Kevork Baghdjian, the independent Armenian Catholic candidate in the same constituency, withdrew from the race.¹⁵⁴ Following Djeredjian's withdrawal, the Local Executive Committee of the Huntchag party issued a communiqué appealing

to its members and supporters "to vote for all those candidates who are struggling for the freedom and complete sovereignty of the Lebanese people, for the improvement of the public services, for bread and employment, for peace and for a higher standard of living."¹⁵⁵

In the constituency of Metn, Papazian, the Tashnag candidate for the Armenian Orthodox seat, joined the pro-government, Constitutional (*Destour*) list on 21 March. His allies on the list were Wadih Naim, Dr. Elias Khoury, Khalil Abi Jaoudé, Michel Doumit, Hassan Farhat, Beshir Aouar and Fouad Khoury.¹⁵⁶

The rival Armenian Orthodox candidate, Tosbath, first joined the opposition list led by Pierre Eddé on 4 April.¹⁵⁷ The next day, Tosbath announced that he had, after negotiations between the Armenian Front, the Phalangist leader Pierre Gemayel and Gabriel Murr, withdrawn from the National Bloc's list to join the list of Independents headed by Gemayel. This list was composed of Pierre Gemayel, Salah Labaki, Elia Abi Jaoudé, Joseph Khoury, Michel Mouawad (Maronites), Gabriel Murr (Greek Orthodox), Bahij Mezher (Druze), Abdallah Hajj (Shiite) and Dikran Tosbath (Armenian Orthodox).¹⁵⁸

On 13 April, Noubar Nokhoudian, another Armenian Orthodox candidate in Metn, who was running as an independent, withdrew in Tosbath's favor so as "to consolidate the Armenian Union."¹⁵⁹ Two days later, Tosbath announced that he had also been accepted on the National Bloc's list, which now consisted of Pierre Eddé, Elia Abi Jaoudé, Habib Akl, Edouard Honein, Nikola Hayek (Maronites), Albert Moukheiber (Greek Orthodox), Abdallah Hajj (Shiite), Bahij Mezher (Druze) and Dikran Tosbath (Armenian Orthodox).¹⁶⁰ *Ararat*, the mouthpiece of the right wing of the Huntchag party, also supported Tosbath, arguing, "He can best represent the Armenian community in Parliament."¹⁶¹

The Compatriotic Unions of Daron-Dourouperan, Vasbouragan and Garin (Erzerum) organized a demonstration of sympathy for Papazian at St. Astvadzadzin Church at 10 a.m. on 8 April. The candidate had spent his revolutionary life against the Ottoman government in those regions of Western Armenia. Melik Sarhatian and Sasouni spoke during the gathering.¹⁶²

At 8 p.m. the following day, a rally was held in Nor Marash honoring the Constitutional list for Metn. 10,000 people attended. Tashnag leader Haig Balian and candidates Naim, Khalil Abi Jaoudé, Fouad Khoury and Papazian were among the speakers at the rally.¹⁶³

The rival Independent List of Gemayel held its public rallies at 4 p.m. on 8 April at Bourj Brajné.¹⁶⁴

On the eve of the elections, *Zartonk* called on its supporters to vote for the Popular List in Beirut, making special mention of its Armenian candidates and for the Independent List in Metn, drawing attention to Tosbath's presence.¹⁶⁵ *Ararat* called on its followers to vote for Khatcherian, Toursarkissian and independent candidates in Beirut, and for Tosbath and Elia Abi Jaoudé in Metn.¹⁶⁶ Finally, *Aztag* appealed to its supporters to vote for the List of Giants in Beirut, emphasizing the candidature of both Der Kaloustian and Hairabedian, but making no mention of Chader, and for the Constitutional list in Metn, underlining the candidacy of "comrade Vahan Papazian."¹⁶⁷

The elections took place on 15 April in an orderly atmosphere. Even the opposition, despite minor irregularities, acknowledged their fairness.¹⁶⁸

In Beirut, out of 57,658 registered voters, 21,948 persons actually voted.¹⁶⁹ The official results were as follows:¹⁷⁰

Rashid Beydoun	14779	Benoît Aboussouan	6684
Ramez Sarkis	14775	Mohieddin Nsouli	6584
Sami Solh	14758	Hratchia Setrakian	6583
Abdallah Yafi	14629	Zouheir Osseiran	6538
Henri Pharaon	13284	Yetvart Barsoumian	5883
Charles Helou	13180	Mustafa Aris	5502
Saeb Salam	12808	Anis Heneykati	5380
Moussa de Freige	12747	Hussein Sejaan	4073
Amin Beyhum	12175	Raeef Abellama	3930
Movses Der Kaloustian	12004	Jean Jalkh	3789
Melkon Hairabedian	11946	Takieddin Solh	3348
Habib Abi Chahla	11016	Artin Madoyan	2765
Nassim Majdalani	10333	Elie Khayat	2257
Joseph Chader	9660	Rafiq Tabbara	1653
Nasri Maalouf	7411	Krikor Khatcherian	1099
Mohammed Jaroudi	7171	Dikran de Chadarevian	231
Noubar Toursarkissian	6987		

Members of the List of Giants, together with Chader, were thus elected as members of the next Chamber of Deputies.

The opposition Popular List in Beirut formally acknowledged that the elections had been free, but that they had, after 11 a.m., turned into a black market. The opposition declaration concluded with the statement that "a struggle ended; a new struggle has begun."¹⁷¹

In Metn, 22,904 out of the 40,449 registered voters cast their votes.¹⁷² In Bourj Hammoud, some incidents disturbed the orderly atmosphere of the election.¹⁷³ The official results were as follows:¹⁷⁴

Dikran Tosbath	12504	Pierre Gemaye	17945
Elia Abi Jaoudé	1920	Pierre Eddé	7798
Abdallah Hajj	11534	Nikola Hayek	6680
Hassan Farhat	11311	Albert Moukheiber	6177
Emile Lahoud	10988	Edouard Honein	5737
Beshir Aouar	10776	Gabriel Murr	4717
Bahij Mezher	10519	Joseph Khoury	4647
Elias Khoury	10400	Salah Labaki	3813
Vahan Papazian	10186	Michel Mouawad	2939
Fouad Khoury	9926	Antoine Tabet	2464
Michel Doumit	9653	Hafiz Munzer	1735
Wadih Naim	9012	Rukoz Abi Nader	512
Habib Akl	8697	A. Khoury	65
Khalil Abi Jaoudé	8419	Noubar Nokhoudian	34

From the Constitutional list, Elias Khoury, Emile Lahoud, Michel Doumit (Maronites), Fouad Khoury (Greek Orthodox), and Beshir Aouar (Druze) were thus elected members of the Chamber of Deputies, and, from the Independent list, Elia Abi Jaoudé (Maronite), Abdallah Hajj (Shiite) and Dikran Tosbath (Armenian Orthodox). A second ballot would have to take place between Wadih Naim and Pierre Gemaye for the fifth Maronite seat in Metn.¹⁷⁵

Tosbath, the victorious Armenian candidate, wrote that in Bourj Hammoud:

Les membres du parti Tachnak, au vu et au su de la gendarmerie, ont littéralement occupé le bureau de vote et ses abords immédiats empêchant tout électeur qui n'était pas de leur bord, de déposer son bulletin.¹⁷⁶

Zartok, Ararat, Le Sotr, and *Al-Amal* strongly protested against Tashnag behavior during voting in Bourj Hammoud.¹⁷⁷ *Al-Amal* mentioned a protest note handed to the Prime Minister complaining that five polling offices had been stationed in a single building in a Tashnag quarter, and guns were used in front of the eyes of the constabulary. Upon protests by Tosbath and Murr, the army had intervened for a short while. After their departure, however, the Tashnags could vote until 5:30 p.m., well beyond the formal time of closure, with the help of the headman (*mukhtar*) of the area.¹⁷⁸

Aztag argued that Papazian had received ninety percent of the Armenian votes cast in Bourj Hammoud, and that Tosbath's success could be explained by the fact that he had been on both of the opposition lists.¹⁷⁹ *Aztag* criticized the anti-Tashnags for bragging about the success of Tosbath "which was independently achieved." It concluded by asking rhetorically by how many

votes had the anti-Tashnag groupings assisted in Tosbath's success.¹⁸⁰ Tosbath's *Le Soir* replied as follows:

Que le directeur du *Soir* n'ait pas obtenu la majorité des voix arméniennes de Bourj Hammoud, nous ne le contestons pas ici. Mais chacun sait, comment le scrutin s'est déroulé dans les quartiers arméniens du fleuve, où profitant de la carence de la gendarmerie, les Tachnags ont pu interdire l'accès des bureaux de vote aux électeurs de l'opposition.¹⁸¹

At 11:30 a.m. on 17 April, Tosbath visited the Catholicosate at Antelias. He was accompanied by notables of the Armenian Front, including Djidedjian, Minassian, Tabourian, Bakalian, Parounag Tovmassian, Setrakian, Barsoumian, Vahridj Djeredjian, Souren Khanamirian and others in a convoy of about fifty cars. They were received by the Congregation of the Cilician Catholicosate, headed by Bishops Khoren Paroyan and Terenig Poladian. Then, Tosbath and Djidedjian visited the ailing Catholicos Karekin I in his chamber. The deputy elect promised to do his best to serve the interests of the Armenian community. The Catholicos blessed Tosbath and wished him success.¹⁸²

Moreover, it was reported on 11 May that the Armenian Catholicosate of Antelias had given a reception in honor of the newly elected Armenian deputies. Vicar-General Archbishop Khat, Bishop Paren Melkonian and deputies-elect Tosbath, Hairabedian and Chader had reportedly been present.¹⁸³

CONCLUSION

The 1947 elections were fraudulent and aimed at the renewal of President Khoury's term by an amendment of the constitution. The 1951 elections were generally accepted, thanks to the efforts of the Prime Minister, as lawful.

Within the Armenian community, the position of the Tashnag party was strengthened further as the 1946 repatriation had taken away a few thousand voters who had generally supported the Huntchags and Ramgavars. The Cold War had begun to affect the local electoral scene. The parties opposed to the Tashnags managed to form a United Front in 1947. They failed to score any success, however, because they were allied with the opposition. Four years later, the anti-Tashnag groupings were splintered and could not stand a chance, except in Metn, where, due to electoral alliances with non-Armenian candidates, an independent was elected for the Armenian seat.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ Gideon Tadmor, "The Lebanese Elections", *Middle Eastern Affairs*, June-July 1951, p. 247.
- ² This article is also an updated version of part of my thesis, submitted in partial fulfillment for the requirements of the degree of Master of Arts in the History Department of the American University of Beirut, October 1963.
- ³ F.O. 371/40001. Spears uses the term 'abstained' to explain Der Kaloustian's absence from the parliamentary session.
- ⁴ The National Congress was formed after the arrest of President Khoury, Prime Minister Riad Solh and some of his ministers on 13 November 1943. Ahmed Daouk and Henri Pharon were the co-presidents of the congress. They supported the independent Lebanese government based in the village of Bhardoun, organized strikes and demonstrations to demand the release of the renowned prisoners. The National Congress functioned until the evacuation of French forces from Lebanon in 1946.
- ⁵ *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, February 16-23, 1946, p. 7737a.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 7738. Armenian National Councils were established from 1944 in some countries of the Armenian Diaspora to lobby for the Armenian case at the end of the Second World War. Huntchags, Ramgavars, Communists and some independents were involved in these councils.
- ⁷ Interview with Meguerditch Messerlian, April 1961. Messerlian was the Honorary President of the committee overseeing the repatriation of Armenians in Lebanon. For details of the repatriation campaign, see *Keesing's Contemporary Archives*, November 15-22, 1947, p. 8939. According to Hovig Meliksetian, *Hayrenik-Spurk Archetiosanere Yev Hayrenatsoutune* [Fatherland-Diaspora Relations and the Repatriation] (Yerevan 1985), p. 241, 3,794 Armenian families from Syria and Lebanon, consisting of 19,253 persons, repatriated to Armenia in 1946.
- ⁸ Salwyn J. Shapiro, *Modern and Contemporary European History*, Cambridge, Mass., 1953, p. 945.
- ⁹ Khosrov Tutundjian, *Piroyagan Snangoutloune Yev Irav Tashnagsoutian Ughin (Arapagan Ashkharhi Verchin Tebkeru Loussin Dag)* [The Bankruptcy of the Bureau and the Real Political Line of Tashnagstautian (In Light of Recent Events in the Arab World)], Beirut: Sevan, 1959, pp. 76-77.
- ¹⁰ For the principles of the electoral law in Lebanon in general and for the amendments introduced see Zaven Messerlian, 'Armenian Participation in the Lebanese Legislative Elections during the French Mandate, 1934-43', *Haigazian Armenological Review*, vol. 21 (2001), pp. 321-333 and 336-337 (note 22).
- ¹¹ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 32 (4696), 19 April 1947.
- ¹² 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, p. 198.
- ¹³ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 30 (4694), 16 April 1947.
- ¹⁴ *L'Orient* reported an agreement among Solh, Yafi and Oweyni, whereby Abellama, de Freige, Abi Chahla, Rashid Beydoun (Shiite), Der Kaloustian and another neutral Armenian candidate would complete the pro-government list; see *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3023, 20 April 1947.
- ¹⁵ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 35 (4699), 23 April 1947.
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.* Another pro-Tashnag weekly, *Aztorar*, 5th year, no. 234, 26 April 1947, p. 5, announced that Hairabedian would be the second Armenian candidate on the first list.

- ¹⁷ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 39 (4703), 29 April 1947.
- ¹⁸ *Le Jour*, 13th year, no. 3882, 30 April 1947; *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 39 (4703), 29 April 1947.
- ¹⁹ Interview with Hmtchia Chamlian, November-December 1961.
- ²⁰ *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1869, 30 April 1947.
- ²¹ *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3053, 6 June 1947, wrote that the Lebanese Armenian Democratic Front had been formed "six months ago." The Lebanese Armenian Verznount (Renaissance) Association was 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.
- ²² *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3031, 1 May 1947; *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1870, 2 May 1947; *Le Soir*, 1st year, no. 103, 1 May 1947. *Azatar*, 5th year, no. 234, 26 April 1947, p. 5 mentioned that the possible anti-Tashnag candidates were Chamlian, Dr. Karekin Tabourian, Kevoork Yerevanian, Zarch Baghdassarian, Missak Vehouni, Mardiros Emile Iskenderian, and Parounag Tovmassian.
- ²³ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 42 (4706), 3 May 1947.
- ²⁴ *Ibid.*, 21st year, no. 43 (4707), 4 May 1947.
- ²⁵ *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3031, 1 May 1947.
- ²⁶ *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1873, 7 May 1947.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 10th year, no. 1872, 5 May 1947.
- ²⁸ *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3037, 11 May 1947.
- ²⁹ *Ibid.*, 10th year, no. 3035, 8 May 1947; *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1875, 9 May 1947; *Le Soir*, 1st year, no. 110, 9 May 1947.
- ³⁰ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 47 (4711), 10 May 1947.
- ³¹ *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1876, 10 May 1947.
- ³² *Ibid.*, 10th year, no. 1877, 11 May 1947.
- ³³ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 49 (4713), 13 May 1947; *Le Soir*, 1st year, no. 112, 12 May 1947; *Azatar*, 5th year, no. 237, 17 May 1947.
- ³⁴ The Adana Compatriotic Union, who brought together all Armenians originating from the city of Adana in Cilicia, had been established in the early 1920s. Hairabedian confirmed, in a private interview with the author in September 1962, that his electoral campaign expenses had been paid by Kevoork Tchatalbeshian, an independent, who also came from the city of Adana in Turkey that the Armenian refugees to Lebanon had left in 1921.
- ³⁵ *Le Soir*, 1st year, no. 122, 23 May 1947.
- ³⁶ *L'Orient*, 23rd year, no. 6066, 8 May 1947.
- ³⁷ *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3037, 11 May 1947; *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1878, 12 May 1947. According to Michael Johnson, Salam "was not able to stand in 1947 because, to paraphrase his own words, virtually everyone in the political elite around President Bishara al-Khuri was against him"; see Michael Johnson, *Class & Client in Beirut: The Sunni Muslim Community and the Lebanese State 1840-1985*, London & Atlantic Highlands, 1985, p. 73.
- ³⁸ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 49 (4713), 13 May 1947.
- ³⁹ *Ibid.* According to one pro-government newspaper, *Le Jour*, 13th year, no. 3893, 13 May 1947, the number of cars used during this parade was "about 150". The Prime Minister was running in South Lebanon, while Pharaon, described as the "strongman of the regime in Beirut", had his political base among the Greek Catholic community of the Bekaa Valley; see Johnson, pp. 59, 74, 121.
- ⁴⁰ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 49 (4713), 13 May 1947.
- ⁴¹ *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1878, 12 May 1947.

- ⁴² *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3039, 14 May 1947. According to *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 50 (4714), 14 May 1947, the number of cars was "exactly 69", while, according to the predictably sympathetic *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1880, 15 May 1947, it was 200. *Ararat* even named those who had opened gunfire. *L'Orient*, 23rd year, no. 6071, 13 May 1947 wrote: "Le Front Démocratique Arménien organisant hier à 17 heures 30 à Bourj-Hammoud une manifestation en faveur de ses deux candidats, Mm Chamelian et Minassian quand ses partisans virent provoquer par les Tachnak qui appuient la candidature de M. Der Kaloustian". *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 50 (4714), 14 May 1947 wrote that Armenian Bolsheviks had cursed the Tashnags during their ride and had repeated those curses with greater virulence when passing in front of the Tashnag party headquarters in the neighborhood of Nor Sis. This provocation had not affected the Tashnags, claimed *Aztag*, and the Bolsheviks began to fire revolver shots. As a result, Tashnags and their opponents came to blows, and a few were wounded during the skirmish.
- ⁴³ *Zartouk*, 10th year, n. 3039, 14 May 1947; *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1880, 15 May 1947.
- ⁴⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁵ *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1877, 11 May 1947.
- ⁴⁶ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 48 (4712), 11 May 1947.
- ⁴⁷ *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3040-3041, 15-16 May 1947; *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1882, 17 May 1947.
- ⁴⁸ *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3041, 16 May 1947.
- ⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 10th year, no. 3042, 18 May 1947.
- ⁵⁰ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 53 (4717), 18 May 1947.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁵² *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 53 (4717), 18 May 1947.
- ⁵³ *L'Orient*, 23rd year, no. 6074, 16 May 1947.
- ⁵⁴ *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3043, 20 May 1947; *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1882, 17 May 1947; *Le Jour*, 13th year, no. 3898, 18 May 1947.
- ⁵⁵ *Le Soir*, 1st year, no. 120, 21 May 1947.
- ⁵⁶ *Le Jour*, 13th year, no. 3900, 21 May 1947.
- ⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 13th year, no. 3899, 20 May 1947.
- ⁵⁸ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 57 (4721), 24 May 1947.
- ⁵⁹ *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3043, 20 May 1947; *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1885, 20 May 1947.
- ⁶⁰ *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3046, 24 May 1947.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁶² *Ibid.*, 10th year, no. 3047, 25 May 1947; *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1888, 24 May 1947.
- ⁶³ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 58 (4722), 25 May 1947. *Zartouk*, 10th year, no. 3047, 25 May 1947 wrote that the Tashnags had made an agreement to exchange votes with the right-wing Syrian Social Nationalist Party (SSNP). The Tashnags would, based on this alleged agreement, replace the names of de Fréige and a Muslim candidate with those of two SSNP candidates. Der Kaloustian denied these charges as "untrue" in an interview with this author in January 1962.
- ⁶⁴ *Astara*, 5th year, no. 238, 25 May 1947.
- ⁶⁵ *L'Orient*, 23rd year, no. 6083, 25 May 1947.
- ⁶⁶ *L'Orient*, 23rd year, no. 6083, 25 May 1947 wrote that "à Beyrouth on signalait notamment que M. Minassian candidat arménien de la liste démocratique n'aurait pu obtenir son "récépissé de candidature" sous prétexte qu'il était syrien".
- ⁶⁷ *Le Jour*, 13th year, no. 3902, 23 May 1947, p. 2.

- ⁵⁸ According to *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3048, 27 May 1947, the voters of the Democratic Front had been easily recognized as they did not wear the sign on which the supporters of the pro-government list had agreed.
- ⁵⁹ *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3048, 27 May 1947; *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1891, 27 May 1947.
- ⁶⁰ *Le Soir*, 1st year, no. 124, 26 May 1947.
- ⁶¹ *Ibid.*
- ⁶² *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1891, 28 May 1947.
- ⁶³ *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3048, 27 May 1947.
- ⁶⁴ *Ibid.*
- ⁶⁵ *Ararat*, 10th year, no. 1894, 30 May 1947.
- ⁶⁶ Hairabedian confirmed this, in a private interview with this author in January 1962, saying: "Sami Solh's son did a few things; even if he had not done them, we would have won."
- ⁶⁷ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 61 (4725), 29 May 1947. *Le Jour*, 13th year, no. 3907, 28 May 1947 published the number of votes received by 37 candidates - except Chamlian and Minassian. The writer obtained the number of votes these two candidates received from *Le Soir*, 1st year, no. 125, 27 May 1947. *Le Soir* wrote: "On peut facilement se rendre compte du chiffre qu'ils auraient pu totaliser si tous les électeurs avaient pu voter dans tous les bureaux de vote si les candidats des listes d'opposition ne s'étaient pas retirés, dans la matinée du 25." We could not find any reliable information about the Armenian candidates Moussalian, Nahassian and Barounian, who received a few votes each.
- ⁶⁸ George Akl et al., *The Black Book of Lebanese Elections of May 25, 1947*, New York: Phoenicia Press, 1947, quoted in Michael W. Suleiman, *Political Parties in Lebanon*, New York, 1964, p. 69.
- ⁶⁹ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 59 (4723), 27 May 1947; *Le Jour*, 13th year, no. 3904, 26 May 1947; *Aztorar*, 5th year, no. 239, 31 May 1947.
- ⁷⁰ *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3048, 27 May 1947.
- ⁷¹ *Le Soir*, 1st year, no. 125, 27 May 1947.
- ⁷² Michael Hudson, *The Precarious Republic*, New York, 1968, p. 253.
- ⁷³ *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3050, 29 May 1947.
- ⁷⁴ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 65 (4729), 3 June 1947.
- ⁷⁵ *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3053, 6 June 1947.
- ⁷⁶ *Ibid.*; *Keesing's Contemporary Archives (1946-48)*, August 2-9, 1947, p. 8758b.
- ⁷⁷ *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3060, 15 June 1947.
- ⁷⁸ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 63 (4727), 31 May 1947. It must be noted, however, that Hussein Jisr, the *Mohafiz* (Governor) of Mount Lebanon, was dismissed from his post on charges of corruption after Ministers Jomblat, Gabriel Murr and Camille Chamoun had threatened to resign; see *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3050, 29 May 1947. Jisr was later given a post in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs; see *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3070, 1 July 1947.
- ⁷⁹ *Le Jour*, 13th year, no. 3907, 28 May 1947.
- ⁸⁰ *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3062, 18 June 1947.
- ⁸¹ *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3070, 1 July 1947.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*, 10th year, no. 3071, 2 July 1947.
- ⁸³ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 87 (4751), 3 July 1947. The case of that deputy-elect was to be examined later.
- ⁸⁴ *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3087, 25 July 1947.
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, 10th year, no. 3106, 27 August 1947.
- ⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, 10th year, no. 3125, 17 September 1947.

- ⁹⁷ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 75 (4739), 17 June 1947.
- ⁹⁸ *Zartok*, 10th year, no. 3061, 17 June 1947.
- ⁹⁹ *Aztag*, 21st year, no. 75 (4739), 17 June 1947.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 21st year, no. 89 (4753), 8 July 1947.
- ¹⁰¹ Z. Monoforian, 'Kani Daregan E Lipsmani Khorhrarane Yev Inch Kidenk Anor Masin' [How Old Is the Lebanese Parliament and What Do We Know About It?], *Aztag*, 46th year, No. 30 (12207), 11 April 1972, p. 4.
- ¹⁰² Tadmor, p. 247.
- ¹⁰³ *Zartok*, 14th year, no. 4014, 23 February 1951.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, 14th year, no. 4019, 2 March 1951.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Aztag*, 25th year, no. 26 (5716), 11 April 1951.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1319, 8 April 1951.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Keating's Contemporary Archives*, July 14-21, 1951, p. 11590a.
- ¹⁰⁸ *Zartok*, 14th year, no. 4014, 23 February 1951.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Aztag*, 25th year, no. 5 (5695), 11 March 1951. The List of Giants was criticized by two influential newspapers. *Beirut* held the members of the list "responsible for the misery of Lebanon", while *Al-Nahar* wrote that the list had no plan; it relied on money, and that was its only program.
- ¹¹⁰ *Keating's Contemporary Archives*, November 15-22, 1947, p. 8939 states that 60,000 Armenians repatriated to Soviet Armenia in 1947, 15,000 of whom were from the Levant states. Meliksetian, p. 241 mentions that 35,438 Armenians were repatriated to Armenia in 1947, of whom 16,770 were from the Levant states. Overall, 89,750 Armenians were repatriated in 1946-49.
- ¹¹¹ Interview with Jirayr Nayiri, editor of *Ararat*, August 1961.
- ¹¹² *Zartok*, 14th year, no. 4058, 26 April 1951 would claim – after the elections – that "someone" had tried to divide the anti-Tashnag front and had succeeded through the Huntchags. The newspaper further stated that the Veraznount organization had been indifferent on this occasion and that the Communists had entered a candidate of their own.
- ¹¹³ *Zartok*, 14th year, no. 4043, 7 April 1951. Armenag Poladian, Dadjad Srabian, Krikor Nercessian, Dr. Khatchadour Pilavdjian, Abro Abroyan and other personalities joined this grouping at a later stage and participated in later meetings. *Ararat*, 14th year, No. 3072-74, 7-8 May 1951 claimed that an earlier meeting had taken place at the residence of Mardiros Emile Iskenderian at the beginning of February. An agreement was reportedly reached between Hratchia Setrakian (Rangavar) and Zawzawatjian (independent) during this meeting to form a list consisting of Setrakian, Tabourian and Tosbath. The Armenian Catholic candidate on this list preferably would be Joseph Chader or, if that proved impossible, Noubar Toursarkissian. A committee of independents was reportedly brought forth on the basis of the Setrakian-Zawzawatjian agreement. It consisted of Tchblakian, Tabourian, Nadjarian, Zawzawatjian and Major Toursarkissian. This committee had called for the said meeting of independents at the Nadjarian residence, which according to *Ararat*, had taken place not on 22 but on 23 February. However, the Rangavar leaders had allegedly conspired against the Huntchags to leave the latter out of any list. Setrakian, during an interview with this author in May 1962, denied having participated in a meeting at Iskenderian's home and having reached any agreement with Zawzawatjian.
- ¹¹⁴ *Zartok*, 14th year, no. 4043, 7 April 1951.
- ¹¹⁵ Der Kaloustian confirmed this point in an interview with this author in January 1962.
- ¹¹⁶ *Zartok*, 14th year, no. 4043, 7 April 1951.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 14th year, no. 4052, 20 April 1951. *Ararat*, 14th year, no. 3075, 10 May 1951 claimed that Huntchag leaders Djambouljan, A. Kibarian, Gharib, and Khatcherian had declared during a meeting held on 11 March at the Zawzawajian residence that the Huntchag party convention had decided to participate in the election with a candidate of its own. Dr. Kh. Pflavdjan, a Veraznount leader, and a few independents had reportedly supported the Huntchag view. The Ramgavars, wrote *Ararat*, had been reluctant to accept the Huntchag proposal of nominating one Huntchag and one Ramgavar candidate. *Ararat* further explained that Ramgavar leaders had attacked the Huntchags for having posted pictures of Khatcherian. The newspaper claimed that Khatcherian's candidacy had been decided by the Huntchag party on 13 February and that this was no obstacle to reaching an agreement. The Huntchags, wrote *Ararat*, had proposed Chamlian as independent candidate, but their proposal had not been accepted.

¹¹⁸ *Ararat*, 14th year, no. 3075, 10 May 1951. According to *Zartok*, 14th year, no. 4057, 25 April 1951, the Huntchags had been ready to be part of the United Front if only an agreement were reached with the List of Giants. The Huntchags had argued that Der Kaloustian was already accepted on the List of Giants and that the name of the Armenian Catholic candidate need not be the Front's concern. Therefore, only a single Armenian vacancy on the List of Giants in Beirut and another in Metn were available to the Front. The Huntchags had demanded the nomination of a candidate from their party for one of these two available Armenian seats. They had also made clear that they could only cover the electoral expenses of their candidate. These conditions were not accepted.

¹¹⁹ *Zartok*, 14th year, no. 4057, 25 April 1951.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, 14th year, no. 4025, 10 March 1951.

¹²¹ *Le Jour*, 17th year, no. 5131, 1 April 1951.

¹²² *Aztag*, 25th year, no. 5 (5695), 11 March 1951.

¹²³ Interview with Hratchia Setrakian, July 1962. Meguerditch Messerlian told the present writer in an interview in April 1961 that Yafi, a close friend of his, had asked him, through mutual friends, to join the List of Giants as the second Armenian Orthodox candidate. Messerlian, however, had retired from public life early in 1947 and was facing financial difficulties due to the Palestine tragedy. He turned down what he termed had been "a polite offer".

¹²⁴ *Ararat*, 14th year, no. 3034-3035, 19 March 1951.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 14th year, no. 3042, 29 March 1951.

¹²⁶ *Zartok*, 14th year, no. 4043, 7 April 1951.

¹²⁷ *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1307, 24 March 1951.

¹²⁸ *Zartok*, 14th year, no. 4042, 6 April 1951.

¹²⁹ *Ibid.*

¹³⁰ *Zartok*, 14th year, no. 4048, 14 April 1951.

¹³¹ *Ibid.*, 14th year, no. 4038, 31 March 1951.

¹³² *Ibid.*, 14th year, no. 4043, 7 April 1951. Tosbath was an Armenian Catholic, who converted to be eligible to run for the Armenian Orthodox seat in the elections.

¹³³ *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1311, 30 March 1951.

¹³⁴ *Zartok*, 14th year, no. 4045, 11 April 1951.

¹³⁵ *Tadmor*, p. 248

¹³⁶ *Le Jour*, 17th year, no. 5133, 3 April 1951.

¹³⁷ *Aztag*, 25th year, no. 20 (5710), 3 April 1951.

¹³⁸ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4043, 7 April 1951. Khayat, born in Beirut in 1903, was the lawyer of the Armenian Catholic community. He had wide experience in public affairs. He had become a member of the Beirut Municipal Council in 1934 and a member of a political committee with Camille Chamoun, Henri Pharaon, Majid Arslan and Khalil Abi Jaoudé in 1937. In 1938, Khayat had been appointed Secretary-General of the Union of Lebanese Overseas. During the crucial days that led to the formal acceptance of Lebanon's independence in November 1943, Khayat had been the Secretary-General of the Lebanese National Congress. In 1944, he had been a member of the committee which raised funds to help the Red Army acquire a series of armored tanks called *Sasuntsi Taviti*. Baghdjian (better known under his pen name, Vazken Aykouni) was a writer and teacher, the author of a book titled *Arméniens: Peuple Tragique*, published in Beirut in 1945. De Chadarevian was an engineer.

¹³⁹ *Le Jour*, 17th year, no. 5136, 7 April 1951.

¹⁴⁰ *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1318, 7 April 1951.

¹⁴¹ *Le Jour*, 17th year, no. 5140, 11 April 1951.

¹⁴² *Astog*, 25th year, no. 25 (5715), 10 April 1951.

¹⁴³ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4047, 13 April 1951.

¹⁴⁴ *Astog*, 25th year, no. 25 (5715), 10 April 1951.

¹⁴⁵ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4045, 11 April 1951.

¹⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 14th year, no. 4048, 14 April 1951.

¹⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 14th year, no. 4045, 11 April 1951.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, 14th year, no. 4046, 12 April 1951.

¹⁴⁹ *Ararat*, 14th year, no. 3053, 11 April 1951.

¹⁵⁰ *Ibid.*

¹⁵¹ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4049, 15 April 1951.

¹⁵² *Astog*, 25th year, no. 26 (5716), 11 April 1951.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, 25th year, no. 29 (5719), 14 April 1951.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, 25th year, no. 28 (5718), 13 April 1951.

¹⁵⁵ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4048, 14 April 1951; *Le Jour*, 17th year, no. 5141, 13 April 1951.

¹⁵⁶ *Astog*, 25th year, no. 13 (5703), 22 March 1951.

¹⁵⁷ *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1315, 4 April 1951.

¹⁵⁸ *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1316, 5 April 1951; *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4043, 7 April 1951.

¹⁵⁹ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4049, 17 April 1951; *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1324, 15 April 1951.

¹⁶⁰ *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1324, 15 April 1951.

¹⁶¹ *Ararat*, 14th year, no. 3054, 13 April 1951.

¹⁶² *Astog*, 25th year, no. 25 (5715), 10 April 1951.

¹⁶³ *Ibid.*, 25th year, no. 26 (5716), 11 April 1951.

¹⁶⁴ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4043, 7 April 1951.

¹⁶⁵ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4049, 17 April 1951.

¹⁶⁶ *Ararat*, 14th year, no. 3057, 15 April 1951.

¹⁶⁷ *Astog*, 25th year, no. 29 (5719), 14 April 1951.

¹⁶⁸ Tadmor, p. 249.

¹⁶⁹ According to *Astog*, 25th year, no. 32 (5722), 18 April 1951, the number of registered voters was 57,652; and the number of those who voted, 21,988.

¹⁷⁰ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4051, 19 April 1951; *Astog*, 25th year, no. 32 (5722), 18 April 1951.

¹⁷¹ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4052, 20 April 1951.

¹⁷² *Ibid.*, 14th year, no. 4051, 19 April 1951; *Astog*, 25th year, no. 32 (5722), 18 April 1951.

- ¹⁷³ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4050, 18 April 1951; *Ararat*, 14th year, no. 3058, 19 April 1951; *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1325, 16 April 1951; *Le Jour*, 17th year, no. 5144, 16 April 1951.
- ¹⁷⁴ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4051, 19 April 1951; *Aztag*, 25th year, no. 32 (5722), 18 April 1951.
- ¹⁷⁵ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4050, 18 April 1951.
- ¹⁷⁶ *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1325, 16 April 1951.
- ¹⁷⁷ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4050, 18 April 1951; *Ararat*, 14th year, no. 3058, 19 April 1951; *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1325, 16 April 1951.
- ¹⁷⁸ *Al-Amal*, 17 April 1951, as quoted in *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4052, 20 April 1951.
- ¹⁷⁹ *Aztag*, 25th year, no. 32 (5722), 18 April 1951. Tosbath told the writer, during an interview in July 1962, that Papazian had received 951 and he 127 Armenian votes in Bourj Hammoud.
- ¹⁸⁰ *Aztag*, 25th year, no. 35 (5725), 22 April 1951.
- ¹⁸¹ *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1327, 18 April 1951.
- ¹⁸² *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4053, 21 April 1951; *Le Soir*, 5th year, no. 1328, 19 April 1951; *Ararat*, 14th year, no. 3058, 19 April 1951.
- ¹⁸³ *Zartouk*, 14th year, no. 4066, 11 May 1951.

**ՆԱԽԱԳԱՀ ՊԵՍԵՐԱ ԽՈՒՐԻՒ ԺԱՄԱՆԱԿԱՇԻՋԱՆԻՆ
ՀԱՅՈՑ ՄԱՄՆԱԿՑՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ԼԻՐԱՆԱՆԻ
ԽՈՐՀՐԴԱՐԱՆԱԿԱՆ ԸՆՏՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐՈՒՆ (1948-1962)
(Ամփոփում)**

ԶԱԿՆ ՄՍԸՐԼԵԱՆ

Հեղինակը՝ հիմնուելով ժամանակակից լիբանանահայ, առաջի՝ Լիբանանի մէջ լուր անոնող մի քանի արաբատառ ու ֆրանսատառ լրագրիչներու նիւթերուն, ինչպէս նաև լիբանանահայ քաղաքական գործիչներու յատուկ ասուլիսներու ընթացքին հաղորդած քանաւոր վկայութիւններու վրայ, հանգամանորէն կը ներկայացնէ լիբանանահայութեան կեցուածքը երկրի անկախութեան համար մղուած պայքարի օրերուն, Պաղ Պատերազմի սկզբնաւորութեան թողած ազդեցութիւնը լիբանանահայութեան վրայ, և յատկապէս՝ 1947ին և 1963ին կայացած երկրի խորհրդարանական ընտրութիւններուն ընթացքին հայ առաքելական ու կաթողիկէ համայնքներուն յատկացուած երեսփոխանական ամրոտներուն շուրջ ծաւալած պայքարը, աչ կազակցութեամբ լիբանանահայ քաղաքական տարբեր հոսանքներու դիրքորոշումները, Լիբանանի միւս համայնքները ներկայացնող թեկնածուներու հետ անոնց հաստատած ընտրական դաշինքները, ընտրութեանց ընթացքին պետական մարմիններու կողմէ կատարուած միջամտութիւնները:

Թողուածը կարելի է շարունակութիւնը համարել հեղինակին՝ Հայկազեան Հայրապետական Հանգչի ԻԱ հատորին մէջ լուր ընծայած աշխատասիրութեան: