

ARMENIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE
LEBANESE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS
DURING THE PRESIDENCY OF
ELIAS HRAOUI (1989-1998)
(PART II¹)

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THE LEGISLATIVE ELECTIONS OF 1996

Due to the fact that the major Christian political parties and many influential politicians had boycotted the legislative elections of 1992, President Hraoui, the speaker of the parliament and the Lebanese government were prepared to hold the legislative elections of 1996 in such a manner as to attract wider participation, especially involving the majority or at least part of those who had boycotted the 1992 elections. One way to do that was by amending the electoral law.

Since the last elections of 1992, calm had prevailed in Lebanon on the political scene. Part of the south of the country was still under Israeli occupation, which met fierce resistance from Hizbullah and other groups. The Christian Lebanese Forces were declared illegal, and their leader, Samir Geagea, faced several charges in court. After a long trial he was sentenced to life imprisonment. The Kataeb Party was split into two fractions.

The government reviewed the naturalization law and in 1994 granted citizenship to thousands of foreigners who had been living in Lebanon for a long time. These naturalized Lebanese were to participate in the elections of 1996.

The Syrian forces remained in Lebanon during this period.

Within the Armenian community there were a few developments.

Some time after the independence of Armenia, in July 1992, President Levon Der Bedrossian accused the Tashnag Party of a plot, and the Party's offices were closed in Armenia; several leading figures were arrested and their trial began in court. The Tashnag Party was forced to cease its activities in Armenia, and the representative of the Tashnag Bureau, Hrair Maroukhian, was declared *persona non grata* and had to leave the country. The Tashnag organ, *Yergir*, was banned.

The Huntchag and Ramgavar Azadagan parties continued to support President Der Bedrossian. This had a negative affect on Armenian interparty relations. Contacts were maintained, but tension was felt within the Lebanese Armenian community. While the Tashnag Party boycotted the inauguration of the Republic of Armenia's embassy in Lebanon in June 1994, the Huntchags and Ramgavars attended it. A public protest against the regime in Armenia by the Tashnag Party in the Bourdj-Hammoud Stadium, to be held the same day as the Embassy inauguration, was cancelled by the Lebanese authorities.

The Huntchag party withdrew from the joint commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and held the commemoration function alone, while the Ramgavar and the Tashnag parties proceeded with the joint function.

The Catholicos of All Armenians, Vazken I, residing in Etchmiadzin's Mother See in Armenia, passed away in the summer of 1994, and elections were scheduled for April 1995. President Der Bedrossian made it public that his preference for the post was Catholicos Karekin II of Cilicia, who resided in Antelias, Lebanon, much to the annoyance of the Ramgavars and Huntchags. The conclave of religious and lay delegates held in Etchmiadzin was influenced by the presidential preference and elected by majority vote Karekin II, as Karekin I Catholicos of All Armenians.

Karekin II, who had left for Yerevan before the elections, by becoming the new Catholicos of All Armenians, ceased to be the Catholicos of Cilicia. New elections were held in Antelias, and the conclave of religious and lay delegates elected Archbishop Aram Keshishian, Prelate of the Armenian Orthodox Diocese of Lebanon, as Aram I, Catholicos of Cilicia. The new Catholicos of All Armenians, Karekin I, arrived in Beirut and ordained Archbishop Aram as Catholicos in Antelias.

In June 1995, on the eve of the Catholicosal election in Antelias, there were verbal attacks in public speeches by Huntchag leader Vahridj Djeredjian on the Tashnag leadership regarding the Cilician Catholicosate, as well as by Huntchag MP Dr. Yeghia Djeredjian, who was a member of the Armenian Bloc of MPs run by the Tashnag District Committee of Lebanon. The occasion was the commemoration of the 80th anniversary of the hanging of 20 Huntchag leaders in Constantinople by the Ottoman Turkish authorities.²

The Huntchag leader said, "the party [i.e. the Tashnag] that in Armenia is pointing out the lack of democracy more than 40 years ago occupied the

Catholicosate of Cilicia with the aid of foreign forces. Party members were selected to elect a Tashnag Catholicos in Antelias. The Huntchag party is against opposing the independent Republic of Armenia to a Diaspora government, it is against opposing the Catholicosate of Cilicia versus Etchmiadzin. We call upon the Tashnag Party to review its negative positions and let us hand in hand work for the construction of our fatherland".³

In July 1995 there were partial parliamentary elections after the passing away of the Greek Catholic MP, Joseph Moghaizel. The only significant candidate for the vacant seat, former MP Nasri Maalouf, received separately the endorsements of the Tashnag, Huntchag and Ramgavar Azadagan parties.⁴ He was elected by 8945 votes, while candidate Gilbert Shammass obtained the second highest number (he got 1620) among the 10 candidates.⁵ Although there were allusions in the local newspapers to the low Armenian turnout in this partial election, after his election MP Maalouf visited all three party headquarters thanking the respective party leaderships for their support to his candidacy.

Local newspapers reported on intra-party problems within each of the three Armenian political parties. The split in the Ramgavar Party was the most serious.

As the year 1996 started and elections drew closer, declarations, visits and functions pertaining to the legislative elections intensified.

The 61st general meeting of the Ramgavar Azadagan District Council of Lebanon announced in December 1995 its intention of participating in the parliamentary elections.⁶ The party received a visit from the Kataeb Party vice-president, Karim Pakradouni, while Political Bureau member Antoine Chader twice visited the party headquarters in the Tekeyan Center.⁷

The Huntchag Party delegated Vahridj Djeredjian, Sebouh Kalpakian and MP Djeredjian to visit Syrian vice-president Abdel Halim Khaddam in Damascus on February 8, 1996 to discuss "the situation in Lebanon".⁸

On March 13, 1996 the Huntchag and Ramgavar Azadagan central councils met at Tekeyan Center and concluded that "their views, ideas and positions were harmonious" and cooperation and joint consultations were the means for pursuing their aims.⁹

Catholicos Aram I of the Cilician See invited the representatives of the Huntchag, Tashnag and Ramgavar Azadagan Party leadership to a consultative meeting in Antelias on March 25, 1996. He emphasized the

necessity of supporting and strengthening the Republic of Armenia and supporting the Karabagh struggle, and of strengthening the national concord by mutual cooperation between Armenia-Diaspora and Etchmiadzin-Antelias. Aram I said the three political parties had an important role in this respect and suggested that by dialogue, and mutual understanding and cooperation they would contribute their share in the realization of these aims. The participants discussed the forthcoming 80th anniversary of the Armenian genocide and the necessity of a joint commemorative function on April 24.¹⁰

A scandal of financial embezzlement shook the Armenian Orthodox community administration. The Locum Tenens of the Armenian prelacy Rev. Father Kegham Khacherian and his lay collaborators discovered and exposed an embezzlement of large proportion and dismissed from work three individuals.¹¹ On April 27 the Tashnag Party Lebanon Central Committee (TPLCC), disapproving their action, expelled two of three persons who were party members.¹² According to newspaper reports, this scandal had an effect on the Tashnag Party in Lebanon as well as on the elections and the nomination of the party candidates.¹³

On May 24, 1996 Rev. Khacherian, accompanied by minister Barsoumian and MP Babikian, visited President Hraoui and discussed issues concerning the Armenian community.¹⁴ The same day, in a separate visit, a delegation of the TPLCC comprising minister Shahé Barsoumian, Sebouh Hovnanian, Tsolag Tutelian and Hagop Pakradouny met President Hraoui in Baabda.¹⁵ They discussed the elections, the rights of the Armenian community and the case of the electoral district of Mt. Lebanon. The president told the delegation the elections were to be held at the stipulated time.¹⁶

On May 26 the TPLCC representatives, including minister Barsoumian, visited Syrian vice-president Khaddam in Damascus.¹⁷ A similar visit was made to the Syrian forces head in Lebanon, General Ghazi Kanaan.¹⁸

In an article in *L'Orient-Express*, the supplement of *L'Orient-Le Jour*, Paul Khalife, under the title of "the Armenian unknown", wrote that the influence of the Tashnag Party had receded in Lebanon and in other countries where there are strong Armenian communities and the party was no longer able to apply its political autocracy and present itself as the sole representative of Armenians. The first signs appeared in the 1992 elections, when they could not have their candidate elected in Zahle, while they were

obliged to include the Huntchag candidate Yeghia Djeredjian on Solh's list in Beirut. Since the previous elections many new factors had come forth, which made possible a new arrangement in the elections of 1996.

Khalife maintained, in the past the Tashnag Party had enjoyed the support of the United States of America and major European countries, as they were part of the Cold War strategy of the Western struggle against the Soviet Union. Now that the "evil empire" did not exist, the Tashnag Party had lost its main role vis-à-vis the Western powers.

Based on information provided by MP Babikian, Khalife wrote that two factors had brought decisive changes since 1991. The first was the emergence of Armenia as an independent state and, due to certain reasons, its opposition to the Tashnag Party. The second factor was the "new style" adopted by PM Hariri, who had selected Hagop Demirdjian as minister, although the latter was not a candidate of the Armenian Bloc.

Khalife wrote the Tashnag Party could not gather around itself the Armenian political class in its campaign against the authorities of Armenia. Unlike Souren Khanamirian, a long time party ally who preferred to maintain a distance from the party, Babikian maintained close relations with the party and Armenia.

Babikian told Khalife "if Armenia intervenes in Lebanese affairs it will bear the consequences." To this Yeghia Djeredjian replied, "Armenia has never intervened in internal Lebanese affairs." However, Hariri had decided to intervene in Armenian community affairs. He received Louis Simone-Manougian, AGBU president, with minister Demirdjian at his Koraytem palace during their 24 hr. visit to Lebanon. Khalife said Hariri was willing to take minister Demirdjian or one of his brothers on his list. The AGBU had recently strengthened its independence from the Ramgavars, and this opened new avenues.

Khalife added, Hagop Kassardjian was elected President of the Central Council of the Ramgavar Azadagan Party in its recent general conclave held in Cyprus. He had close relations with the authorities in Yerevan. This split the party and another Central Council came into being in New York. The Huntchag Party also held its conclave in November 1995 and MP Djeredjian was elected member of the party Central Council. The relations of the Tashnag and Huntchag parties worsened in April 1995. Djeredjian told Khalife that all Armenian parties should be represented in the parliament. Huntchags and Ramgavars were discussing cooperation;

however interparty relations were not good enough for the distribution of Armenian seats between them.

Khalife concluded that, according to an Armenian dignitary, the number of Armenian votes would be 10,000. Of these 8000 were sympathizers of the Tashnag Party. In 1992 only 3000 Armenians had voted. In the naturalization law 14,000 Armenians, 11,000 of whom were former Syrians, had received Lebanese nationality. 10,000 of the newly naturalized Armenians were registered in Mt. Lebanon and the rest in Beirut.¹⁹

On May 30, 1996 MPs Djeredjian, Khanamirian, Dr. Nouridjan Demirdjian and Kassardji met with President Hraoui in the course of the weekly visits of MPs to the presidential palace.²⁰

Walid Jumblat, who had received a Huntchag delegation on March 26,²¹ visited the Tashnag Sardarabad club in June 5,²² as had done former PM Rashid Solh on June 4.²³ The Ramgavar Azadagan Lebanon District Council visited the latter on June 5.²⁴ On June 6, a TPLCC delegation, including minister Barsoumian, visited Hariri to examine the electoral law and the various versions of electoral districts.²⁵ The Minister of Interior, Michel Murr, visited Catholicos Aram I to discuss the preparation of the elections.²⁶

By mid-June, the new electoral districts were delineated. The country was divided into four *mohafazats* except for Mt. Lebanon, which was divided into six *cazas*. It was specified that this was an exceptional arrangement and was to be applied once. Parliament endorsed the electoral law on July 11, with 83 votes. 22 voted against and 5 abstained. According to the new electoral law, the term of the new parliament was to extend for 4 years and 8 months.²⁷

Ten MPs of the outgoing parliament had presented a petition to the Constitutional Court of Lebanon asking it to abolish the amended electoral law. On August 8, 1996 in a surprise decision the court unanimously decided to proclaim the electoral law's second and third articles and their annexed first, third, fourth and fifth articles invalid. These pertained to the division of the electoral districts (with the exception of Mt. Lebanon), the terms of the resignation of state officials, if they wanted to be candidates in the elections, recent amendments, the time to convene the elections, and the duration of the new parliament's term of office. The court expected the elections to be postponed.²⁸

The government did the necessary to comply with all but one demand of the court. It found a way to maintain the constituencies of Mt. Lebanon and did not postpone the elections.

Despite newspaper attacks by the Huntchag Central Council president, Vahridj Djeredjian, on the Tashnags and the latter's response, MP Djeredjian in a speech said Armenian political leaders should be broad-minded and should try to form a coalition list, where all political currents, groupings and worthy non-partisan personalities should be included to represent the Armenian community at its best in the parliament, for the benefit of Lebanon and the Armenian community. Otherwise, he added, the confrontation would spread on many fronts and would create new dissent.²⁹

On June 19, 1996, representatives of the leaderships of Tashnag, Huntchag and Ramgavar Azadagan parties met at the Tekeyan Center to discuss matters concerning the Lebanese Armenian community.³⁰

This joint meeting did not prevent each party maintain its separate contacts. On June 25, the TPLCC delegation, including minister Barsoumian, met Salim Hoss to discuss electoral matters.³¹ The same day a delegation of the Huntchag Party, including MP Djeredjian and Khanamirian, met the Syrian Popular Party (SSNP) leadership.³² The next day a Tashnag delegation met the Hizbullah leadership and on June 27 hosted Rashid Solh at its headquarters.³³ The Ramgavars received Michel Sassin and visited Salim Hoss.³⁴ The Tashnags received the Greek Orthodox League President, Dimitri Bitar.³⁵ Likewise Nassib Lahoud visited them in the Sardarabad club and later on the Ramgavar leaders at the Tekeyan Center, and the Huntchag leaders at their headquarters.³⁶ A delegation of the TPLCC, including minister Barsoumian, visited Kanaan on July 4 and on July 5 the Makassed president Tammam Salam.³⁷ The Ramgavar Azadagan Lebanon District Council representative had also met Salam and Mohammad Mashnouk.³⁸ A Huntchag delegation accompanied by MP Djeredjian met Khaddam in Damascus on July 1.³⁹ A Ramgavar delegation met Hizbullah leaders and later sheikh Hussein Fadlallah.⁴⁰ An SSNP delegation met Tashnag leaders on July 15.⁴¹ While a Hizbullah delegation met the Huntchag leadership in their club on July 19.⁴²

Both *Zartonk* and *Ararad* criticized the TV interview of MP Joukhadarian on July 5, 1996, in which he described the process of selection and claimed that the Tashnag Party - being the strongest party - would choose the Armenian candidates for parliament and then present them to the other parties, after which an agreement would take place like in

1972 and 1992.⁴³ *Ararad* said it would have been better if he had not confused the Armenian community with the Tashnag Party.⁴⁴

By mid-July newspapers abounded with articles concerning the formation of lists. Tammam Salam was said to be coveted by Hoss and later on Hariri, but he did not join any of the lists, as he wanted to be an equal partner in selecting candidates. Najah Wakim was said to have the intention of forming a separate list including Assem Salam, President of the Order of Engineers, who opposed the Hariri-supported *Solidaire* project. Wakim did not want to include any Armenian on his incomplete list, as this could be more beneficial to his list.⁴⁵

On the Christian front, the idea of boycotting the elections did not generate unanimity. It lacked the backing of a significant section of the Christian population, as it had in the elections of 1992. General Michel Aoun, former president Amin Gemayel and the leader of the National Bloc, Raymond Edde, and Dory Chamoun of the National Liberal Party, decided to boycott the elections.⁴⁶ Aoun said the elections were falsified "à la Syrienne."⁴⁷ The first three leaders were in Paris. Albert Moukhaiber, on the other hand, declared we must assure a place for the opposition in the parliament. Dr. Pierre Daccache, Boutros Harb and others shared his view.⁴⁸

It was noted that during this electoral period an Iranian embassy attaché, Sayed Ahmad Husseini visited the Ramgavar Azadagan leadership on July 16⁴⁹ and on the next day a TPLCC delegation visited the Iranian Ambassador, Houmayoun Ali Zadeh, at the embassy.⁵⁰

Aztag complained about misinformation disseminated through local newspapers and said the votes would be an answer to these misrepresentations. The paper said these were done for propaganda purposes or intended to create a confused state.⁵¹ However, *Aztag* gave the translation of one such article by Maarouf Dahouk in *Al-Liwa*.⁵²

The article said the last meeting of the Tashnag, Huntchag and Ramgavar leaders could not settle differences and create an agreement regarding the elections. The disagreements had come forth six months earlier and had created discord in the Armenian Bloc. It had led to the detachment of MPs Khanamirian and Djeredjian from the bloc. Some ascribed the main cause of disagreements to be the stance of the Tashnag Party concerning the Republic of Armenia. The article then listed some likely Armenian candidates: Khanamirian, who intended to run as an independent and would try to get support from anti-Tashnag Armenian

groups; Babikian and Joukhadarian as Tashnag candidates; Djeredjian as a Huntchag candidate; Hagop Demirdjian, who had not yet decided on his participation; Antoine Chader and Karim Pakradouni as Kataeb candidates.

Dahouk mentioned that the number of Armenian registered voters was 30,000; however, the majority was outside Lebanon and that out of the 15,000 voters 5000 would vote for the Tashnags, 5000 for Huntchags and Ramgavars, 2000 for the AGBU and 3000 votes would be distributed between different parties and currents.

He concluded although the Armenian parties continued their consultations, no final agreement had yet been reached.⁵³

Zartonk, in an article by Barouyr Aghbashian, said the Armenian response to misinformation should be joint and collective cooperation and rhetoric. He advocated a united position in the elections.⁵⁴

In the pre-election period, when the Armenian candidates had not yet been determined, the visits continued. On July 21, 1996, a delegation of the Armenian Bloc and the TPLCC including Barsoumian, Babikian, Joukhadarian, Djeredjian and Dr. Demirdjian visited Syrian President Hafez Assad in Kerdaha (Syria) to offer condolences on the loss of his brother.⁵⁵ Khanamirian's absence was noted.

A Huntchag delegation met PM Hariri in his office on July 22, 1996. Both sides emphasized the need for massive participation of the Armenian community in the elections.⁵⁶ Also a delegation of the Tashnag Party and minister Barsoumian met Rashid Solh in his residence.⁵⁷

At this stage Kataeb vice-president, Pakradouni, who was of Armenian Orthodox origin, and Chader came forth as Armenian Orthodox and Armenian Catholic candidates respectively.

Aztag called upon the Armenian community to be alert and vote massively to prevent the loss of seats which belonged to the Armenian community and see that they did not go to forces who had no relation with the Armenian community.⁵⁸

Rev. Khacherian, as president of the Armenian Orthodox Communal Council, called upon the Armenians to vote massively.⁵⁹

Articles in *Diar* and *Anwar* newspapers were translated and published in *Aztag*.⁶⁰ *Diar*'s article mentioned that the Armenian political parties had not agreed on candidates in their joint meeting. The article said after Armenian ambassador Yervant Melkonian's appointment, the Huntchag and Ramgavar parties changed their stance and intended to weaken the Tashnag Party. The interference of the Armenian Ambassador⁶¹ had

created discord in the ranks of the Huntchag and Ramgavar Party ranks. The ranks of the Huntchag Party, following the party's District Council, opposed the candidates appointed by President Der Bedrossian. At the same time the Ramgavar Party, which held its world council in Nicosia, was facing an inner discord. The new party leadership had made new appointments, concentrating power and authority in his hands. Several leaders disapproved these steps and resigned. Furthermore, responsible Ramgavar people expressed reservations about the political activities of the AGBU local leadership, which they interpreted as intent to present candidates for the elections.⁶²

The newspaper added the Tashnag Party had decided its candidates for Beirut, Bekaa, and Northern Metn and was waiting for the final position of the Huntchags and Ramgavars to participate in the elections with a united list.

Kataeb leaders Pakradouni and Chader had met Huntchag and Ramgavar leaders with the proposal of forming a joint list.

Diar concluded that the Tashnag Party would stop its meetings with the other Armenian parties as the elections of Mt. Lebanon were near.

Anwar's article said the Tashnags were waiting for a list of accord and if this did not come forth, they would nominate their own candidates.

Ararad complained that *Aztag* had printed the articles of *Diar* and *Anwar*, as there was false information in favor of the Tashnags and made-up news against the Huntchags and Ramgavars. The Huntchag daily said this was a dangerous attempt on the part of the translators and could create disputes on the basis of articles written by others, especially as *Aztag* had recently been complaining of such articles. *Ararad* added that the Huntchag Party "interventions" and "appointment" by non-Huntchags were excluded, and the party would not decide on the basis of directives of any force, be he the President of the Republic or the Ambassador.⁶³

Minorities candidate Antoine Misperian, whose parents were from Adana and who belonged to the Latin Community, met Tashnag leaders at the Sardarabad club on July 23 and requested their support.⁶⁴ On August 9 Misperian visited the Ramgavar leadership at the Tekeyan Center for the same purpose.⁶⁵ He also had an interview on the Armenian television network, which was seen in the Nahr-Bourdj-Hammoud area.

The Tashnag Party held public meetings on July 25 in 15 locations in Beirut, Bourdj-Hammoud, Raouda and Fanar, where party representatives

stressed the importance of the massive participation of the Armenians to safeguard the community rights.⁶⁶

On July 26 the TPLCC delegation and minister Barsoumian visited President Hraoui to discuss electoral issues. After the meeting Barsoumian said in Northern Metn the Armenian community would cooperate with Murr and in Beirut the TPLCC was waiting for the clarification of the situation, especially for the decision of PM Hariri. He said the Armenian community traditionally cooperated with the state list and there was no reason to change this policy. He added that there were no dissensions between the Armenian parties and "we propose to designate candidates from all the currents and denominations, as we have done traditionally".⁶⁷

On July 28, upon his return from the USA, Catholicos Aram I, accompanied by the Locum Tenens Prelate Rev. Khacherian, MP Babikian, former MPs Ara Yerevanian and Andre Tabourian (all these personalities were in the Civil Central Council of the catholicosate) visited President Hraoui. The president and the Catholicos stressed the importance of the participation of all the Lebanese in the elections.⁶⁸

On the same day a delegation of TPLCC and minister Barsoumian visited Damascus and met the Syrian president's son Bashar Assad.⁶⁹

That same day, Babikian said efforts were under way so that the Armenian community would participate in the elections as a united front; otherwise the contest would be held in a sportive spirit. He added as in the past the Tashnag Party was the leading force, which was running the elections.⁷⁰

This emphasis of the Tashnag role, and the hegemonic presentation of the Armenian Bloc as one run by the party, was criticized by the *Huntchag* and *Ramgavar* newspapers.⁷¹

Aztag stressed one more time that the immediate danger was that the parliamentary seats reserved for the Armenians could be occupied by non-Armenian forces, in an apparent allusion to the Kataeb tandem of Pakradouni and Chader.⁷²

Pakradouni had a 150-minute interview on NTV on July 26 1996. In this interview he mentioned he did not know Armenian and noted that if elected he would urge the opening of a Lebanese embassy in Armenia, would settle the garbage dump problem in Bourdj-Hammoud and would encourage a Lebanese official visit to Armenia.⁷³

Aztag and *Ararad* criticized Pakradouni. *Aztag* said he came forth as "the defender of the Lebanese Christian cause" and said he was ignorant of

Armenian issues.⁷⁴ *Ararad* questioned where and how he had been of any use to the Armenian community that he sought one of the seats reserved for the community.⁷⁵

Pakradouni had a meeting with Lebanese Kurds in a public gathering at Jnah. During the meeting he mentioned his Armenian origin. He also visited Catholicos Aram I in Antelias on August 13.⁷⁶

L'Orient-Le Jour said Pakradouni and Chader could benefit from "a reflex of solidarity on the part of the Eastern [section of Beirut] electorates, as all the poles representing the Christian camp are being put apart."⁷⁷ In other words, the non-Armenian electorate might vote for them.

Unlike the unclear electoral picture in Beirut, particularly concerning the Armenians, the electoral alliances of Northern Metn were pretty clear.

On August 2 the TPLCC decided to nominate Dr. Sebouh Hovnanian as candidate of the Armenian Orthodox seat in Northern Metn, to replace the incumbent MP Barsoumian, who was also a minister in Hariri's government. A delegation of the TPLCC, which included minister Barsoumian, visited President Hraoui and informed him of this decision.⁷⁸

The decision came as a surprise to political circles and the general public. *L'Orient-Le Jour* wrote Barsoumian was put aside against all expectations.⁷⁹ Some newspapers wrote the recently appointed TPLCC, who was not in Barsoumian's favor decided to replace him, and that there was an inner conflict in the Tashnag Party.⁸⁰ Both Barsoumian and the party issued denials. Barsoumian said, "I never intended to be the candidate of the party in Metn, and I respect the choice of the party and support the candidacy of Sebouh Hovnanian and put at his disposal all my political and popular credit."⁸¹ The party in its turn said their choice did not indicate a veto against the person of Barsoumian. His case was one of party discipline, and changes in the party are a tradition based on the principle that the functions and posts are temporary.⁸²

Hayat wrote the Tashnags, in not presenting Barsoumian's candidacy in Metn intended to put forth his candidacy for a ministerial post in the post-election government.⁸³

On August 8 *Aztag* printed their Metn candidate's picture and biography.⁸⁴ Hovnanian was born in Beirut in 1952. He had studied dentistry in the University of St. Joseph and joined the Tashnag Party in 1968. In 1974-75 he was the president of the Student Council of St. Joseph University. He had been a member of the Order of Dentists in Lebanon

since 1994. In 1982 and much later on he had become a member of the TPLCC and was their political representative.⁸⁵

Interior Minister Murr's list was almost completed. His list was contested by Albert Moukhaiber (Greek Orthodox), Nassib Lahoud, Walid Khoury, Farid Abou Jaoude, Emil Kanaan (Maronites), Michel Samaha (Greek Catholic) and Michel Akl (Greek Orthodox). Moukhaiber's list was said not to include any Armenian Orthodox candidate unless all three Armenian political parties would agree on one candidate.⁸⁶

Ararad twice had mentioned that an Armenian candidate known to the Armenian community would join the Lahoud-Moukhaiber list.⁸⁷ This claim did not materialize

There were two other Armenian candidates in Metn. One was the independent Raffy Madeyan, grandson of the late Communist leader, Artin Madeyan, and the adopted son of former Communist chief, Georges Haoui.⁸⁸ The Tashnag Party, Massis Alexandrian, manager of an auditing company presented the second. He was a reserve candidate⁸⁹ in case of any mishap to their main candidate.

The Armenian Communist weekly, *Gantch*, mentioned that Madeyan had presented his candidacy on an individual initiative and made no propaganda for him.⁹⁰ On another note, *Gantch* said Armenian votes should not be the basic reason for the failure of popular and loved non-Armenian candidates, because their failure would earn the antipathy of their supporters and bring discredit to the Lebanese Armenian community.⁹¹

L'Orient-Le Jour noted that Madeyan was known in the intellectual circles of Metn and was "the first to defy the powerful Tashnag Party."⁹²

Madeyan visited the Huntchag headquarters, accompanied by Haoui, requesting their support for him.⁹³ He also visited Catholicos Aram I.⁹⁴

Madeyan had an interview on the local Armenian television, ATN, aired in the region of Bourdj-Hammoud. He had posted paid advertisements for it in *Aztag*, *Ararad* and *Zartonk*. *Aztag* omitted the line that said "Metn Armenian Orthodox Candidate", which the other papers maintained.⁹⁵

Upon the invitation of President Hraoui on August 7, the TPLCC, led by Hovnanian, visited him. Electoral matters were discussed.⁹⁶ The next day MP Djeredjian visited Hraoui and discussed similar issues.⁹⁷

On August 9 Murr visited the Tashnag headquarters in Bourdj-Hammoud and met Hovnanian and others and announced his alliance with the Tashnag Party.⁹⁸

Soon after, on August 11, the list of Murr was announced in the latter's Bteghrin residence. The list included himself (Greek Orthodox), Auguste Bakhos, Ghassan Ashkar, Shaker Abou Sleiman, Habib Hakim (Maronites), Raji Abou Haidar (Greek Orthodox), Antoine Haddad (Greek Catholic) and Sebouh Hovnanian (Armenian Orthodox).⁹⁹

A public gathering took place on August 14 at the parking lot next to Shaghzoian Center in Bourdj-Hammoud. More than 12,000 persons were present. Murr and all his list members, Minister Barsoumian, MPs Babikian, Joukhadarian, and Dr. Demirdjian, and Bourdj-Hammoud mayor Tsoilag Tutelian were among the notables present. Abou Sleiman, Ashkar, Bakhos, Murr, and, in the name of the TPLCC, Hagop Pakradouni addressed the public. Hovnanian did not speak. *Aztag* wrote, "The gathering was a brilliant success." Murr and his list members welcomed the constructive role of the Armenians and the leading role of the Tashnag Party. The large presence of sympathizers was a proof of the electoral strength of Armenians.¹⁰⁰

L'Orient-Le Jour wrote the Armenian Orthodox candidate in Murr's list did not seem to have the unanimity of the Armenian community. The paper added the Huntchag and Ramgavar parties might bring their support to the Moukhaiber-Lahoud list.¹⁰¹

However, *L'Orient-Le Jour's* speculation was not borne out. Both the Huntchag and Ramgavar parties supported Murr's list.

On August 13 Murr received the visit of a Huntchag delegation, and the Metn elections were discussed. *Ararad* announced the meeting ended with a positive result and high hopes.¹⁰²

On August 14 the Huntchag Party Lebanon Executive Body called on its members and sympathizers to participate in the Mt. Lebanon elections and vote in favor of Murr's "National Moderation List."¹⁰³

Appeals to voters appeared in *Ararad* to vote for Murr's list. The Homenmen club in Khalil Badawi Street, the Jirayr Mourad center in Hadjen, the Homenmen Tomarza club in Sin-el-Fil and the Homenmen club in Djounieh were listed as centers to help the voters and transport them to the polling centers.¹⁰⁴

On August 16 the Ramgavar Azadagan daily, *Zartonk* published a communiqué by the party Lebanon District Council asking its members

and sympathizers to participate in the Metn elections and to vote for Murr's list.¹⁰⁵ On Election Day the Ramgavar Bourdj-Hammoud Baykar club was the center for facilitating the voters and transporting them to the polling centers.¹⁰⁶

On August 15 the Tashnag Party held a gathering of solidarity with the Tashnag candidates and Murr and his list members in Portemilio, Kaslik that had limited attendance. The presence of Murr, Barsoumian, Babikian, Joukhadarian, Dr. Demirdjian, Hovnanian, Bakhos, Abou Sleiman, Yerevanian, Tabourian and Tutelian was noted. Murr spoke and said the newly naturalized citizens' case was being criticized. However, these had received their rights.¹⁰⁷

On Sunday, August 18, the elections took place in Mt. Lebanon, including in Northern Metn, generally in a calm manner.

Out of the 144,452 registered votes, 64,785 voted (44.84 per cent) in 362 polling stations.¹⁰⁸

The official results indicated that the candidates elected were:¹⁰⁹ Michel Murr (Greek Orthodox) 43,707, Raji Abou Haidar (Greek Orthodox) 30,331, Antoine Haddad 30,431 (Greek Catholic), Ghassan Ashkar 34,597, Habib Hakim 32,965, Nassib Lahoud 31,914, and Shaker Abou Sleiman 29,063 (Maronites), and Sebouh Hovnanian (Armenian Orthodox) 29,764.

The votes of those who lost the elections were as follows: Auguste Bakhos 28,811, Albert Moukhaiber 26,270, Michel Samaha 25,535, Walid Khoury 15,056, Emile Kanaan 15,777, Michel Akl 15,292, Farid Abou Jaoude 13,034, Gabriel Gemayel 10,958, Raffy Madeyan 5238, Antoine Dagher 4842, Bassam Abou Fadel 4010, Wadih Hajj 3991, Fadi Gemayel 3841, Charbel Abdel Massih 3307, Roger Shamma 3131, Mitri Bitar 1715. 14 other candidates received less than one thousand votes.

All but Nassib Lahoud were elected from Murr's list.

The Armenian newspapers gave the results under different headlines:

Aztag wrote "Our victory in Metn, the first step for Beirut. For the Lebanese Armenians and the Tashnag Party, resounding victory in the Metn elections. The massive participation of the Armenian community is a proof of [their] conscious duties and rights. 95 per cent of Armenians said, "yes" to the Tashnag Party."¹¹⁰

Ararad wrote, "The worthy participation of Mt. Lebanon Armenians is proof of high national conscientiousness. The Armenian community responded to the appeals of the three Armenian political parties."¹¹¹

Zartonk wrote "The final results of Mt. Lebanon elections."¹¹²

Lebanese Arabic newspapers that had supported the Moukhaiber-Lahoud list criticised the Armenians. One of the sub-titles of *Nahar* the day after the elections was "Moukhaiber failed due to the difference of votes of the Armenians and the newly naturalized citizens."¹¹³

The Armenian polling stations had 26,542 registered electors of whom 7693 voted. The results of Bourdj-Hammoud were as follows:¹¹⁴ Murr 7374, Abou Haidar 7244, Bakhos 7190, Hakim 7319, Ashkar 7199, Abou Sleiman 7214, Haddad 7246, Hovnanian 7241, Moukhaiber 238, Lahoud 308, Abou Jaoude 126, Samaha 203, Madeyan 87, Gemayel 21, Akl 129, Kanaan 138, Khoury 134, Abou Fadel 1, Abdel Massih 17, Dagher 6, Hajj 5, Roger Samaha 29, Bitar 4, Roumouz 5.

Moukhaiber lost with a difference of 4061 votes. His Greek Orthodox opponents got respectively 7374 and 7244 votes in the Armenian constituencies of Bourdj-Hammoud, while he obtained only 238 votes.

Sarkis Naoum wrote in *Nahar*, "It is not possible to protest legally, especially from the democratic point of view, for Murr's success in joining the Armenians in their varieties and differences (Tashnag, Huntchag, and Ramgavar). But it is possible to say that by their past, present, and perhaps future electoral behavior the Armenians work as a colony of foreigners who have received citizenship and not as a main and active part of the Lebanese people. If in the future they do not resolve this problem, one day they may open the door for the reduction of the number of Armenian MPs."¹¹⁵

The TPLCC replied to such attacks. It said before the elections political interpreters used to say the Armenians had migrated massively from Lebanon and questioned the electoral ability of Armenians. Some considered the number of seats given to the Armenians as exaggerated and questioned their right to have ministers in the government. Others were doubtful of the influence of Armenian political parties, especially that of the Tashnag Party. However, they were surprised by the massive participation of the Armenians in the elections and started to complain about their choice of supporting a plan or a political party. Those who lost the elections made a negative interpretation. The Armenians of Lebanon, as citizens, are part of this mixed community and act as such and reject this criticism.¹¹⁶

Madeyan's 5238 votes surprised Hovnanian. He said Madeyan had at the most 2200 votes; he speculated that there must have been an agreement between the Communists, some candidates and Madeyan.¹¹⁷

Madeyan scored well and got more votes than Hovnanian in the villages of Khenchara, Douar, Zeghrin, Zakrit, Mrouj, Bickfaya, Atshane, Ain-el Khroum and Wadi Shahin. Hovnanian scored well in 84 out of 94 locations, particularly Bourdj-Hammoud, Sin el Fil, Baoushrieh, Sid Baoushrieh, Bteghrin, Biskanta, Jdeyde, Jal el Dib, Aintoura, Dekwane, Amarat Shalhoub, Beit Mary and Brummana.¹¹⁸

Hovnanian told *Nahar* that he received above 10,000 votes from Armenians, more than 8100 in all the area of Bourdj-Hammoud and 2000 in other Northern Metn localities. He thought he should have received 3000 more votes. He said his name was cancelled out of the 38,000 lists around 2500-3000 times. He explained that Murr received 10,000 more votes due to candidate Michel Akl's support. He added they had agreed with Lahoud and Moukhaiber to leave the Armenian seat vacant on their list, but the agreement was not respected in the end.¹¹⁹

Murr accused his rival list of bribery and vote buying.¹²⁰ His opponents counter-accused that their delegates were not allowed to enter the Bourdj-Hammoud polling centers, while those of Murr had all the facilities and worked freely.¹²¹

Aztag wrote, "The 10,000 votes, which represented 96 percent of the Armenian voters, reminded us once more of the Armenian participation in the previous elections and the decisive effect on the Northern Metn results. Nasib Lahoud, who had received the highest number of votes in the opposing list, got 300 votes in Bourdj-Hammoud. As far as the other Armenian candidate is concerned, the votes he received can be qualified as insignificant. 2500 Armenians could not vote due to legal defects."¹²²

Lahoud in his turn indicated that "if the Armenian votes and the votes of the recently naturalized citizens are put aside, then it's apparent that Moukhaiber and Samaha had obtained a score much higher than their adversaries."¹²³

Madeyan criticized the hegemony and the will imposed in the name of Armenians on the inhabitants of Metn and criticized the use of state machinery by the Minister of Interior Murr, adding, "I was an Armenian candidate who faced deceitful unanimity and sectarian hegemony."¹²⁴

Zartonk wrote "if the conscientious element of the Armenians said 'yes' to the elections, this does not mean that there should be exploiters of this

'yes', trying whimsically to appropriate it, as if the "Armenians have by 95 percent said 'yes' to the Tashnag Party." The article concluded, when the Ramgavar Party had appealed to people to vote for Murr's list, this should not have been exploited. The Ramgavar had dealt with a list and not a party.¹²⁵

On August 23 in a gathering of the National Moderation List in Bteghrin, in the presence of the newly elected MPs and 12,000 people, Murr said in his speech the participation of Armenians in big numbers in the Metn election showed the ardour of Armenians towards Lebanon. He took up the role of the Tashnag Party saying, "When they promise, they carry out their promise."¹²⁶

After the Metn elections, *Aztag* wrote, "the Metn elections gave a testimony of the amount of support the Tashnag Party enjoys in the Armenian community and why it is a political tradition that it has the decisive word in the appointment of Armenian candidates."¹²⁷

Safir wrote, "the Huntchag Party representative, Sebouh Kalpakian, said the percentage of Huntchag votes for Murr was 35% while Hovnanian said it was 5 to 7 percent. MP Djeredjian said their support for Murr could be explained by the fact that they share the policies and ideas of Murr. To this should be added their positive disposition towards the Tashnag Party in the aim of reaching an agreement in the Beirut elections. *Safir* pointed out that Tashnag sources clarified that after the Metn results they did not accept any agreement with the other Armenian political parties and said, "we proved ourselves in Metn, and in Beirut we shall [prove ourselves in] ... greater numbers."¹²⁸

If the Metn elections, as far as the Armenians were concerned, were almost a settled affair, the situation in Beirut was not clear, not only for the Armenians but also for the major Sunnite candidates.

Towards the end of July, Hoss had made up his mind to form an incomplete list and run for the elections as the sole leader of that list. Syrian vice-president Khaddam's wish of a joint Hariri-Hoss list thus did not materialize due to Hoss's rejection.¹²⁹ There was much talk of a Hariri-Tammam Salam joint list as there had been talk of a Hoss-Salam or even a Hariri-Hoss-Salam united list. As late as August 7, 1996, *L'Orient-Le Jour* mentioned that Hoss, Hariri and Salam might form a triumvirate and divide 19 seats as follows: 5 for Hoss, 5 for Hariri, 4 for Salam, and the Tashnags maintaining the 4 Armenian seats (3 Orthodox and one Catholic) and there would remain the Protestant seat, which the Armenians had won in 1992.¹³⁰

However, no joint or united list came forth, and in the end each Sunnite leader had his own way."

MP Rashid Solh announced on August 16, 1996 that he declined running.

As Hariri had not yet made up his mind on the day *Aztag* published, Hariri could have been an individual candidate, the TPLCC met former PM Hoss in his residence on August 2, 1996, to discuss electoral matters. Hoss informed them of his intention of forming an incomplete list.¹³¹

Diar wrote that, due to the uncertainty of Hariri's candidacy, the Armenian parties, which had not yet come to an agreement on candidates, were avoiding announcing their candidates. The Tashnag Party had also not given a final decision on forming a list of candidates of party members and sympathizers. *Diar* said, according to Armenian sources, the forming of the list of joint candidates was difficult but not impossible. If the electoral situation remained as it was, the Tashnag Party might form a separate list, against which the Huntchags and Ramgavars might form a rival list, or "half" a list. They might even include Pakradouni and Chader on their list. *Diar* added that if Hariri decided not to form a list, Armenian circles might incline to join Hoss's list. Then, contradicting this information, *Diar* added Hariri was making efforts to include Hagop Demirdjian on his list and that it was not unlikely that the Tashnags would take on their list a representative of the AGBU.¹³²

After Hariri announced on August 12¹³³ his intention of running in Beirut and forming a list, each Armenian political party, although stressing the need for a coalition list, approached Hariri and tried to secure the inclusion of its candidates on his list.

Safir reported young Tashnags wanted all seven Armenian MPs to be party members, but the party leadership thought it was more logical to adopt candidates who were party sympathizers to win the support of the masses and independent Armenian dignitaries. Hagop Pakradouni told *Safir* that "the party has not yet taken a decision for a final alliance, and they are striving to present a joint concord list with the Armenian political parties, which will gather around certain principles provided these MPs will form part of the Armenian Bloc and obey its decision."¹³⁴

On the day Hariri announced his intention of running in the elections, due to a previously arranged appointment, the Ramgavar Azadagan leadership visited him in the government headquarters to discuss electoral matters. According to *Zartonk* the Ramgavars informed Hariri of their view

concerning the Armenian seats. Both sides "examined the possibilities of a broad cooperation"¹³⁵, expressed "similar positions" and stressed the need for massive participation.

The next day, on August 13, the Huntchag Party visited Hariri at the government headquarters to discuss electoral matters. Both sides underlined the need for massive participation in the elections, stressed the need for the harmonious cooperation of all forces, and decided to meet again.¹³⁶

That same day the Tashnag Party delegation visited Hariri and consulted on electoral issues and the possibilities of cooperation and decided to continue the consultations.¹³⁷

Like most Lebanese parties and influential candidates participating in the elections, the Armenian political party delegations visited Damascus to meet Syrian vice-president Khaddam.

On August 10 a TPLCC delegation and minister Barsoumian visited Khaddam and raised electoral matters and the role of the Armenians in this respect.¹³⁸ On August 15 a joint delegation of Ramgavar Azadagan and Huntchag parties visited Khaddam in his Bloudan summer residence and discussed electoral matters.¹³⁹

By August 23 no agreement was reached yet between the Armenian political parties. *Diar* had written on August 7 that President Hraoui was applying pressure and demanding that minister Barsoumian is included in the Beirut list. Indeed he did present his candidacy in Beirut. Hariri was insisting on including a person close to the Ramgavars in the person of former minister Hagop Demirdjian or his elder brother Sarkis.¹⁴⁰

The Ramgavar Party proposed the candidacies of Souren Khanamirian and Hagop Demirdjian on Hariri's list.¹⁴¹ The Huntchag Party officially announced the candidacy of MP Djeredjian on August 15.¹⁴² The Tashnags vetoed Khanamirian. Newspapers wrote Hariri was cool on Djeredjian compared to Babikian.¹⁴³

On August 15 *Diar* wrote tension was high within the Armenian community after Hariri had announced his intention to run in the elections. The dissensions arose due to the position of the parties towards the authorities in Armenia, the Huntchags being in favor and the Tashnags opposing them. The interparty negotiations had ceased, and these dissensions had their public expression in the Armenian quarters, between the Tashnags representing 50% of the Armenians and the Front of Three (Huntchags, Ramgavars, AGBU) representing the other 50%. There were

conflicts in the neighborhood of Raouda, where the Huntchags were present. Physical attacks and fights broke out when pictures of candidates were being posted, and the Lebanese army intervened. A similar event took place in Zalka. The reason for the dissent was the veto of the Tashnag Party on MPs Khanamirian and Djeredjian and former minister H. Demirdjian. The Tashnags wanted Babikian, Joukhadarian and Dedeyan and were thinking of putting forward the candidacy of former MP Yerevanian, who had returned from Canada at the beginning of the year. All the Armenian parties were in favor of Hariri, but the two opposing sides (i.e. the Tashnags and the Huntchag-Ramgavar-AGBU) were trying to include their candidates in his list. Hariri was in a difficult situation; if he accepted the Tashnags alone, he would lose the others, including his friend H. Demirdjian, and vice versa.¹⁴⁴

On August 18 Hariri met Catholicos Aram I in the series of visits he made to spiritual leaders in Lebanon.¹⁴⁵ Rumors were abundant that the Catholicos had presented the candidacies of Yerevanian and Tabourian.

Indeed both were registered as candidates.

The Ramgavars intensified their campaign and held a meeting with their rank and file. They intended to place all the Armenian candidates, along with the Huntchag candidate, on Hariri's list.

On August 21 *Diar* wrote Hariri had promised to include the Ramgavar and Huntchag candidates in his list. Simultaneously he had promised the same to the Tashnags. The Ramgavars and Huntchags¹⁴⁶ were ready to compromise one name in order for Hariri to include one Tashnag candidate, possibly Babikian. The Tashnag candidates were Tabourian, Barsoumian, and Babikian for the Armenian Orthodox seats and Joukhadarian for the Armenian Catholic seat. The candidates of the Ramgavars and Huntchags were H. Demirdjian, Khanamirian, Y. Djeredjian for the Armenian Orthodox seat, Kevork Aharonian for the Catholic seat and Jack Ekmekji for the Protestant seat. There remained the independent Protestant candidate Dedeyan.¹⁴⁷

Indeed both Aharonian and Ekmekji registered their names as candidates.

Passing from words to action on August 21, a gathering of AGBU Armenian Youth Association-Antranik (AYA) and the Ramgavar Azadagan leaders and cadre took place in AYA Zabel Movsessian Center. Among those present were MP Khanamirian, candidate Aharonian and Hariri's campaign representative Issam Arakji. Jirayr Tanielian spoke on

behalf of the AGBU-AYA and urged massive participation in the elections and support for Hariri's list. Vicken Bayramian (Ramgavar) and Garo Djeghelian (AYA) indicated the need to support Hariri's list.¹⁴⁸

On August 27 Hoss agreed to include in his list two Armenian Orthodox personalities, former vice-governor of the Central Bank of Lebanon, Meguerditch Bouldoukian, and Mihran Seferian, son of long-term Mudawar quarter Mukhtar, Mihran Seferian, and member of the Lebanon Huntchag Executive Body, who had put forward their candidacies individually.¹⁴⁹ Soon after, on August 23, *Ararad* published the decision of the Huntchag Party Lebanon Executive Body to expel Seferian from the party for disciplinary reasons.¹⁵⁰

Two other Armenian candidates emerged. One was Linda Matar-Pandjardjian, who was a native Lebanese married to the late Puzant Pandjardjian and had been recently elected as the president of the Lebanese Women's Association Council. She ran for one of the Armenian Orthodox seats.¹⁵¹ The Armenian Communist weekly gave her picture and programme on its front page.¹⁵² The other Armenian Orthodox candidate was Hagop Yessayan, the director of the popular local Armenian radio 'Paradise'.¹⁵³

After the deadlines for candidacies, the Armenian candidates in Beirut were as follows:

Orthodox: Yerevanian, Babikian, H. Demirdjian, Barsoumian, Tabourian, Bouldoukian, Y. Djeredjian, Seferian, Yessayan, K. Pakradouni, Matar, Khanamirian.

Catholic: Joukhadarian, Aharonian, Chader.

Protestant: Dedeyan, Ekmekji.

Ararad published an article, which had appeared in *al-Liwa*. It noted that notwithstanding the immediacy of the Beirut elections, all efforts to have the Armenians on one list had failed. The Ramgavars said the division would weaken the strength of the Armenian vote. The disagreement among the Armenian sides was due to the differences of the political parties' views regarding Armenia. The Tashnags opposed the authorities there, unlike the Huntchags and Ramgavars, who had good relations. This dissension was the cause for which Khanamirian and Y. Djeredjian had left the Armenian Bloc. The Ramgavar Party source told *al-Liwa* that the agreement the Ramgavars had with the Huntchag Party and AGBU aimed at the active role of their organizations in Armenian life and the strengthening of their role. The source added the Ramgavars agreed on the

Tashnag candidate in Northern Metn and had voted in his favor, so it was supposed that the Tashnag Party in turn would agree with their three candidates in Beirut and would propose two Tashnag candidates so that the list of five Armenian candidates would be completed. This would prevent an Armenian interparty electoral confrontation. The source added to *al-Liwa* that the Tashnag Party wanted to impose all the candidates. However, the presence of the Armenian parties in the parliament, with their principles and views was considered more desirable. The Ramgavars had decided to run with Hariri, with whom contacts were maintained. They anticipated 7000 Armenian votes, if the tripartite agreement between the Armenian parties took place.¹⁵⁴

On August 22 *Zartonk* wrote, without naming the Tashnag Party, that the latter had demolished all possibilities of forming a concord list.¹⁵⁵

On August 22 a Tashnag Central Committee delegation visited Damascus and met Khaddam. For 1 hour 30 minutes the Beirut electoral issues were discussed. Afterwards in the presence of Khaddam a brief meeting took place with the representatives of the Ramgavar and Huntchag parties, and some proposals were made regarding the Armenian seats in Beirut.¹⁵⁶ According to Huntchag sources, Khaddam met the Huntchag-Ramgavar delegation prior to his meeting with the Tashnag delegation.¹⁵⁷ After the Tashnag delegation returned to Beirut, they met PM Hariri and informed him of their meeting with Khaddam.¹⁵⁸ Later on Hariri in his turn went to Damascus to meet Khaddam and discussed details of the list he was going to form.¹⁵⁹ On his return to Beirut Hariri met President Hraoui in the Baabda presidential palace and informed him of the results of his discussions with Khaddam.¹⁶⁰

That same day Hariri, in a gathering of 500 representatives of Christian families in his residence at Keraytem, said he had wanted to form a joint list with Hoss, who turned down his offer, so he formed his own. Ramgavar representatives were present at this meeting.¹⁶¹

According to a Tashnag Party communiqué published in *Aztag* on August 24, late in the night of August 23, the TPLCC met Hariri and presented to him the following names: Babikian, H. Demirdjian, Y. Djeredjian, Joukhadarian and Dedeyan. After consultations the PM agreed on the proposed names, which were to be on his list.¹⁶²

In its August 24 issue *Aztag* wrote, probably before the compromise list was finalized, "we face the important stage of Beirut. It will be a real endeavor of showing the will and the campaign of imposing [our] right, in

which the sons of the Armenian community shall once more be with the Tashnag Party."¹⁶³

L'Orient-Le Jour in its August 24 issue listed the 15 candidates who would be on Hariri's list. The Armenian candidates were Babikian, Demirdjian, Djeredjian, Joukhadarian and Dedeyan.¹⁶⁴ No mention was made of the TPLCC as the nominator of these candidates.

The Ramgavar daily reacted strongly on August 25 to the TPLCC communiqué. In a communiqué the Ramgavar Party Lebanon District Council said, "they [i.e. the Tashnags] are distorting the facts", and they "condemn these "cheap" games." "The fact is that only two candidates are for the Tashnag Party, Babikian and Joukhadarian, one for the Huntchag Party, Y. Djeredjian and one for the Ramgavar Azadagan, AGBU and AYA, Demirdjian. The list of the five candidates is not one-sided but is the result of the negotiations of each party with the PM." *Zartonk* also reported that after extensive consultations, visits and negotiations an agreement was reached between Hariri and the representatives of the three Armenian political parties. The candidates were then listed with their party affiliation, and Dedeyan was presented as an independent candidate. In an editorial *Zartonk* said there were no Tashnag Party candidates but a collective representation.¹⁶⁵

The approach of the Huntchag daily was less severe; the newspaper said it read in *Aztag* "cheerfully" the names of Beirut Armenian community candidates. It explained why "the Armenian community after long negotiations had decided on worthy candidates." However the newspaper objected to the style of the announcement in *Aztag*. Then it added, "We repeat, it is more than our wish, rather our demand that the Armenian candidates' list enjoy not only the blessing of this or that political current, but that of all the Lebanese Armenians." It said, "it is illogical that in one night an organisation decided not only its representatives but also the others'," in an apparent allusion to the TPLCC announcement in *Aztag*.

Ararad gave the list of the candidates under the headline "Lebanese Armenian community candidates of the Beirut electoral district." The text said after many months of contacts, the three Armenian political parties had decided upon their candidates, who would be on the PM's list.¹⁶⁶

On August 26 Hariri called on a public gathering in the Beirut Municipality Sport Stadium. In the presence of Armenian party representatives, he announced his incomplete list of 17 candidates, leaving one Sunnite and one Maronite seat vacant on his list. His list was

composed of himself, Bahaeddine Itani, Salim Diab, Adnan Arakji, Mouhieddine Doughan (Sunnites), Hussein Yetim, Hassan Sabra (Shiites), Khaled Saab (Druze), Beshara Merhej, Atef Majdalani (Greek Orthodox), Michel Pharaon (Greek Catholic), Khatchig Babikian, Hagop Demirdjian, Yeghia Djeredjian (Armenian Orthodox), Hagop Joukhadarian (Armenian Catholic), Apraham Dedeyan (Protestant) and Jamil Shammass (Minorities).¹⁶⁷

After the announcement of Hariri's list, on August 26 Aharonian and Ekmekji withdrew their candidacies in favor of the list of concord of Armenian parties. In a joint communiqué they thanked the Ramgavar Azadagan Party and the AGBU for supporting them during the period of their candidacy.¹⁶⁸ The next day Khanamirian withdrew his candidacy, in order to maintain the entente and cohesion between the different Armenian parties and currents and urged Armenians to vote.¹⁶⁹ After the withdrawals of Aharonian, Ekmekji and Khanamirian, in a joint communiqué on August 28 Tabourian and Yerevanian responded to the call of the TPLCC and withdrew their candidacies.¹⁷⁰ The TPLCC announced on the same day the withdrawal of Barsoumian's candidacy.¹⁷¹

After the concord list was formed Aghbashian wrote in *Zartonk*, "this is an important event in the history of the Lebanese Armenian parliamentary elections because for the first time it has been possible to abandon the old style and by a new method to adopt the truly representative aspect."¹⁷²

Aztag in its turn wrote, "The Armenian political leadership enters the electoral campaign with an agreed list of Armenian candidates to give a clear and sharp answer to those who bear Armenian names (an apparent allusion to K. Pakradouni, Chader and Matar) who have ambitions for the Armenian seats and rights. The Armenian voter has decided to give his vote to those who were decided by his political leadership, by a decision of accord, to be his representatives."¹⁷³

Ararad, likewise wrote, to vote for one list is "a strong blow to all those who want to undermine the solidarity of the Lebanese Armenian community and to all those who are trying to fish in dirty waters."¹⁷⁴

The daily organs of the three Armenian political parties published an appeal to the Lebanese Armenians on August 28, which said the three party representatives had met in Tekeyan Center to discuss electoral campaign issues and put the emphasis on the necessity of massive participation of the Armenians. The meeting was held in an atmosphere of mutual

understanding and called upon the Armenians to vote for PM Hariri's list, on which, were the candidates who represented the three Armenian political parties' list of accord.¹⁷⁵

L'Orient-Le Jour said Hariri had put all his weight in the balance and had posed as a condition to the Armenian political parties wishing to join his list to form a common list so that the Armenian electorate would vote like a single man, without any hesitation, for the authorities' list. The influential French newspaper wrote, "out of 58,700 Armenians registered on the electoral lists, the Armenians had promised 15,000 votes to Hariri."¹⁷⁶

A public gathering, organized by the Tashnag Party, was held in Bourdj-Hammoud in the parking lot next to Shaghzoian Center. Alongside Hariri, all the candidates and minister Barsoumian¹⁷⁷, 20,000 people attended the gathering.

Hariri gave homage to the Armenians "who during the Lebanese war refused the logic of war and succeeded in preserving unity, entente and conviviality" and urged them "to vote for the whole list in the Armenian manner." He said *leman tsang* (whole list) in Armenian and added "you are the cornerstone for the defence of [the list] 'Decision of Beirut' ... vote for the whole list in the Armenian manner, without mixed voting." Babikian began his address by saying "Ramgavar, Huntchag and my hero Tashnag brothers." Joukhadarian also spoke. Marwan Hamade and Akram Shouhayeb represented the Progressive Socialist Party.¹⁷⁸

All three political party newspapers published the group picture of Hariri's list as well as the pictures and biographies of the Armenian candidates.¹⁷⁹

Aztag urged Armenians to vote together for the Beirut Decision List. The Tashnag daily said, "the Beirut elections will be decisive for the Armenians, and unlike previous elections, there are individuals who do not represent the collective will of the Armenians and who are pursuing the interests of non-Armenian circles, are trying to wrest away the Armenian Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant candidates' seats."¹⁸⁰

The refusal of Hoss to join the list formed by Hariri had led Beshara Merhej to abandon Hoss and join Hariri.¹⁸¹ Michel Sassin also decided to leave Salam and run individually.

With the addition of two Armenian Orthodox candidates on Hoss' list, it was comprised of Hoss, Ahmad Tabbara, Rouhi Baalbaki, Mohammad Kabbani (Sunnites), Mohammad Youssef Beydoun (Shiite),

Issam Naaman (Druze), Fadi Moghaizel (Greek Orthodox), Fouad Habib (Greek Orthodox), Meguerditch Bouldoukian and Mihran Seferian (Armenian Orthodox), Fouad Issa (Protestant), Georges Khadije (Maronite) and Riad Abdel Jalil (Minorities).¹⁸²

Hoss left two Sunnite, one Shiite, one Greek Orthodox, one Armenian Orthodox and the Armenian Catholic seat vacant in his list.

MP Wakim in his turn formed an incomplete list of 7 candidates comprised of himself (Greek Orthodox), Amine Kammouriye, Hamze Shatila, Ousama Fakhoury (Sunnites), Nadim Abdel-Samad (Druze), Tony Saad (Protestant) and Asmar Asmar (Minorities).¹⁸³

MP Adnan Traboulsi also formed an incomplete list of 5 candidates led by him (Sunnite), Khalil Shahrour (Shiite), Gilbert Shammas (Greek Orthodox), Ziad Kantis (Greek Orthodox), and Habib Ephrem (Minorities).¹⁸⁴

There were also 46 independent candidates including influential names like Tammam Salam, Mohammad Berjawi, Saadeddine Khaled, Ghassan Matar, Zouheir Obeidy, and Michel Sassin.

L'Orient-Le Jour wrote "the discipline of the Armenians [in voting] scared the rivals of Hariri, who feared that this electorate would throw in bloc its votes in favour of the list of the PM and compensate for the disaffection that [people] foresee in Ashrafieh."¹⁸⁵

Hoss appealed to the Armenians, to "show they are in favour of the fatherland and not the authorities."¹⁸⁶

Wakim, who had visited the Tashnag headquarters in Bourdj-Hammoud on August 24 before Hariri's list was proclaimed, made an appeal to the Armenians on August 30, "to vote in harmony with their conscience and not to be influenced by pressures exercised on them." He said, "The experience of Metn was painful to the Armenian people. The Armenians like all the Lebanese, have the right to choose their representatives." Wakim also criticised President Hraoui because "he did not succeed in respecting his oath to safeguard the constitution and watch over the integrity and freedom of voting."¹⁸⁷

Only the Armenian Communist weekly *Gantch* seemed to echo to the above appeals. The paper repeated what it had advised in the Metn elections that Armenian votes should not be the major cause of the failure of loved and popular Lebanese candidates. The paper suggested Armenian voters should vote freely without any restriction, like politically mature

people, by clarifying which Armenian or Arab candidates they would centralize their votes upon.¹⁸⁸

On August 30, two days before the elections, visits were still happening. MP Djeredjian¹⁸⁹ visited Catholicos Aram I, the AYA Zabel Movsessian Center, the Tashnag Yerevanian Center and the Ramgavar Baykar Club in Bourdj-Hammoud.¹⁹⁰ Candidate H. Demirdjian visited the Huntchag Center, in the presence of Khanamirian.¹⁹¹ The latter had also visited the Ramgavar Baykar Club. *Zartouk* wrote, "He was one of the Ramgavar candidates who gallantly withdrew his candidacy to bring about the list of concord." The paper added Ramgavar leaders and Khanamirian discussed possibilities of "a warm cooperation in the near future."¹⁹² Dedeyan who had visited the Ramgavar leadership early on July 29,¹⁹³ before the formation of the list of concord, with Demirdjian visited the Ramgavar Baykar Club on August 28, where the Ramgavar and AGBU leaders and a large number of members and sympathizers were present. The same day his picture and biography had appeared in *Zartouk*.¹⁹⁴ The next day Dedeyan visited the Huntchag center.¹⁹⁵ On August 31 the Tashnags hosted Salam, accompanied by Abdallah Mashnouk, in their Sardarabad club.¹⁹⁶ Hussein Yetim and Ghassan Matar visited the Huntchag center.¹⁹⁷ The latter¹⁹⁸ also visited the Ramgavar and Tashnag centers.¹⁹⁹

The Huntchag Party held an electoral public gathering for their electoral and propaganda bodies²⁰⁰ in Ain el Mraisseh and another on August 30 in their Sahagian-Levon Meguerditchian Lycee. On Election Day Demirdjian visited the Tashnag and Ramgavar centers. So did Dedeyan and Traboulsi.²⁰¹

Khanamirian, Minister Fouad Siniora and candidate Pharaon visited the Ramgavar center. Between 10 a.m. and 12 p.m. on Election Day, an aeroplane dropped pamphlets over Beirut, calling the residents to show solidarity with the "Beirut Decision" list of Hariri. The Ramgavar Party, AGBU-AYA, signed the pamphlets. AGBU-AYA leaders visited the Ramgavar headquarters, and the latter visited the AGBU-AYA clubs.²⁰²

Hoss in a press release verbally attacked Hariri. He said he regretted Hariri's attacks on him, saying Hariri denied all he, Hoss, had stood for. That for 7 years he had been PM at difficult times and that Hariri behaved as if history had begun the day of his return to Beirut and his assumption of the PM office in 1992.²⁰³

The Locum Tenens of the Armenian Orthodox Community, in a communiqué published in the three Armenian dailies, called for massive participation in the elections.²⁰⁴

The following list of the numbers of the Beirut polling stations and the registered voters per quarter was published: Ain el Mraisseh 9796 (20), Bashoura 39,188 (86), Zokak el Blat 36,164 (78), Musaitbe 54,423 (118), Mazraa 61,968 (138), Ras Beirut 27,049 (60), Ashrafieh 48,634 (111), Rmeil 28,661 (69), Mudawar 41,173 (99), Saifi 9814 (23), Minet el Hosn 13,368 (15), Marfa 7394 (15) - a total of 377,692 voters and 846 polling stations.²⁰⁵ Another total given was 378,994.²⁰⁶

L'Orient-Le Jour rounded the number of voters of each community as follows: 142,000 Sunnites, 48,000 Shiites, 60,000 Armenians,²⁰⁷ 46,000 Greek Orthodox, 28,000 Maronites and 51,000 Greek Catholics, Protestants and Minorities. The number of Druze voters was not given.²⁰⁸

The elections took place on Sunday, September 1, 1996, in calmness but with fierce competition. According to the Ministry of the Interior, only 125,098 voted in Beirut, thus only 33%.²⁰⁹ *L'Orient-Le Jour* said 116,762 had voted (31%), as follows: Musaitbe 19,072 voters (35.25%), Ashrafieh 12,194 (24.9%), Rmeil, Saifi and Marfa 9175 (20.29%), Bashoura 14,990 (36%), Zokak el Blat 12,674 (34%), Minet el Hosn-Mudawar 8764 (16%), Ain el Mraisseh and Ras Beirut respectively 9363 and 11,055 voters (41%) and Mazraa 26,120 (42.25%).²¹⁰

The official results of the elected MPs were as follows:²¹¹

Rafik Hariri 78,714, Selim Hoss 64,259, Bahaeddine Itani 48,652, Selim Diab 47,892, Tammam Salam 46,885, Adnan Arakji 46,203 (Sunnites), Mohammad Y. Beydoun 45,762, Hussein Yetim 40,150 (Shiites), Khaled Saab 51,599 (Druze), Michel Pharaon 54,571 (Greek Catholic), Beshara Merhej 59,038, Najah Wakim 53,088 (Greek Orthodox), Khatchig Babikian 55,381, Hagop Demirdjian 54,416, Yeghia Djeredjian 50,036 (Armenian Orthodox), Hagop Joukhadarian 53,833 (Armenian Catholic), Apraham Dedeyan 52,372 (Protestant), Jamil Shammas 39,636 (Minorities) and Ghassan Matar (Maronite) 28,229.

Except for Hoss, Beydoun, Salam, Wakim and Matar, the other 14 were elected from Hariri's list.

The results of the candidates who lost the elections were as follows: Atef Majdalani 47,404, Mouhieddine Doughan 41,054, Hassan Sabra 39,551, Mohammad Berjawi 36,270, Saadeddine Khaled 32,481, Issam Naaman 31,415, Adnan Traboulsi 31,339, Fadi Moghaizel 25,807, Ahmad

Tabbarah 20,329, Rouhi Baalbaki 18,707, Mohammad Kabbani 18,482, Zouheir Obeidy 18,340, Asmar Asmar 17,316, Tony Saad 15,901, Meguerditch Bouldoukian 14,930, Georges Khadije 14,683, Habib Ephrem 14,472, Mihran Seferian 14,411, Ahmed Omari 13,312, Amine Kammouriye 13,010, Antoine Chader 12,971, Karim Pakradouni 12,798, Michel Sassin 12,336, Sayed Frangieh 11,490, Fouad Issa 10,898, Abdel Majid Zein 10,896, Hamze Shatila 10848, Fouad Habib 10,108, Nadim Abdel-Samad 10,040, Riad Abdel-Jalil 9579, Inaam Raad 9346, Khalil Shahrour 9175, Fouad Metni 8803, Gilbert Shammas 8745, Ziad Kantis 8408, Ossama Fakhoury 8151, Linda Matar 7470, Joseph Hachem 4496, Imad Turk 2629, Wahhaj Moussa 2592, Mohammad Ardroumali 2203, Mohammad Baasiri 2097, Khaled Itani 1851, Mohammad Michel Ghorayeb 1797, Beshara Gholam 1550, Simon Khazen 1387, Mohammad Nsouli 1339, Mohammad Ramadan 1100, Emile Shehade 1083, Antoine Misperian 919, Yassine Moussali 885, Faouzi Metni 803, Joseph Zeidan 668, Georges Oueida 649, Claude Abi Shahin 636, Abdel Kader Kabbani 528, Elie El Khoury 384, Ahmad Addam 478, Hagop Yessayan 366, Ali Haidar 276, Rami Shidiak 229, Albert Jamo 214, Michel Bashour 208, Ahmad Yassine 185, Abdallah Tannir 169, Akram Selmane 164, Abdel-Hakim Zaim 157, Badri Abdel-Dayem 124, and Ghazi Mounzer 72.²¹²

Once the official results were out, it became obvious that the Huntchag MP Djeredjian had received the least votes among the elected Armenian MPs - a difference of 2300-5000 votes. This was explained by the presence of a dissident Huntchag candidate on Hoss's list and also by the deletion of his name, probably by Tashnag voters.

The results by electoral district of the major candidates, especially the Armenians, were as follows:²¹³

Candidate	1 st District (Ashrafieh, Mudawar/Saifi/ Minet-el Hosn/Marfa/Rmeil)	2 nd District (Bashoura/ Zokak el Blat/Ain el Mraisseh)	3 rd District (Mazraa/Musait be/ Ras Beirut)	Total Votes
Hariri	21851	16751	40112	78714
Hoss	16353	19789	28117	64259
Merhej	16366	12168	30504	59038
Babikian	15837	11282	28262	55381
Pharaon	17974	11036	25561	54571
Demirdjian	16819	11217	26380	54416
Joukhadarian	16172	11175	26486	53833

Wakim	15653	17045	20390	53088
Dedeyan	16037	12037	24298	52372
Saab	15899	10500	25200	51599
Djeredjian	14503	10288	25245	50036
Itani	14911	9473	24268	48652
Diab	13392	8327	26173	47892
Arakji	14767	8978	22458	46203
Beydoun	10680	10847	24235	45762
Yetim	13727	8558	17865	40150
Shammas	7592	9119	22925	39686
Gh. Matar	8436	6532	13261	28229
Majdalani	13580	9818	25006	47404
Doughan	13781	7905	19368	41056
Sabra	7079	8265	24207	39551
Berjawi	5271	15586	15413	36270
Khaled	4276	7293	20912	32481
Naaman	6800	7938	16677	31415
Traboulsi	12509	6554	12276	31339
Moghaizel	8196	5815	11796	25807
Baalbaki	3743	5278	9686	18707
Kabbani	5051	4943	8488	18482
Obeidy	1778	7017	9545	18340
Asmar	4352	6789	6175	17316
Saad	5356	6768	3777	15901
Bouldoukian	3854	4326	6750	14930
Khadije	4591	3343	6749	14683
Ephrem	5288	3042	6142	14472
Seferian	3714	4332	6365	14411
Chader	4028	5571	3372	12971
Pakradouni	3672	5643	3483	12798
Sassin	6498	1588	4250	12336
Frangieh	2580	5351	3559	11490
Issa	2133	3122	5643	10898
Habib	1738	2817	5553	10108
Abdel Jalil	2313	3120	4146	9579
Raad	1042	5648	2650	9340
Metni	5070	1176	2557	8803
Shammas	1836	2167	4742	8745
Fakhoury	3126	2032	2993	8151
L. Matar	1831	1947	3692	7470
Hachem	1886	864	1746	4496

The Armenian newspapers announced the results as follows:

Aztag- "Our people proved its presence and strength in Beirut also."²¹⁴

Zartonk- "The elections of the capital were crowned with success. The concord of five Armenian candidates succeeded. The Ramgavar Azadagan, A.G.B.U. and A.Y.A. on the rampart."²¹⁵

Ararad - "The turnout only 31 percent. The winners of the day: Hariri, Hoss, Wakim, Salam. The united list of the Lebanese Armenians came out victorious from the elections. The Huntchag Party candidate again a member of the Lebanese Parliament."²¹⁶

While *L'Orient-Le Jour* headlined "Hariri gets the lion's share. Diverse fraud, "occult" votes and weak participation, however, tarnish the victory of the Prime Minister."²¹⁷

The Lebanese Association for the Democracy of Elections published a statement indicating that its monitors had observed the following infractions, given below verbatim.²¹⁸

I. Preceding Election Day:

1. The replacement of approximately 15 polling station officials on the eve of election day. The previously appointed officials were public school teachers from the South. The newly appointed officials were private sector employees of the OGERO Company owned by PM Hariri. The appointment of private sector employees as elected officials is against the law.
2. The conscription of employees of the Sukleen Company (a private company contracted by the government for solid waste management in the capital) to work in the government list's election campaign.
3. Long delays in completing the administrative paperwork for monitors of opposition candidates.
4. Long delays in completing the administrative paperwork for voters loyal to opposition lists.
5. Long delays in delivering final voter lists to opposition candidates.
6. Smuggling official voting envelopes outside the Ministry of Interior into the hands of government candidates.
7. Violation by government candidates of the government's own rule banning the use of audio-visual media in the election campaign.

II. On Election Day:

8. Thousands of omissions from the voters' lists (constituencies observed: Verdun, Mazraa, Jemmeyzeh, Ashrafieh, and Bashoura).

9. Long delays in the processing of corrections for these voters' lists, especially for voters loyal to the opposition lists.
10. Hundreds of cases of voters arriving at the voting station to find that someone had already voted in their place (constituencies observed: Karm el-Zeitoun, Ashrafieh, Barbir).
11. Withholding of official papers for some monitors of the opposition lists (People's List, List of Salvation and Change).
12. Buying of votes for the Government list (votes were being purchased at 100,000 Lebanese Pounds [approximately \$64], (constituencies observed: Tariq al-Jadidah, Ashrafieh).
13. The eviction of some opposition monitors from some polling stations (constituencies observed: Ras Beirut).
14. The absence of voters' lists for several hours in some voting stations (constituencies observed: Bishara al-Khoury, Saifi, Musaitbe).
15. The absence of essential voting material inside many polling stations (i.e. blank papers, pens, candidate list) (constituencies observed: Minet el Hosn, Ain el Mraisseh).
16. Pro-Government Armenian Tashnag Party operatives prevented some opposition voters from entering polling stations in Beirut's Armenian district.
17. The presence of pro-government supporters inside polling stations without proper permits (constituencies observed: Zokak el-Blat).
18. The presence of armed internal security forces inside polling stations, which is against the law (constituencies observed: Ras Beirut, Ashrafieh, Hawd al-Wilayah).
19. Pressure on voters to vote for the government list (constituencies observed: Mudawar, Zokak el-Blat, Jehtawi).

Former MP Sassin, who had been elected MP on the Kataeb-National Liberal-Tashnag list in 1972, spoke of fraud. He said in the Dar el-Mouallem polling station in Ashrafieh, some people had voted in place of young conscripts doing military service; two were identified and were taken to the police station. In the school of Three Doctors, Dr. Richard Saliba had voted although he had died years ago. Sassin said the supporters of the Tashnags roughly treated Armenians who refused to vote for Hariri's list.²¹⁹

Candidates Seferian and Bouldoukian complained that the Ministry of Interior did not issue permits to their monitors in the Mudawar polling stations. They said they had submitted their requests for 48 scrutineers one

week prior to the elections but none was granted. They had only 20 permits and some polling stations, alleging mistakes, did not admit them. Wakim also complained of the same problem. Seferian claimed about 3000 Armenians had voted for him by 1 p.m.²²⁰

Aztag wrote the participation of approximately 13,000 Armenians was an indicator of the Armenian community's alertness and preparedness to participate in the political life of Lebanon. The turnout of the Armenian voters compared to the general turnout was a direct reply to those who had doubts about the Armenian community's strength of numbers and organization. Technical difficulties and defects on the electoral lists had prevented approximately 3600 Armenians from voting, despite all efforts to rectify the errors.²²¹

There were some newspaper attacks on the votes of the newly naturalized Lebanese. *L'Orient-Le Jour* wrote 25,000 to 30,000 votes separated those on Hariri's list from those of Hoss's. This difference was essentially due to the votes of Armenians and those of the newly naturalized. The Armenian votes were about 13,000 and those of the naturalized were 12,000 to 15,000. The newspaper said the SSNP candidate, Matar, succeeded thanks to the votes of Armenians and the naturalized.²²² Pakradouni also raised the issue of the naturalized votes.

Antoine Ghorayeb, in the daily Arabic newspaper *Shark* wrote that Armenians, Kurds and naturalized are Lebanese beyond any doubt. These Lebanese citizens, more than others, had the full right to elect who they wanted as individuals or as a collectivity. It is strange that the Kataeb Party vice-president Karim Pakradouni raised the issue. The journalist asked whether he had forgotten how often the votes of Armenians had secured the successive elections of his former chief, Pierre Gemayel. Ghorayeb concluded that in those days this was a national affair and now it was suspicious and unacceptable.²²³

After the election results, Hariri declared, "the Lebanese have chosen moderation." This was a reference to the defeats of Berjawi (Hizbullah), Obeidy (Jamaa Islamiye) and Adnan Traboulsi (Ahbash).²²⁴ Hoss said the elections of Beirut were scandalous, due to "numerous irregularities".²²⁵ Wakim threatened court action against minister Murr and Hariri, for "fraud and corruption."²²⁶

Zartouk, without mentioning its sources, reported that 12,000 Armenians voted, of whom 5400 were Tashnag supporters, 1288 Huntchag supporters, 3000 Ramgavar supporters, 1872 AGBU supporters and 911

dissident Huntchags and Communists.²²⁷ Tashnags said the Armenian voters were 13,000. Of these 75 percent had gone to their clubs to get electoral assistance.²²⁸

MP Babikian said the Armenians honoured their undertaking, and if a few MPs were elected outside Hariri's list, "that was the expression of the people's will."²²⁹ A good number of Armenians had voted for Hoss, Wakim, Beydoun, Salam and Matar (winners) while among the losers Adnan Traboulsi had benefited from their votes.²³⁰

According to *L'Orient-Le Jour* three lists were circulated by the Tashnags: the complete Hariri list, another one where Wakim had replaced Majdalani, and a third one with Matar's and Traboulsi's names added. The newspaper claimed out of 12,000 Armenian votes Hariri received 7000, while Wakim, Matar and Traboulsi received 5000 votes.²³¹

There was a close contest between the Shiite candidates of Hariri's list. While the counting was being done Sabra was ahead of Yetim by 1000 votes. Therefore Speaker Nabih Berri contacted Hariri, who went to the tabulation center at Sanayeh and suggested a recounting of the votes. In the official results, after the recount, Amal's candidate, Yetim, had 599 votes more than Sabra, and was declared elected.²³² In the Mudawar-Ashrafieh-Saifi-Rmeil-Minet el-Hosn region, where the number of Armenian voters was massive, Yetim secured 13,727 votes to Sabra's 7079.²³³ Many Armenians did not vote for Sabra, as he was known to have what they considered as extremist views in *Shiraa*, his periodical, in which he had at times presented the Armenians negatively.

Sabra, bitter in his defeat, attacked the Armenian community in his periodical. In his articles published on September 9 and 15 1996, he said, from a patriotic perspective, it was not permissible for Armenians to have any MPs in Lebanon. They are Lebanese in a country that has Arab culture, identity and civilization, which accepts all who speak Arabic and obey the laws and regulations of the land. The Armenians, like Kurds and Sourianis, are Lebanese and as Christians they belong to the Orthodox, Catholic or Protestant denominations, so their seats in Beirut, Mt. Lebanon and Zahle should be distributed among these communities. Sabra said it is illegal for 40,000 Greek Orthodox voters to have 2 MPs in Beirut while the Armenian Orthodox have less than 20,000 voters (of whom only 5000 vote) and have 3 MPs. It is illogical that the Greek Catholics have 20,000 voters and have one MP in Beirut, while Armenian Catholics have 10,000 voters (of whom 3000 vote) and have one MP. It is illogical that the Protestant seat is

privileged to them when they have a few hundred voters, while the Arab Protestants have more than 9000 voters in Beirut. He concluded it's not possible to give seats to Armenians on the grounds of ethnicity, when in Lebanon they are Lebanese and are part of the accepted communities of Lebanon.²³⁴

The Armenian newspapers resented his claims. There was no united response by the Armenian parties though.²³⁵ The Armenian Popular Movement issued a communiqué.²³⁶

The Lebanese law of communities has recognized the Armenian Apostolical Church as Armenian Orthodox, acknowledging that they are basically different from the Greek Orthodox. The Armenians accepted the first three ecumenical councils and rejected the Chalcedonic doctrine of faith of 451 A.D., while the Greek Orthodox accepted the first seven ecumenical councils including the Council of Chalcedon of 451 A.D. The Maronites are a Catholic rite, so are the Greek Catholics (Melkite), but they are classified as different communities, as the Armenian Catholics are. All Arabic or Armenian expression Evangelicals are classified as the Protestant community. Sabra contradicted himself. There were several Protestant candidates (Saad, Issa, Shehade, Ouieda and Dedeyan) and the candidate who got most of the votes (Dedeyan) won, irrespective of his ethnic origin. Furthermore the numbers given by Sabra did not match the official data.

Two of the Protestant losers, Issa²³⁷ and Shehade, protested on the grounds of the ethnic origin of the Protestant MP Dedeyan. Shehade appealed to the Constitutional Court,²³⁸ but his request to annul the results of Dedeyan's election was not accepted.

The Armenian political parties, which were urged to form a united list in Beirut, soon after the Beirut elections, even before the elections of Zahle, went their own way.

On September 6, 1996, a delegation including MPs Babikian, Joukhadarian, Dedeyan, Hovnanian and TPLCC representatives Tutelian and H. Pakradouni paid a visit to Hariri and congratulated him.²³⁹ Later on the newly elected MPs Babikian, Joukhadarian and Dedeyan and representatives of the TPLCC received congratulations in the Sardarabad Club. Visitors included the Armenian Orthodox Prelate, Khacherian, and representatives of the Armenian Orthodox Community Civil Council, minister Barsoumian, outgoing MP Dr. Demirdjian, former MPs Dr. Antranik Manoukian and Yerevanian, former Central Bank vice-governor and defeated candidate Bouldoukian, withdrawn candidate Ekmekji,

Armenian Catholic Patriarchate's Bishop Manuel Batakian, Merhej, Murr, Habib Hakim, Ashkar, Traboulsi, Khaled Saab, Habib Ephrem, George Kassis, National Security chief Jean Hobeika, Metn Internal Security Forces Chief Joseph Dib, Samir Sabbagh, Jack Sarraf, Georges Karnabi, Youssef Jebran, Roger Shammas, Dr. Nassim Khoury, Sheikh Mohammad Aboul Kateh, Central Bank vice-governor Haroutioun Samuelian, Bourdj-Hammoud Municipality Council's chair, Tutelian, a delegation representing the Armenians of Anjar and many others.²⁴⁰ The absence of newly elected MPs H. Demirdjian and Y. Djeredjian was noted.

Zartok wrote, "The first confirmation of accord had failed." The Ramgavar daily wrote, "It is regrettable that a reception was organized in the Tashnag club. It was more than natural that some newly elected MPs absented themselves from this ceremony." The paper concluded by asking if it would not have been exemplary and served the purpose if all the Armenian MPs had been gathered in a neutral, independent center, for congratulating them collectively and for congratulating each other.²⁴¹

Soon after the Tashnag delegation had visited Hariri to congratulate him, on September 10, *Zartok's* editor Aghbashian wrote under the headline "Not to remain factional but turn into a compact totality." The editor deplored the absence of a united response to the accusations, misinformation and disinformation that had appeared in the Lebanese press and called for a collective answer, without any delay. And until such a united step was taken, the editor criticized the translation and printing in *Aztag's* 5 September issue of an interview that had been given to *Nahar* by newly elected Metn MP Hovnanian on August 20.²⁴²

The Ramgavar organ's editor rectified four points:

First, the candidates for the five Armenian seats in Beirut were decided by accord, and there was not a monopoly of decision by the Tashnags. It was wrong to say that H. Demirdjian was not the candidate of the Ramgavars, as he was officially declared to be the Ramgavar, AGBU and AYA candidate. Furthermore Dedeyan was an independent candidate enjoying the sympathy of all the Lebanese Armenians, and it was wrong to appropriate him.

Second, in reply to a question Hovnanian had said 85% of the Armenians are supporters of the Tashnags and the remaining 15% to the Huntchags and Ramgavars. *Zartok's* editor in response said only 5 percent of the Armenians are party members, and each party has its range of supporters, but to reach 85% is sick vanity.

Third, Hovnanian had declared, "the Catholicos of the See of Cilicia is very close to us" [i.e. the Tashnag Party]. Aghbashian replied that this is not a novelty but a reconfirmation, a further proof of a fact, asking what Hovnanian gained by appropriating the Armenian Church.

Fourth, in the interview Hovnanian said the Armenian Bloc's president was always a party member. *Zartouk* said this was true until now, and this did not serve the interests of the Lebanese Armenians. Then the paper questioned whether the situation would remain the same, when conditions had changed, and that it should be truly Armenian and not partisan.²⁴³

After his election Dedeyan received the congratulations of well-wishers in the Tashnag club and joined the Armenian Bloc, unlike H. Demirdjian and Y. Djeredjian.

Soon after the elections of Beirut were over, attention turned to the Bekaa, where in Zahle, the Armenian Orthodox were allotted one seat.

The number of electors in the Bekaa region was 409955 with Zahle having 123,315 votes and 266 polling centers, Baalbek-Hermel had 192,641 voters and 466 polling centers and western Bekaa-Rachaya had 93,991 voters with 206 polling stations.²⁴⁴ The number of Armenian voters in the Bekaa region was 11,325.²⁴⁵

As far as the Bekaa region was concerned, there was not the same enthusiasm among Armenians, unlike the Beirut elections. Only the Tashnag Party showed some interest, as they had about 3000 voters in the Bekaa town of Anjar. However, the party was unable to present a candidate from Anjar itself.

On July 31 1996 the TPLCC and minister Barsoumian received visits from the Bekaa Armenian independent MP Georges Kassardji and candidate Dr. Antoine Neshanakian and discussed the electoral situation and the possibilities of cooperation.²⁴⁶ Dr. Neshanakian visited the Tashnag committee in Anjar.²⁴⁷ On August 23 MP Kassardji visited President Hraoui.²⁴⁸

The Tashnag Party had contacts with vice-speaker Elie Ferzli and Hizbullah, concerning the Bekaa electoral situation,²⁴⁹ and the Anjar party committee received the visits of Robert Ghanem, Mohammad Meiss, Youssef Salloum, Abdel Rahim Mrad, Henri Chedid, Shaouki Fakhoury, Tony Tohme and Farouk Dahrouj.²⁵⁰

On September 2, 1996 MP Elie Skaff affirmed that his reconciliation with Minister Nicolas Fattouche was the prelude to the formation of a coalition list to preserve coexistence in the Bekaa.²⁵¹

By August 20, 1996 it was apparent that the Tashnag Party would not designate a candidate from Anjar or a party member from Beirut but would endorse the independent MP Kassardji,²⁵² who had defeated their candidate in 1992 with a difference of 8260 votes.²⁵³

In an interview in *Nahar*, Hovnanian said it was expected that the Tashnags would officially appoint Kassardji as their candidate after the elections of Beirut. He said Kassardji was a member of Homentmen, his brother was a Tashnag Party member and he was very close to them. *Aztag* published the translation of the interview on September 5.²⁵⁴

The next day on, September 6, Kassardji visited the Sardarabad club of the Tashnags. He congratulated them for their electoral victories and expressed solidarity.²⁵⁵ That same day the newspapers announced the formation of the Hizbullah-Amal-Zahle coalition list comprised of Hussein Husseini, Assem Kanso, Ghazi Zeayter, Ibrahim Amin Sayed, Ammar Moussaoui, Ibrahim Bayan, Ismail Succariyeh, Rabia Kayrouz, Marwan Fares (Baalbek-Hermel candidates); Elie Skaff, Nicolas Fattouche, Mohsen Dalloul, Shaouki Fakhoury, Khalil Hraoui and Georges Kassardji (Zahle candidates); Elie Ferzli, Mahmoud Abou Hamdan, Robert Ghanem, Abdel Rahim Mrad, Sami Khatib and Feisal Daoud (Western Bekaa candidates).²⁵⁶

Once Kassardji was on the strong list, the TPLCC endorsed his candidacy.

On September 8²⁵⁷ Kassardji had visited the Tashnag club of Anjar and met the TPLCC and the Anjar and Zahle Tashnag Party local committee representatives.²⁵⁸

On August 12 a public gathering took place in Anjar. Vice-speaker Ferzli, ministers Barsoumian, Abou Hamdan, Fattouche and Dalloul were present, as well as Hovnanian, Babikian, Joukhadarian, Dedeyan, Kassardji, Daoud, Meiss. Among the speakers was Kassardji. A second gathering was held in the Zahle Armenian school courtyard, by the initiative of the inhabitants of the Meydan quarter. Minister Abou Hamdan and a Tashnag Party representative spoke.²⁵⁹

In an official declaration the Huntchag Party Lebanon Executive Administrative Body Electoral Office advised Huntchag Party members, sympathizers and Armenians in general to vote for the coalition list "Entente and National Unity", which included the "worthy candidate Georges Kassardji".²⁶⁰

The Ramgavars did not issue any declaration.

Neshanakian maintained his candidacy as an independent. Vartkes Chaparian also presented his candidacy. He was on a mini-list entitled "the list of the development of the Bekaa" along with Ghassan Nadaf (Greek Catholic) and Shukri Tineh (Greek Orthodox). Both Armenian candidates did not receive any support from the three Armenian parties. There were all in all 135 candidates, 23 of whom constituted the coalition list.²⁶¹

The elections were held on September 15, 1996 in a calm atmosphere.

The official results of the elected MPs were as follows:²⁶²

Rachaya and Western Bekaa: Mahmoud Abou Hamdan (Shiite) 105,192, Elie Ferzli (Greek Orthodox) 68,510, Abdel Rahim Mrad 75,225, Sami Khatib (Sunnites) 52,361.

Zahle: Mohsen Dalloul (Shiite) 95,258, Elias Skaff 81,697, Nicolas Fattouche (Greek Catholics) 74,378, Khalil Hraoui (Maronite) 63,692, Shaouki Fakhoury (Greek Orthodox) 60,556, Georges Kassardji (Armenian Orthodox) 57,981, Mohammad Ali El-Meiss (Sunnite) 51,547.

Baalbek-Hermel: Ibrahim Amin El-Sayyed 93,043, Hussein El-Hajj Hassan 86,496, Ammar Moussaoui 85,042, Hussein Hussein 68,932, Assem Kanso 67,209, Ghazi Zeayter (Shiites) 61,479, Ibrahim Bayan 74,083, Ismail Succariyeh (Sunnites) 41,940, Rabiha Keyrouz (Maronite) 66,424, Marwan Fares (Greek Catholic) 51,501.

All but Robert Ghanem (Maronite, West Bekaa, 67,240 votes) and Hassan Hojeiri (Sunnite, Baalbek-Hermel, 29,949 votes) of the coalition list won.

The results of those who lost, but scored high were:

West Bekaa: Farouk Dahrouj 43,904, and Omar Harb 37,440.

Zahle: Tony Abou Khater 39,313, Antoine Neshanakian 22,054, Nassif Tini 21,493, Ibrahim Shahine 18,668 and Vartkes Chaparian 15,737.

Baalbek-Hermel: Rifaat Masri 58,288, Fady Younes 40,342, Tarek Habshi 33,172, Ali Fliti 32,827, Akef Haidar 31,760, Hussein Kanaan 29,372, Mohammad Hamade 26,258 and Albert Mansour 25,648.

The Tashnag Party claimed it gave 3000 votes to Kassardji and the coalition list.²⁶³

Zartouk announced the reelection of Kassardji and published his picture. The *Ramgavar* organ said it was obvious that Kassardji would be reelected as, in his term of office of four years, he had done public service in his region despite the fact that he had no links whatsoever with the Armenian party bloc. If the Armenians of the region voted for him, this

was the result of their desire to have the independent. Kassardji acceptable to all and ready to serve all, as MP.²⁶⁴

In the second page of the same day's *Zartouk*, a brief article mentioned that Tashnag sources said Kassardji had agreed to be a member of the Armenian Bloc, led by the Tashnags, and to submit to their decisions. The Ramgavar organ also mentioned Kassardji's denial published in *Safir*. In it Kassardji said he was an old ally of the Tashnag Party, that the party did not endorse his candidacy but supported it, and that he was at an equal distance from all Armenian political parties. *Zartouk* however, looked askance. The paper said Kassardji used to brag that he was an independent and did not accept being a member of a partisan bloc until a few months before the elections.²⁶⁵

A month after the elections of Bekaa, *Zartouk* published an interview with Kassardji, as well as his picture. In the interview Kassardji said the Tashnag Party approached him and proposed that the party adopt his candidacy and he accepted; at the same time he said that he was an independent candidate who represented the whole of the Lebanese Armenian community. Kassardji added it was altogether two different things to be a Tashnag candidate on the one hand, and to have his candidacy adopted by them, on the other. He added the Ramgavars and Huntchags also supported his re-election and did not abstain. He said he would join the Armenian Bloc if it were under the auspices of the three Armenian political parties. He declared his support for the Republic of Armenia and its president Der Bedrossian, and thanked *Zartouk*, who in the four years of his service in the parliament constantly reported his activities.²⁶⁶

On October 28, 1996 Kassardji went alone to the presidential consultations in Baabda before the new government was formed. He proposed H. Demirdjian and Khanamirian as ministers.²⁶⁷ Later during his term, Kassardji joined the Armenian Bloc; however, this did not prevent him from acting unilaterally when he so desired.

The new government was formed on November 7, 1996 presided over by Hariri. Demirdjian and Barsoumian were reappointed as ministers.²⁶⁸

On October 10, 1996, PM Hariri attended the inauguration of the AGBU/AYA Demirdjian Center, along with Catholicos Aram I, Patriarch Kasparian and Rev. Kardjian and decorated the AGBU president Louise Simone-Manougian with a Lebanese medal of distinction.

On November 10, 1996, PM Hariri attended the 75th anniversary of the Ramgavar Party, held under his auspices and delivered a speech; right after party representative Hagop Kassardjian had spoken.

The presence of Hariri at both events indicated his close relations with them, which was later reflected in the legislative elections of 2000.

ENDNOTES

- ¹ This study is the seventh in a series of articles by the author on Armenian participation in successive Lebanese legislative elections since 1934. The first six previous articles were published in volumes 21, 22, 23, 24, 26, and 27 of the *Haigazian Armenological Review*. Part I of this current article which covered the appointments of 1990 and the elections of 1992 during the presidency of Elias Hraoui was given in volume 27.
- ² *Ararad*, 58th year, № 169 (15611) June 20, 1995. The presence of Prelate Archbishop Aram Keshishian, MPs Souren Khanamirian, Hagop Joukhadarian, Georges Kassardji, Dr. Nouridjan Demirdjian, and the charge d'affaires of the Armenian embassy, Yervant Melkonian were noted, along with representatives of all the Armenian political parties to the 80th anniversary commemoration of the 1915 hangings.
- ³ *Ibid.*, № 171 (15613) June 22, 1995.
- ⁴ *Aztag*, 70th year № 104 (19105), July 12, 1995; *Ararad*, 58th year № 190 (15632), July 14, 1995; *Zartok*, 58th year, July 13, 1995.
- ⁵ *Gantch*, July 22, 1995, quoting from *Safir* said Sunnis had given Maalouf 7000 votes, while the remaining 1945 votes were from all the Christian communities including the Armenians.
- ⁶ *Zartok*, 59th year № 283 (16498), December 12, 1995; *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8555, January 12, 1996.
- ⁷ *Zartok*, 59th year № 8 (16521), January 12, 1996; *Ibid.*, № 38 (16551), February 17, 1996.
- ⁸ *Ararad*, 59th year № 70 (15808), February 9, 1996.
- ⁹ *Zartok*, 59th year № 59 (16572), March 15, 1996; *Ararad*, 59th year № 97 (19835), March 15, 1996.
- ¹⁰ *Zartok*, March 26, 1996.
- ¹¹ *Nor Gyank* weekly, Los Angeles, May 9, 1996, as quoted by *Araks* periodical, Tehran, 10th year, № 79, May-June 1996, p. 6.
- ¹² *Aztag*, 71st year, April 27, 1996.
- ¹³ *Nor Gyank* May 9, 1996, mentioned that the Tashnag Bureau had dissolved the Central Committee of Lebanon and appointed a new Central Committee composed of Garo Hovhannessian, Dikran Djinbashian, Krikor Edjitian, Sebouh Hovnanian and Hagop Yapoudjian, as the former Council was split over the scandal. *Nor Gyank* further wrote that the dissolved Central Council led by Hrair Der Torossian had decided to participate in the elections with the candidacies of Hrair Der Torossian, Hagop Pakradouni, Shahe Barsoumian, Apraham Dedeyan, Hagop Demirdjian and Hagop Joukhadarian.
- ¹⁴ *Aztag* 71st year, № 65 (19365) May 25, 1996 also *L'Orient- Le Jour*, May 25, 1996.
- ¹⁵ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁷ *Ibid.* 71st year № 66 (19366) May 27, 1996.
- ¹⁸ *Ibid.*

- ¹⁹ *Ararad*, as quoted from *L'Orient-Express* April 1996 in its issue of April 12, 1996.
- ²⁰ *Ararad*, 59th year, May 31, 1996.
- ²¹ *Ararad*, 59th year, March 27, 1996.
- ²² *Aztag*, 71st year, № 74 (19374) June 6, 1996.
- ²³ *Ibid.* 71st year, № 73 (19373) June 5, 1996.
- ²⁴ *Zartouk*, 59th year, № 129 (16636), June 6, 1996.
- ²⁵ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 75(19375) June 7, 1996.
- ²⁶ *Ibid.* 71st year, № 84 (19384) June 18, 1996.
- ²⁷ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 192 (15930) July 12, 1996.
- ²⁸ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 129 (19429) August 9, 1996.
- ²⁹ *Ararad*, in its issue of 6 and 7 June 1996, had published V. Djerredjian's articles "With the Fatherland, supporting the Fatherland" which upset *Aztag*, which replied on June 18, 1996, in a front-page article entitled "Huntchag pains". Djerredjian's speech was published in *Ararad* June 18, 1996.
- ³⁰ *Zartouk*, 59th year, № 135 (16648) June 20, 1996. According to Y. Djerredjian (correspondence, August 2006) in one of the early inter-party meetings, the Huntchags stated their minimum demands of having one seat in Beirut to be appointed by the party and also agreed that the Ramgavars would have their own candidate. The Tashnags said the Beirut candidates should not be party members. The Huntchags replied that the Tashnags could appoint a non-party member but each party should decide its candidate. They further said, "It is better if we agree ourselves rather than have foreign forces force this on us."
- ³¹ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 91 (19391) June 26, 1996.
- ³² *Ararad*, 59th year, № 178 (15916) June 26, 1996.
- ³³ *Ibid.* 59th year, № 180 (15918) June 28, 1996.
- ³⁴ *Zartouk*, 59th year, № 145 (16658) July 2, 1996; *Ibid.* 59th year, № 146 (16659) July 3, 1996.
- ³⁵ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 99 (19399) July 5, 1996.
- ³⁶ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 205 (15993) July 27, 1996; *Aztag*, 71st year, № 110 (19410) July 18, 1996 and № 127 (19427) August 7, 1996; *Zartouk*, 59th year, № 164 (16677) July 24, 1996.
- ³⁷ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 99 (19399) July 5, 1996; *Ibid.* № 100 (19400) July 6, 1996.
- ³⁸ *Zartouk*, 59th year, № 141 (16654), June 27, 1996.
- ³⁹ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 183 (15921) July 2, 1996.
- ⁴⁰ *Zartouk*, 59th year, № 151 (16664), July 9, 1996; *Ibid.* 59th year, № 153 (16666), July 11, 1996.
- ⁴¹ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 108 (19408), 16 July 1996.
- ⁴² *Ararad*, 59th year, № 199 (15937), 20 July 1996.
- ⁴³ *Zartouk*, 59th year, № 153 (16666), 11 July 1996.
- ⁴⁴ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 192 (15930), 12 July 1996.
- ⁴⁵ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8695, 29 June 1996.
- ⁴⁶ *Ibid.* № 8708, 13 July 1996.
- ⁴⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁴⁹ *Zartouk*, № 59th year, № 159 (16673), 17 July 1996.
- ⁵⁰ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 110 (19410), 18 July 1996.
- ⁵¹ *Ibid.* 71st year, № 109 (19409), 17 July 1996.
- ⁵² *Aztag*, 71st year, № 110 (19410), 18 July 1996.

- ⁵³ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁴ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 112 (19412), 20 July 1996.
- ⁵⁵ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 113 (19413), 22 July 1996.
- ⁵⁶ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 201 (15939), 23 July 1996.
- ⁵⁷ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 114 (19414), 23 July 1996.
- ⁵⁸ *Ibid.*
- ⁵⁹ *Ibid.* 71st year, № 115 (19415), 24 July 1996; *Ararad*, 59th year, № 202 (15940) 24 July 1996; *L'Orient-Le Jour*, 27 July 1996.
- ⁶⁰ *Ibid.* 71st year, № 115 (19415), 24 July 1996.
- ⁶¹ Dr. Djeredjian (correspondence, August 2006) says upon Ambassador Melkonian's wish he met with him, and the Ambassador said the "Patriotic Front" should adopt the candidacy of Khanamirian. The Huntchag MP said he did not know of the existence of such a front and that the party did not need "patriotic lectures" from Armenia's ambassadors or even the president.
- ⁶² On 30 August 1996 the present writer was informed by Hrair Hovivian, a Ramgavar leader, that AGBU vice-president Berdj Setrakian had reconciled the AGBU-Ramgavar leadership during a 48 hr. visit to Lebanon.
- ⁶³ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 203 (15941), 25 July 1996.
- ⁶⁴ *Aztag*, 71st year № 115 (19415), 24 July 1996.
- ⁶⁵ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 179 (16692), 10 August 1996.
- ⁶⁶ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 117 (19417), 26 July 1996.
- ⁶⁷ *Ibid.* № 118 (19418), 27 July 1996.
- ⁶⁸ *Ibid.* № 119 (19419), 29 July 1996.
- ⁶⁹ *Ibid.*
- ⁷⁰ *Ibid.*
- ⁷¹ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 206 (15944) 28 July 1996; *Zartok*, 59th year, № 1166 (16680), 26 July 1996.
- ⁷² *Aztag*, 71st year, № 119 (19419), 29 July 1996.
- ⁷³ *Ibid.* № 118 (19418), 27 July 1996.
- ⁷⁴ *Ibid.* 71st year, № 124 (19424), 3 August 1996.
- ⁷⁵ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 200 (19410), 21 July 1996.
- ⁷⁶ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 132 (19432), 13 August 1996.
- ⁷⁷ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8750, 31 August 1996.
- ⁷⁸ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 123 (19423), 2 August 1996.
- ⁷⁹ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8726, 3 August 1996.
- ⁸⁰ *Ibid.* № 8728 (19424), 5 August 1996.
- ⁸¹ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8728, 5 August 1996; *Aztag*, 71st year, № 125 (19425), 5 August 1996.
- ⁸² *Ibid.*
- ⁸³ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 139 (19439), 21 August 1996, as quoted from *Hayat*.
- ⁸⁴ *Ibid.* 71st year, № 128 (19428), 8 August 1996.
- ⁸⁵ *Ibid.*
- ⁸⁶ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 173 (16682), 3 August 1996.
- ⁸⁷ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 207 (15945), 30 July 1996, and № 209 (15947), 1 August 1996.
- ⁸⁸ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8726, 3 August 1996.
- ⁸⁹ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8726, 3 August 1996; *Spurk*, № 7-12 July-December 1996 pp. 3, 4.
- ⁹⁰ *Gantch*, № 219 (75), 10 August 1996.

- ⁹¹ *Ibid.* № 220 (76), 17 August 1996.
- ⁹² *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8726, 3 August 1996; № 8738, 17 August 1996.
- ⁹³ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 216 (15954), 9 August 1996.
- ⁹⁴ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 132 (19432), 13 August 1996.
- ⁹⁵ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 135 (19435), 16 August 1996, *Zartok*, 59th year, № 184 (16697), 16 August 1996; *Ararad*, 59th year, № 222 (15960), 16 August 1996.
- ⁹⁶ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 128 (19428), 8 August 1996.
- ⁹⁷ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 216 (15954), 9 August 1996.
- ⁹⁸ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8732, 10 August 1996; *Aztag*, 71st year, № 130 (19430), 10 August 1996.
- ⁹⁹ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 131 (19431), 12 August 1996.
- ¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*, 71st year, № 134 (19434), 15 August 1996.
- ¹⁰¹ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8726, 3 August 1996.
- ¹⁰² *Ararad*, 59th year, № 220 (15958), 14 August 1996. Y. Djeredjian (correspondence, August 2006) says when the Huntchags met Michel Murr, he was in the delegation, and they proposed to vote for him in Metn, if the Tashnags agreed with them in Beirut. During the conversation a telephone call came from Ghazi Kanaan, and Murr reported to him the Huntchag proposal. Both sides concluded the Huntchags would vote for Murr in Metn, in exchange of Murr's assistance in reaching a concord in Beirut.
- ¹⁰³ *Ibid.* 59th year, № 221 (15959), 15 August 1996.
- ¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 59th year, № 223 (15961), 17 August 1996.
- ¹⁰⁵ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 184 (16697), 16 August 1996.
- ¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.* 59th year, № 187 (16700), 20 August 1996.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 135 (19435), 16 August 1996.
- ¹⁰⁸ Nicola Nassif and Rozanna Bou Mounsef, *Al-Masrah wa Kawaliss fi Fassoulaha*, Dar al Nahar [Beirut 1996] p. 226.
- ¹⁰⁹ *Gantch*, № 221 (77), 24 August 1996.
- ¹¹⁰ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 137 (19437), 19 August 1996.
- ¹¹¹ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 225 (15963), 20 August 1996.
- ¹¹² *Zartok*, 59th year, № 187 (16700), 20 August 1996.
- ¹¹³ *Nahar*, № 19520, 19 August 1996.
- ¹¹⁴ Nassif and Bou Mounsef, p. 247.
- ¹¹⁵ *Nahar*, 21 August 1996 as translated in as *Aztag* № 144 (19444), 27 August 1996.
- ¹¹⁶ *Aztag*, 71st year, 30 September 1996.
- ¹¹⁷ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 152 (19452), 5 September 1996, as taken from *Nahar*, 20 August 1996.
- ¹¹⁸ Nassif and Bou Mounsef, pp. 247-250.
- ¹¹⁹ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 152 (19452), 5 September 1996, as taken from *Nahar*, 20 August 1996 issue.
- ¹²⁰ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8739, 19 August 1996.
- ¹²¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹²² *Aztag*, 71st year, № 138 (19438), 20 August 1996.
- ¹²³ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8741, 21 August 1996.
- ¹²⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹²⁵ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 187 (16700), 20 August 1996.
- ¹²⁶ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 142 (19442), 24 August 1996.
- ¹²⁷ *Ibid.* 71st year, № 139 (19439), 21 August 1996.

- ¹²⁸ *Ibid.* 71st year, № 140 (19440), 22 August 1996.
- ¹²⁹ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8750, 31 August 1996.
- ¹³⁰ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8730, 7 August 1996.
- ¹³¹ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 124 (19424), 3 August 1996.
- ¹³² *Ibid.* 71st year, № 129 (19429), 9 August 1996, as translated from *Diar*.
- ¹³³ *Ibid.* 71st year, № 131 (19431), 12 August 1996, as translated from *Safir*.
- ¹³⁴ *Ibid.*
- ¹³⁵ *Zartonk*, 59th year, № 181 (16694), 13 August 1996.
- ¹³⁶ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 220 (15958), 14 August 1996.
- ¹³⁷ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 133 (19433), 14 August 1996.
- ¹³⁸ *Ibid.* 71st year, № 131 (19431), 12 August 1996.
- ¹³⁹ *Zartonk*, 59th year, № 184 (16697), 16 August 1996; *Ararad*, 59th year, № 222 (15960), 16 August 1996. According to Y. Djeredjian (correspondence, August 2006) the joint meeting with Khaddam was held on Syrians wish. During the meeting the Ramgavars, in the form of a question, pushed forward the idea of Huntchag-Ramgavar, joint list against the Tashnags. Khaddam did not object. The same day they met Ghazi Kanaan; the Ramgavars presented the same view, and Kanaan left this to both parties to decide. The Ramgavars interpreted the non-refusal of their proposal by the Syrians as an approval, while it was not so. The Huntchags were displeased by the Ramgavar proposal. The Huntchags thought the Ramgavars were trying to see that if they had no party candidate, the Huntchags also were not to have one. Indeed they so proposed and asked the Huntchags to propose an Evangelical candidate. Khaddam in their meeting with him had asked Khanamirian's age, which the Huntchags interpreted to mean that they could leave him out of the list.
- ¹⁴⁰ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 143 (14443), 26 August 1996 as translated from *Diar*, 7 August 1996.
- ¹⁴¹ *Diar*, 13 August 1996.
- ¹⁴² *Ararad*, 59th year, № 221 (15959), 15 August 1996.
- ¹⁴³ *Diar*, 13 August 1996.
- ¹⁴⁴ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 226 (15964), 21 August 1996 as translated from *Diar* of 15 August 1996.
- ¹⁴⁵ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 137 (19437), 19 August 1996.
- ¹⁴⁶ Y. Djeredjian (correspondence, August 2006) says the Huntchags had not presented any list to Hariri, but had stressed that they had one candidate, Y. Djeredjian, and had left the decision to select the other names to the other Armenian political parties and Hariri.
- ¹⁴⁷ *Zartonk*, 59th year, № 189 (16702), 22 August 1996, as translated from *Diar* of 21 August 1996.
- ¹⁴⁸ *Zartonk*, 59th year, № 189 (16702), 22 August 1996.
- ¹⁴⁹ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8747, 28 August 1996. Bouldoukian had announced his candidacy on 20 August 1996 as indicated in *L'Orient-Le Jour* of 21 August.
- ¹⁵⁰ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 228 (15966), 23 August 1996. Mihran Seferian gave to *L'Orient-Le Jour* (№ 8745, 26 August 1996) the text of a communiqué by the Regional Committee of the Huntchag Party, which objected to the decision of the Political Bureau of the party expelling Seferian from the party. The regional committees considered this decision as illegal and called on their supporters to vote for Seferian. *Aztag*, while mentioning the candidates in Beirut in front of Seferian's name, had indicated that he was a member of the Huntchag Executive Committee. Furthermore, Hovnanian, in his interview in *Nahar* on 20

- August 1996, published in *Aztag* on September 5 1996, considered Seferian as "a strong candidate" who had followers.
- ¹⁵¹ *Gantch*, № 219 (75) 10 August 1996; *L'Orient-Le Jour*, 17 August 1996.
- ¹⁵² *Gantch*, № 221 (77) 24 August 1996.
- ¹⁵³ The Armenian Popular Movement in a communiqué dated 30 August 1996, called upon supporters to vote for Hoss, Kammourie, Wakim, Berjawi, Matar, Bouldoukian, Demirdjian and Yessayan (*Spurk*, № 7-12, July-September 1996, p. 15).
- ¹⁵⁴ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 228 (15966), 23 August 1996 as quoted from *Liwa* of 17 August 1996.
- ¹⁵⁵ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 189 (16702), 22 August 1996.
- ¹⁵⁶ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 141 (1941), 23 August 1996.
- ¹⁵⁷ According to Y. Djeredjian (correspondence, August 2006), on August 22, Khaddam first met the Huntchag, Ramgavar joint delegation in the presence of Ghazi Kanaan, and the Huntchag MP presented the delegations demands. Then he met the Tashnag Party alone, and then a joint meeting with all the parties was held. At the meeting Khaddam gave the names of the Armenian candidates, which did not include Khanamirian. Khaddam said Khanamirian would later be appointed as a minister. Y. Djeredjian thinks Khanamirian did not become a minister as the Tashnags "played with the list and, instead of Atif Majdalani, his chief opponent Najah Wakim was elected."
- ¹⁵⁸ *Aztag*, 71st year № 141 (194), 23 August 1996.
- ¹⁵⁹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶⁰ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 190 (16703), 23 August 1996.
- ¹⁶¹ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶² *Aztag*, 71st year, № 8744, 24 August 1996.
- ¹⁶³ *Ibid.*
- ¹⁶⁴ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8744, 24 August 1996.
- ¹⁶⁵ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 192 (16705), 25 August 1996; *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8745, 26 August 1996.
- ¹⁶⁶ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 230 (15968), 25 August 1996.
- ¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 59th year, № 231 (15969), 27 August 1996.
- ¹⁶⁸ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 193 (16706), 27 August 1996; *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8747, 28 August 1996.
- ¹⁶⁹ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 194 (16707), 25 August 1996; *Aztag*, 71st year, № 145 (19445), 28 August 1996; *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8747, 28 August 1996.
- ¹⁷⁰ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 146 (19446), 29 August 1996.
- ¹⁷¹ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 146 (19446), 29 August 1996; *L'Orient Le Jour*, № 8749, 30 August 1996 gave Yerevanian's communiqué in full.
- ¹⁷² *Zartok*, 59th year, № 193 (16706), 27 August 1996.
- ¹⁷³ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 945 (19445), 28 August 1996.
- ¹⁷⁴ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 233 (15971), 28 August 1996.
- ¹⁷⁵ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 195 (16708), 29 August 1996; *Aztag*, 71st year, № 145 (19445), 28 August 1996; *Ararad*, 59th year, № 232 (15970), 28 August 1996.
- ¹⁷⁶ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8749, 30 August 1996.
- ¹⁷⁷ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 147 (19447), 30 August 1996.
- ¹⁷⁸ *Ibid.*

- ¹⁷⁹ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 144 (19444), 27 August 1996; *Zartok*, 59th year, № 194 (16707), 28 August 1996; *Ararad*, 59th year, № 232 (15970), 28 August 1996.
- ¹⁸⁰ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 148 (19448), 31 August 1996. *Nahar* raised the issue of the Protestant seat, under the title of "Beirut's Evangelical seat, Armenian or Arab", giving the historical background of the issue. *Aztag*, which gave the article in translation in its issue of 2 August 1996, found in it a "certain one sidedness". It further said that the Kataeb- Tashnag agreement, before the war, on the Protestant seat was a political one and had nothing to do with the Evangelical community authorities.
- ¹⁸¹ *L'Orient- Le Jour*, № 8750, 31 August 1996.
- ¹⁸² *Ibid.* № 8747, 28 August 1996.
- ¹⁸³ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 219 (15957), 13 August 1996.
- ¹⁸⁴ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8752, 3 September 1996.
- ¹⁸⁵ *Ibid.* № 8749, 30 August 1996.
- ¹⁸⁶ *Ibid.* № 8747, 28 August 1996.
- ¹⁸⁷ *Ibid.* № 8750, 31 August 1996.
- ¹⁸⁸ *Gantch*, № 222 (78), 31 August 1996.
- ¹⁸⁹ On 11 March 1998, MP Djeredjian told the present writer that one day before Hariri's list was finalized and announced, the Tashnags had tried to leave him out on the grounds that the Beirut list should not be comprised of party members. Djeredjian further said Catholicos Aram I intervened so that one of the members of the Cilician See Central Council, Yerevanian or Tabourian, be admitted to the list, but did not succeed. According to Y. Djeredjian (correspondence, August 2006) the Catholicos said to him it was preferable to have non-partisan candidates. His reply was that this proposal they had heard from the Tashnag Party and had refused. According to him, the Catholicos wanted the Huntchag Party to adopt the candidacy of Yerevanian, but the party refused that, as Yerevanian had left Lebanon for Canada during the war. *Ararad* had written an article about this, and Yerevanian was deeply upset. The Catholicos' other candidates were Babikian and Tabourian, both members of the Central Civil Council of the Catholicossate.
- ¹⁹⁰ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 235 (15973), 31 August 1996.
- ¹⁹¹ *Ibid.* 59th year, № 234 (15972), 30 August 1996.
- ¹⁹² *Zartok*, 59th year, № 197 (16710), 28 August 1996.
- ¹⁹³ *Ibid.* 59th year, № 169 (16682), 30 July 1996.
- ¹⁹⁴ *Ibid.* 59th year, № 195 (16708), 29 August 1996.
- ¹⁹⁵ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 234 (15972), 30 August 1996.
- ¹⁹⁶ *Aztag*, 59st year, № 149 (19449), 2 September 1996.
- ¹⁹⁷ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 234 (15972), 30 August 1996.
- ¹⁹⁸ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 194 (16707), 28 August 1996.
- ¹⁹⁹ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 148 (19448), 31 August 1996.
- ²⁰⁰ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 233 (15971), 29 August 1996 and № 235 (15973), 31 August 1996.
- ²⁰¹ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 149 (19449), 2 September 1996; *Zartok*, 59th year, № 199 (16712), 3 September 1996.
- ²⁰² *Zartok*, 59th year, № 199 (16712), 3 September 1996.
- ²⁰³ *L'Orient- Le Jour*, № 8750, 31 August 1996.
- ²⁰⁴ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 197 (16710), 31 August 1996; *Aztag* 71st year, № 148 (19448), 31 August 1996.
- ²⁰⁵ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 190 (16703), 23 August 1996.

- ²⁰⁶ Nassif and Bou Mounsef, p. 226.
- ²⁰⁷ The exact number of the Armenian voters on the government lists was 62,267.
- ²⁰⁸ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8750, 31 August 1996.
- ²⁰⁹ Nassif and Bou Mounsef, p. 226.
- ²¹⁰ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8751, 2 September 1996.
- ²¹¹ Nassif and Bou Mounsef, p. 237-241.
- ²¹² *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8752, 3 September 1996.
- ²¹³ Nassif and Bou Mounsef, pp. 237-241.
- ²¹⁴ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 149 (19449), 2 September 1996.
- ²¹⁵ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 199 (16712), 3 September 1996.
- ²¹⁶ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 237 (15975), 3 September 1996.
- ²¹⁷ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8751, 2 September 1996.
- ²¹⁸ *Eco News*, weekly, Beirut № 58, 9 September 1996.
- ²¹⁹ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8751, 2 September 1996.
- ²²⁰ *Ibid.*
- ²²¹ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 149 (19449), 2 September 1996.
- ²²² *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8752, 3 September 1996. According to *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8750, 31 August 1996, there were 17,867 nationalized citizens of whom 9824 were Sunnites, 2595 Shiites and 2213 Armenians.
- ²²³ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 154 (19454), 7 September 1996 as translated from *Shark*.
- ²²⁴ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8752, 3 September 1996.
- ²²⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²²⁶ *Ibid.*
- ²²⁷ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 213 (16276), 19 September 1996.
- ²²⁸ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 243 (19543), 21 December 1996.
- ²²⁹ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8752, 3 September 1996.
- ²³⁰ On the night of 1 September 1996 the Lebanese Broadcasting Company (LBC) television gave the results of 16 polling centers of Ashrafieh where Armenians had voted. The rounded results were as follows: 800 for Hariri and Hoss, 700 for Wakim, more than 600 for Babikian, Demirdjian, Joukhadarian, 450 for Djeredjian and 125 for Seferian and Bouldoukian.
- There were rumors among Armenian circles that Matar took Armenian votes, but his party members crossed out Armenian names in their votes.
- ²³¹ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8751, 2 September 1996.
- ²³² *Ararad*, 59th year, № 238 (15976), 4 September 1996.
- ²³³ Nassif and Bou Mounsef, pp. 338-339.
- ²³⁴ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 213 (16276), 19 September 1996, as translated from *Shiraa* 9 September 1996; *Zartok*, 23 September 1996 as translated from *Shiraa*, 16 September 1996.
- ²³⁵ *Zartok*, 59th year, 22 October 1996.
- ²³⁶ *Spurk*, № 7-12, July-December 1996, p. 6, indicated on 18 September 1996 the Armenian Popular Movement had published a declaration in the Arabic newspapers.
- ²³⁷ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8760, 12 September 1996.
- ²³⁸ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 176 (19476), 3 October 1996.
- ²³⁹ *Ibid.* 71st year, № 154 (19454), 7 September 1996.

- ²⁴⁰ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 157 (19457), 11 September 1996 and № 158 (19458), 12 September 1996.
- ²⁴¹ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 221 (16274), 17 September 1996.
- ²⁴² *Ibid.*, 59th year, № 205 (16268), 10 September 1996.
- ²⁴³ *Ibid.*
- ²⁴⁴ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 240 (15978), 6 September 1996.
- ²⁴⁵ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 131 (19431), 12 August 1996.
- ²⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, 71st year, № 122 (19422), 1 August 1996.
- ²⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, 71st year, № 139 (19439), 21 August 1996.
- ²⁴⁸ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 191 (16704), 24 August 1996.
- ²⁴⁹ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 111 (19411), 19 July 1996.
- ²⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 71st year, № 126 (19426), 6 August 1996, №155 (19455), 9 September 1996.
- ²⁵¹ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8752, 3 September 1996.
- ²⁵² *Aztag*, 71st year, № 152 (19452), 5 September 1996, as translated from *Nahar* 20 August 1996.
- ²⁵³ Majed Khaled Majed, *Intikhabat Lubnaniya 1861-1992 Qawanin-Natayej* (Lebanese elections 1861-1992 legislation results), Beirut, 1992, pp. 214-215.
- ²⁵⁴ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 152 (19452), 5 September 1996 as translated from *Nahar* 20 August 1996.
- ²⁵⁵ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 154 (19454), 7 September 1996.
- ²⁵⁶ *Ibid.*, 71st year, № 153 (19453), 6 September 1996.
- ²⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 71st year, № 155 (19455), 9 September 1996.
- ²⁵⁸ *Ibid.*
- ²⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, 71st year, № 159 (19459), 13 September 1996.
- ²⁶⁰ *Ararad*, 59th year, № 247 (15985), 14 September 1996.
- ²⁶¹ *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8762, 14 September 1996.
- ²⁶² *L'Orient-Le Jour*, № 8765, 18 September 1996.
- ²⁶³ *Aztag*, 71st year, № 243 (19543), 21 September 1996.
- ²⁶⁴ *Zartok*, 59th year, № 212 (16725), 18 September 1996.
- ²⁶⁵ *Ibid.*
- ²⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 59th year, № 235 (16748), 15 October 1996.
- ²⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, 59th year, 29 October 1996.
- ²⁶⁸ *Spurk*, № 7-12, July-December 1996, p. 8.

**ՀԱՅՈՑ ՄԱՄԼԱԿՑՈՒԹՅՈՒՆԸ ԼԻՐԱՆԱՆԻ ԷԼԻԱՍ ՀՐԱՈՒԻԻ (1989-1998)
ՆԱԽԱԳԱՀՈՒԹԵԱՆ ԺԱՄԱՆԱԿԱՇՐՋԱՆԻ ԽՈՐՀՐԴԱՐԱՆԱԿԱՆ
ԸՆՏՐՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐՈՒՆ (Բ.)
(Ամփոփում)**

ՉԱԻՆ ՄՍԸՐԼԵԱՆ

Հեղինակը հիմնուելով փամանակակից լիբանանահայ, առաւել՝ Լիբանանի մէջ լոյս տեսնող մի քանի ֆրանսատառ, արարատառ եւ անգլիատառ թերթերու, ինչպէս նաեւ անձնական հաղորդակցութեամբ կուտակուած տեղեկութիւններու վրայ, հանգամանորէն կը ներկայացնէ Լիբանանի 1996ի խորհրդարանական ընտրութիւններուն հայկական մասնակցութիւնը Պէյրութի, Հիւսիսային Մեթնի եւ Չահլէի ընտրաշրջաններուն մէջ:

1996ի ընտրութիւններուն հայկական ազգային կուսակցութիւններէն իւրաքանչիւրը փորձ կատարելէ ետք խլելու պետական ցանկին հայկական աթոռներուն մեծամասնութիւնը, այլազան ճնշումներու հետեւանքով ի վերջոյ համաձայնեցան Պէյրութի ընտրութիւններուն մասնակցիլ հայկական միացեալ ցանկով մը, մաս կազմելով վարչապետ Ռաֆիք Հարիրիի ընտրացանկին, նախապէս համաձայնելով, որ Մեթնի Միշէլ Մըրի ցանկը պիտի ընդգրկէ ՀՅ Դաշնակցութեան թեկնածուն: Չահլէի մէջ ՀՅԴ որդեգրեց թեկնածութիւնը 1992ին իր թեկնածուն պարտութեան մատնած Ծորն Քասարճիին, որ ընդունեց իրեն առաջարկուած կուսակցական հովանաւորութիւնը: Ընտրութիւններէն անմիջապէս ետք, երեսփոխաններուն շնորհաւորական ընդունելութիւններէն սկսեալ նշմարելի եղաւ իւրաքանչիւր կողմի իր սեփական ուղին պահելու կամքը:

Յօդուածը շարունակութիւնն է Հայկազեան Հայագիտական Հանդէսի ԻԱ., ԻԲ., ԻԳ., ԻԴ., ԻԵ. եւ ԻԶ. հատորներուն մէջ, նոյն հեղինակէն լոյս տեսած ուսումնասիրութեան: