



# The Suburban.com



September 8, 2007

- [Home](#)
- [Classifieds](#)
- [Archive](#)
- [Links](#)
- [Contact us](#)
- [Web Advertising](#)

**News Index**

- General News
- West End News
- West Island News
- Editorial/Opinion
- Sports
- Golf Cartoon
- Columnists
- Letter to the Editor
- Entertainment
- Editorial Cartoon
- Cohen Chatter
- Business in our Community
- In Our Community
- Community Events
- Crossword Puzzle
- Crossword Solution
- Sudoku
- Sudoku Solution

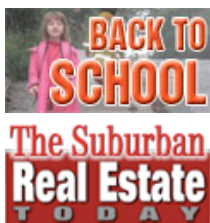
**Focus on**

- Lifestyle
- Family
- Homes
- Teens
- Etcetera
- Back To School
- Entertainment
- Gift Guide
- Celebrations
- Municipal By-Laws
- Suburban Awards

**Showroom**

- Neo Informatics

**Supplement**



**Editorial/Opinion**

## Opinion — Lebanon: Damascus 1 — Washington 0

By **Alain-Michel Ayache, Special to The Suburban**

It was obvious! The victory of Dr. Kamil Khoury, General Michel Aoun's candidate, over his competitor Amin Gemayel, former president of the Lebanese Republic, was foreseeable. What was not, was the difference in votes which carried the Aoun Front Patriotic Movement's candidate towards victory.

Indeed, the 418 votes which separate Khoury from Gemayel are indicative on more than one level. The first being proof once again that Aoun still has supporters in the Christian areas. Second, that he lost the majority of them as one can deduct from these results. From the 70 percent of Christian votes, Maronites in particular who supported him during the last national legislative elections, a minor percentage remains in his favour!

This loss of popularity in the Christian camp finds its origin in the alliance the General made with Hizballah and Syria during his 15 years of exile in France— he represented for the Christians Maronites in particular the spearhead of Lebanese nationalism and "anti-Syrianism." However, since his return to Lebanon in 2005, and in the name of a "national union," he multiplied political errors while betting on the wrong players...

His detractors, forming the current majority of the Lebanese government, are criticizing his political stands and his alignment on the Syrian policy against the interests of Lebanon. Aoun however defends the position of the presidency of the Republic. A main position which he seeks to occupy under the pretext of consolidating the presidential powers vis-a-vis an extremely centralizing Sunni Prime Minister. A government that he considers as being a carbon copy of that under the Syrian occupation, mainly because the majority of the ministers in question were Syrian allies at that time. However, if this "safeguard" of the presidential position is considered to be important by the Lebanese Church, it is nonetheless clear that the General is more than ever perceived today by Christians and the clergy as an inappropriate person to fill it.

The Maronite Patriarch sought at several times to close the breach between Aoun and Gemayel, but lamentably failed, mainly because of Aoun's stubbornness, his personality and his lack of respect for the Gemayel family. That aggressive attitude was translated more than once throughout Aoun's televised declarations whose level of respect against Gemayel approached more the level of a Syrian Moukhabarat agent rather than one of a General of the military Establishment, or even of a person aspiring to the supreme office in the country!

One realizes that the voices which brought Aoun's candidate to victory are mainly those of the Armenian camp, although only partly. The FPM also got the full support of the pro-Syrian Progressive Social National Party, closely tied to Damascus and depending on Syrian funds. Aoun's candidate also benefited from the votes of the "naturalized" Lebanese who came from Damascus by buses "to fulfill their civic rights".

Of course, a part of the Christians have also voted for the Aounist candidate. They are the followers of Michel Murr, former Minister of Interior and vice Prime Minister under the Syrian occupation of Lebanon.

Ironically, Michel Murr's son abstained from electing any of the candidates. He is the current Minister of Defence and had been a victim of an assassination attempt by the same people who killed former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafik Hariri.

For the observers and analysts of the Lebanese political scene, the success of the Aoun "Patriotic Current" (Tayyar) in these by-elections shows the capacity of the latter to obstruct the government's plans for Lebanon. A government he sees as unconstitutional and non-representative of the will of the Lebanese people. However, these results are only the preview of the electoral "fight" to come that Christians in particular will have to carry out for the presidency of the Republic. The candidacy of Michel Aoun for the presidency of the Lebanese Second Republic, although announced, will undoubtedly not receive any support from the Christian population that it is supposed to represent. The major problem for the Maronites becomes then, finding an acceptable alternative to Aoun.

Right now the American analysts think that the presidency of the Republic will form the next round of the continuous bras de fer between the American administration and Damascus.

However, Washington seems to have taken the initiative after this "victory" of Aoun over the Siniora government by announcing the blocking and seizing of all the accounts of American citizens and known American companies that granted financial support to General Aoun. Thus, and until the next presidential elections which should take place at the end of September, the two camps seem to be ready for one of the hottest autumns in Lebanon. Some are even speaking of armed confrontations based on the continuous rearmament of Syria's allies in Lebanon...

**Poll**

**Do you agree with the suspension of the Bill 104 judgement?**

- Yes
- No

To see past poll results click [here](#).



**Calendar of Events**

**September 2007**



Alain-Michel Ayache is a Middle East expert and teaches in the Department of Political Science at the University of Quebec in Montreal.

2007-08-29 10:14:20

**Print Story**



Click banner to download supplements in PDF version. This may take a few minutes.

**Write your comments:**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tel.:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Email:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Content:**

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30						

**Today's event**

- + West Island Association for the Intellectually Handicapped
  - + Cause 4 Paws
  - + Quebec Rabbit Rescue
  - + Montreal School of Performing Arts
- [7 events more >>](#)

**Info for Advertisers**

- Technical Specifications
- Tear Sheets
- FTP site

**Visit these sites**



[Home](#) | [Classifieds](#) | [Archive](#) | [Calendar](#) | [Contact us](#) | [Join](#) | [Login](#)

Copyright © 2004 The Suburban

Powered by eDocuments Live