

Cheminade Presidential Campaign In France Begins To Break Out

by Nancy Spannaus and Christine Bierre

Feb. 4—In a development with the potential to badly disrupt the British Empire’s plans for war and dictatorship, on Jan. 31, Lyndon LaRouche’s co-thinker Jacques Cheminade announced that he had gathered the 500 signed commitments from elected officials required for ballot status to run for President of France. The first round of the French Presidential elections is scheduled for April 22.

Cheminade’s re-emergence as a Presidential contender, after his 1995 race brought the wrath of the French political establishment down on his head, has caused shock waves throughout the country. As the candidate has repeatedly emphasized in the interviews he’s given since the announcement, his warnings of the grave financial crisis on the horizon, during the 1995 campaign, have given him enormous credibility among some political circles and growing sections of the population.

Pressed by the media to respond to why he, and not other candidates who are better known nationally, has gathered the 500 signed commitments, Cheminade stressed again and again that it was this credibility, combined with the realization by the mayors of many small or medium-sized towns who are supporting him, that the heavy austerity imposed by the government on the municipalities in recent years was due to that crisis.

The ‘System Candidates’

The leading contenders are incumbent President Nicolas Sarkozy and Socialist Party candidate François Hollande.

Sarkozy, who has occasionally gone into rhetorical flights of fancy against financial speculation, is in reality implementing a policy drafted by the City of London, both in France and in the European Union, in collaboration with Germany’s Chancellor Angela Merkel. The Franco-German duo has been instrumental in imposing on the EU a hyperinflationary bailout policy for all the bankrupt banks, and crushing austerity on the populations of all EU nations, in the name of balancing the budgets “to save the euro.” Often inviting comparisons



EIRNS/Julien Lemaître

Presidential candidate Jacques Cheminade campaigns in Paris, Nov. 22, 2011. He was subjected to a vicious campaign of slander and judicial assault during his 1995 campaign, but today the climate is different—so far at least. People remember him as the man who told the truth about the oncoming financial crisis.

to Napoleon, Sarkozy has also embraced an imperial foreign policy, writ large in France's role in regime change in Libya, including the illegal murder of Qaddafi, and now in Syria. A number of financial scandals have also contributed to the incumbent President's low popularity.

While Hollande has made waves by making a kind of two-tier banking system and attacks on speculation a major part of his platform, he has refrained from advocating a full separation of investment from commercial banks, as a Glass-Steagall standard would require. He is also neither contesting nor promoting a reform of the euro system, currently on its deathbed. Quite the contrary, Hollande advocates a stronger role for the supranational European Central Bank and the emission of euro bonds as a way to solve the crisis of indebtedness of banks and governments. Furthermore, his program aimed at zero deficit in 2017 only calls for EU23 billion in actual spending for new housing and financing for small and medium companies. He is proposing an austerity budget where every expense would be covered by a cut elsewhere. Nowhere is the candidate pledging the concrete steps necessary to launch a full-scale, great-project based recovery, based on restored national sovereignty and a vision of planetary economic development.

The race, however, is still wide open, since Sarkozy's popular support is stuck at 24% in the polls, and while Hollande is the "frontrunner," only 31% of those polled support him. Two other contenders are being presented by the "system" as alternatives, to control the race: Marine Le Pen, president of the National Front and the daughter of the party's first leader, the anti-immigration extreme right-winger Jean Marie Le Pen, credited with 20% of the vote; and François Bayrou, the head of the Christian Democratic MODEM, who has risen, once again, to national significance, with 14% favorable opinions in the polls.

Marine Le Pen has gained popularity by attacking the euro system, but she proposes to replace it by incompetent "national" monetarism which does not contest the autonomous role of the central bank. As for Bayrou, while claiming he wants a renaissance of French industry, he is running on a balanced budget program which entails EU100 billion in public spending cuts and new taxes over the next five years.

Indeed, as a cartoon published in *Le Canard Enchaîné* perfectly illustrates (see picture), all the main

candidates, including Le Pen and Bayrou, are "system" candidates, offering different versions of monetarism, and the only outsider of stature is Jacques Cheminade.

A Real Alternative

This is why Cheminade's campaign is creating such a stir. His program, inspired by LaRouche, is the only one that could bring an end to this crisis. His is the only competent proposal to re-establish economic and financial sovereignty by retaking control of monetary emission, through the creation of a national, publicly controlled, bank. He is also the only candidate calling for a total overhaul of the monetary system, establishing a Glass-Steagall-style separation between commercial banks on the one side, and insurance companies and investment banks on the other, and calling for a parliamentary commission of investigation of financial crimes, modeled on the 1930s U.S. Pecora Commission, which would lead to a controlled bankruptcy of the toxic financial instruments polluting the banks. In terms of foreign policy, Cheminade denounces the current Western military drive against Russia and China, and any attempts to use the Middle East as the cockpit for war. He would bring France back to the policies of President Charles de Gaulle, of mutual development in Europe from the Atlantic to the China Sea.

Cheminade's campaign staff organized a media and Internet blitz on Jan. 31, the day that Cheminade announced that he had collected at least 500 signed commitments for the race, and was therefore on the road to qualify to participate in the elections. He made his announcement during several media events, including a 10-minute primetime morning interview on Radio Monte Carlo (with 800,000 listeners), a press conference in Paris to release his campaign book (*A World Without the City of London and Wall Street: A Great Construction Site for Tomorrow*), and an appearance on a top national evening talk show, Canal + Grand Journal.

The journalists on the evening show were flabbergasted that Cheminade had succeeded in gathering the signatures, especially when allegedly major candidates, such as former minister Christine Boutin (on the podium with Cheminade that evening) and Le Pen have not been able to gather them. Much of the media later picked up on that issue, such as Europe 1 radio, whose early morning report started with, "Oh, Marine Le Pen will not be happy today ... while she is still

trying to assemble the commitments of elected officials for the presidential elections, Jacques Cheminade announced that he has them already.” Going back to Cheminade’s presence in the race in 1995, the journalist concluded with a loud: “Jacques is back” (in English!).

Cheminade summed up the situation with respect to his rivals at the conclusion of the Radio Monte Carlo show, saying, in paraphrase: The late French President François Mitterrand “promised to fight the financial world; he capitulated in the middle of the battlefield. [Then-President] Jacques Chirac, at the Halifax [G7] summit, denounced speculation as ‘financial AIDS’; he capitulated in the middle of the battlefield. Sarkozy, in his Toulon speech, also claimed he would fight speculation; he capitulated in the middle of the battlefield. Now, François Hollande says he wants to take on finance, but calls for the separation of ‘banking activities’ only, while in reality what is required is a strict separation of banks themselves and a new Pecora Commission.”

The well-planned Cheminade media offensive was accompanied with his campaign’s outreach effort all over France. In Paris, 25 organizing squads reached the financial districts in La Défense and Issy les Moulineaux, the Foreign Ministry at Invalides, and the major train stations of Montparnasse and Saint-Lazare. In the Paris region, over 25,000 copies of a leaflet, “Who Is Afraid of Cheminade?” have gone out, out of 250,000 in distribution nationally. Another 25,000 were distributed in Rouen, Nantes, Rennes, Lyon, Toulouse, Bordeaux, Toulon, Nice, Macon, Montélimar, Lille, Metz, Nancy, Poitiers, Chaumont, Mulhouse, Strasbourg, Marseille, Saint-Etienne, Clermont-Ferrand, and Grenoble.

The task now is for the Cheminade campaign to go from pledges, which he now has in hand, to actual signed documents. The official documents will be given to the mayors on Feb. 23 and are due to be handed to the Constitutional Court no later than March 16. Once the Court certifies the candidates, the law calls for state funding of close to EU150,000 to jump-start the campaign, and equal publicity to all candidates, in private and public channels, throughout the official election period.

The Scandal of 1995

Also contributing to Cheminade’s comeback is the reaction to the abuse against him in 1995, when the

electoral laws were not only broken, but political corruption resulted in the decision of the Constitutional Council (the highest judicial authority in the land), on flimsy political pretexts, not to reimburse Cheminade’s campaign expenses, as all candidates have the right to, in proportion to their results. The state demanded that Cheminade not only pay the equivalent of 4.7 million francs¹ of campaign expenses from his own pocket, but also repay the FF1 million (equivalent to EU150,000) in government funds advanced to his campaign, leading the candidate, whose personal resources are quite limited, to financial ruin, and the state to seize all his belongings!

Finding no fault with either his expenses or receipts, in the smallest budget in the election campaign, the Council invented a motive to refuse to reimburse him, charging that the absence of an interest rate on the loans that had been contracted to balance out his campaign budget at the end of the election, meant that they could be interpreted as “donations,” at a date in the campaign at which any further contributions were forbidden. The Council decreed that “the absence of a stipulated interest constituted an advantage on behalf of the candidate.”

As the Cheminade campaign pointed out in August 1996, “The argument seems all the more legally and politically surprising, when taking into account the fact that at least two others among the major candidates had overtly exceeded the authorized baseline for [expended] sums by 10 to 30 times, without any grievance being raised against them. Add to this secret, remarked on by the press, the fact, also of public notoriety, that the campaigns of other candidates were fed by ‘secret funds’ from Matignon [the prime minister’s office] and commissions on defense contracts (protected by the judges as ‘defense secrets’) as well as from other, even less honorable sources in real estate and ‘African business.’”

Indeed, the campaign expenses of the major candidates in that Presidential election campaign (Jacques Chirac and Edouard Balladur), went way over the allowed ceilings, but were accepted. This was confirmed by investigating magistrates and by a number of leading figures, journalists included, over the course of 2011.

Between 1996 and 2010, Cheminade’s property

1. The euro had not yet been adopted in 1995. It officially went into circulation on Jan. 1, 2002.

seized was seized by the government, including his bank accounts, and a lien was placed on his apartment, which the government renewed in February 2010. On the eve of the 2012 Presidential campaign, the state again demanded from Cheminade the “modest” sum of EU171,325.46 (the original EU150,000 plus fines accumulated since).

The Truth Will Out

The scandal became even greater in 2011, as an affair known as “Karachi-gate” revealed that candidate Edouard Balladur had deposited more than FF10 million in large denominations in his account, money that the judges suspect had come from kickbacks on arms sales to Pakistan and Saudi Arabia. Investigating magistrates recently indicted two former close collaborators of Balladur at that time, Nicolas Bazire, then-chief of staff of Prime Minister Balladur, and Thierry Gaubert, adjunct to Balladur’s budget minister, one Nicolas Sarkozy, who also served as Balladur’s campaign spokesman and campaign manager. Both are accused of having transported suitcases full of cash from Switzerland to finance Balladur’s campaign. Similarly, the clan war at the heart of the French state revealed that Chirac’s campaign had been financed out of suitcases of cash from Africa.

The fact is, as the newspaper *Libération* demonstrated in October 2010, that the rapporteurs of Constitutional Council, those in charge of ascertaining the validity of the campaign accounts of all the candidates, knew of the fraud in Balladur’s and Chirac’s accounts. But Roland Dumas, a former Mitterrand crony known for his corruption, who had been named to preside over the Constitutional Council, compelled the rapporteurs to doctor both their accounts in order to make them appear “valid,” but decided to invalidate those of the candidate whose campaign had spent the least money—Jacques Cheminade.

Dumas himself admitted his discrimination. On May 11, 2011, the host of the national TV program “Face the French” (*Face aux Français*), Guillaume Durand, asked Dumas why he invalidated the accounts of Cheminade and not the others, to which Dumas shrugged, “Well, Cheminade was rather clumsy, while others acted more legit...!” The flagrant injustice against Cheminade has been the object of more and more media coverage in France in recent months, not least because one of the members of the Constitutional Council then, Jacques Robert, de-

cided to reveal most of the damning facts to the news media.

As the crisis deepens, as France and Europe as a whole are on the verge of total collapse due to the financial crisis, French patriots in positions of a certain prominence are more and more deciding that it is time to do what Cheminade has long been fighting for: return the nation’s destiny to its sovereign control.

Interview: Jacques Cheminade

‘Incompetent Oligarchy’ Is Destroying France

The following interview was conducted on Feb. 3 by Christine Schier of our Wiesbaden bureau.

EIR: Jacques, I would first like to say that all your friends abroad, in the U.S., in Germany, Italy, Scandinavia, were very happy to hear that you had announced you had 500 pledges from mayors to endorse your candidacy for President. This should provide a crucial flank in the overall strategic situation, as your program and warnings go out in the media.

Cheminade: Well, this is only the beginning; we should not be too euphoric about it. But what’s interesting is that the reactions are not of the same type that they were in 1995 [when Cheminade ran for the Presidency for the first time]. There are some persons who are trying to launch defamatory accusations, but many people react immediately by supporting us. They recognize that I was the victim of a terrible injustice in 1995, and that the time has come to let me speak out, because I was the only French political leader who announced that a crisis would break out in the next 10 to 12 years, and 12 years later, it did.

The mayors appreciate that very much. They gave me their pledge, officially called a “presentation promise,” because they see that I was right, and the others were wrong. Moreover, they saw that the young activists who came to see them were very determined, had a good deal of humor, and were actually defending a cause, rather than repeating phrases or things that had been dictated to them.



EIRNS/Julien Lemaître

Presidential candidate Jacques Cheminade campaigns in Paris, Nov. 22, 2011. He was subjected to a vicious campaign of slander and judicial assault during his 1995 campaign, but today the climate is different—so far at least. People remember him as the man who told the truth about the oncoming financial crisis.

They were creative, and respected the mayors. They did not approach the mayors as simple “machines to produce signatures,” but as human beings with whom they wanted to conduct a real republican dialogue.

A ‘Buzz’ in the Media

We have had quite a lot of media coverage, although it shouldn’t be overestimated. On Canal Plus, for example, a well-known journalist, Jean-Michel Apathie, said that my candidacy was totally useless, and he repeated it several times, but that completely discredited him. He was strongly attacked afterwards. Many people were disgusted with how rude he was, and they thought I did very well in responding to him. They liked the fact that I called into question the “incompetent oligarchy” which has put France into financial receivership, with the help of the “state nepotism structures.” There was a buzz about that on Internet. In fact, the Internet is changing part of the campaign.

There were also attacks, for example from a Socialist Senator, Patrick Mennucci, who said on RMC [Radio Monte Carlo] that I was anti-Semitic, from the far right, and that I regretted the death of bin Laden. It was so stupid that people can only laugh about it. But I asked [Socialist Presidential candidate] François Hollande to have Mr. Mennucci withdraw his accusations, because they are false. And this morning, the same RMC allowed me to answer, and for five minutes, I demolished the slanders of this moron. A journalist

from the radio said that he himself had been affected by the rumor, then checked out our website, and saw absolutely nothing related to anti-Semitism or right-wing extremism.

EIR: Are the journalists generally interested in the solutions you propose in the current crisis? Or are they trying to silence the debate?

Cheminade: I have been asked what the difference is between what François Hollande proposes and my proposal, because he is also calling for a separation of banking activities. But he proposes that those activities remain under the same roof, while I say they must be different banks, under a law of the type of the Glass-Steagall Act, or what we had in France after the Liberation.

I have been asked who else in France thinks that way. I answered, Maurice Allais, for example, yesterday morning. It was one of his most constant proposals, and he approved of my approach, and that of Mr. LaRouche. Some counter that Lyndon LaRouche is a heretical figure. I say, I’m glad he is! Anyone who attacks the financial oligarchy and the City of London is labeled, by all those who follow their policy line, a heretical figure. This is to be expected, because we are in the midst of combat, and no holds are barred when it comes to us.

I added that, in terms of the political movements in France, I am at the intersection of the Social Christians of Brittany’s “Democratic Abbots,” and of Marc Sang-

nier; the Gaullism of June 1940 and de Gaulle as a representative of the Free French during the Resistance; the socialism of Jean Jaurès, and to a certain extent of Léon Blum, who supported de Gaulle during the Resistance; and also of the Radical Party, in particular the current around the solidarism of Léon Bourgeois, which is very different from that of other countries. Bourgeois said: We have a debt towards the generations of the past, which we have to pay for the sake of the future generations. I would add, a debt to the future, but not to the investment banks, the institutions of Wall Street and the City [of London], who brought us the crisis we are in.

At first, I did not have a chance to bring these issues up; the journalists mainly want to know why I'm running, and how I got the mayors to sign. That is the big question being asked: how I got the signatures, whereas Marine Le Pen doesn't have them. There's a cartoon which was published in the Feb. 2 *Nice Matin* and *Var Matin*, which shows Marine Le Pen looking into a mirror, asking: "Mirror, my beautiful mirror, tell me that I'm the most desirable candidate." And the mirror answers, "Even Jacques Cheminade is more successful than you!"

There's a tremendous buzz around this issue—that I managed to get the signatures, and the others didn't. I explain that it's because of our young activists, and their qualities, because I had forecast the crisis that was coming, and also because of the international character of my campaign, the opening in which domestic policy and foreign policy, international policy are a unity; it's not limited to simple crisis management.

So that is immensely commented upon, everywhere. On political blogs, there have been many attacks against the people who have interviewed me. I must say, that one interview was very honest and fair, on RMC Matin, by Jean-Jacques Bourdin, and again on Feb. 2 on LCI TV. On France Culture, there was one

program which brought up the question of cults, and I threw them back on their starting blocks through actual quotes of the Miviludes (the official anti-cult agency in France), which said that there is absolutely nothing of substance behind the accusations against me.

The Future of the Euro

EIR: On economic policy, is your position on the euro unique compared to the other candidates?

Cheminade: Yes and no. It is not, insofar as Marine Le Pen has a line which is similar to Dupont-Aignan. They are both against the euro. But what I say is that the

euro is already destroying itself in any case, so what we need is a great project for the future. And that's where the really major difference comes in. It's on the issue of productive credit, and great projects for the future. We need a Glass-Steagall to clean out the "Augean stables," to begin with, and we need productive state credit. In that way, Europe becomes meaningful, and can be integrated into a world of great infrastructure works.

But for that to happen, we have to repeal Article 123 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU, and repeal the French law of Aug. 4, 1993, which abrogated the law of Jan. 3, 1973,

which prohibits the Banque de France from advancing credit, or from buying the debt of the Public Treasury in order to finance economic development. And the law of May 12, 1998, which prohibits the Banque de France and Board members from taking orders from the government, or from any other authority.² So



Nice Matin

National Front (NF) candidate Marine Le Pen saying to her mirror, "Mirror, my beautiful mirror, tell me that I'm the most desirable candidate." The mirror replies, "Even Jacques Cheminade is more successful than you!" From the websites of Nice Matin and Var Matin, Feb. 2, 2012.

2. The 1973 law forced the state to borrow from private financial institutions taking interest on the loans, whereas the Banque de France, a state bank, did not take interest. The 1998 law turned the Banque de France into an entity independent from the state, with the task of ensuring monetary stability and not economic development. And the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU prohibits central banks from loaning interest-free money to the member states.

the Banque de France has become a central bank, instead of a national bank.

In France, there is now a big debate on the issue of a national bank. There are a number of articles on leaving the euro, but I insist that it should be a positive exit from the euro, and not for the fun of it.

There's another important point: the attacks against Germany. People say, "Merkel is Germany." I reply that that has nothing to do with my vision of Germany, which is that of Schiller, of Heine, and of Helga Zepp-LaRouche.

Interesting is that my campaign, as Lyndon LaRouche pointed out, is producing in Europe a rift in the agreement on going for austerity and rigor. And from that standpoint, it is useful that François Hollande attacked the world of finance, even though the attack is limited. He denounced austerity, but he did not back that up with the measures to be taken, as I do. So I find myself in a position of *avant-garde* of all this.

People ask, "How could this guy, who only received 0.28% of the vote in 1995, gather 500 signatures, while Marine Le Pen, Hervé Morin, Dominique de Villepin, and Christine Boutin don't have theirs." What is our secret?

A clip came out on the first channel TF1, which lasted 40 seconds, in which they completely changed what I had said, but it comes out effectively, because it shows Marine Le Pen lamenting, in front of the Senate, "Oh, I only have 340 signatures, it's awful." And then it shows me, when I was asked how come we got the signatures, and I answer, "Because we're intelligent," and then I burst out laughing.

So, all of this is going on. For the moment, I haven't been able to develop the real issues too much, except for the Glass-Steagall and state credit. When I bring up the danger of war, everybody is astonished, in the world of the media.

So, we're not yet in the heat of the race, but we've come out of the starting block. We've got our foot in the door, and now we have to get the most important part out: that is all of the ideas.

'A Community of Principle'

EIR: We understand that your candidacy has been heartily endorsed by Lyndon and Helga LaRouche. Would you describe your relationship with these two political figures?

Cheminade: It is a longstanding relationship that

has inspired my intellectual and political life. The first thing that opened for me a new vision on what was happening in the '70s of the 20th Century is what Lyndon LaRouche had to say on economics and culture. He was then the only one who foresaw that ultra-liberalism in economics, under the rule of the financial oligarchy, promoting the looting of labor and tangible production to the benefit of short-term profits, was supported and driven by a destructive counterculture, based on an emotional "short-termism." His understanding of the fight of the British Empire against the American Republic, and of what Benjamin Franklin and Alexander Hamilton really represented, gave me a key to understanding where I was, together with the writings of Allen Salisbury³ and Graham Lowry.⁴

At the same time, our work on science and art, from Riemann and Leibniz to the German Classics in music and the Italian and Northern Renaissances, defined for me a new track in my mind, not in opposition to what I was before, but as an outreach into a new realm. The present work of the "Basement" scientific team, which leads us into the future through the exploration of the past, creates for me an opportunity to find new friends in the past and in the present, like Sky Shield, whom I enjoyed meeting in Europe, or our team of young candidates to whom I never have actually talked, but who are closer to my fight here, than many others more available to my senses.

As for Helga Zepp-LaRouche, I owe her for having led me to explore Friedrich Schiller and Nicholas of Cusa, without whom I would never have been what I think I am.

Journalists keep asking me here if I am the representative in France of Lyndon H. LaRouche, seeing that as a sort of functional or bureaucratic link. I answer them that unfortunately they are silly and cannot understand what a relation of a true human mind to other human minds could be, and that even when we don't talk or see each other, there is something beyond, which is a community of principle. That community of principle is a joy forever.

3. W. Allen Salisbury, *The Civil War and the American System: America's Battle with Britain, 1860-1876* 2nd edition (Washington, D.C.: Executive Intelligence Review, 1992).

4. H. Graham Lowry, *How The Nation Was Won: America's Untold Story* (Washington, D.C.: Executive Intelligence Review, 1988).