
Cheminade's Program

'We must change the rules of the game'

We reproduce here in translation excerpts of the program issued by Jacques Cheminade. The program, like those of the other presidential candidates, has been mailed at government expense to the 40 million households of France's eligible voters.

This presidential election is taking place at a tragic moment in our history, in which we confront world financial cataclysm. This ought to provide the occasion for redefining the role of France, creating a basis for great projects to rebuild the world.

I am the candidate, the only candidate, committed to this purpose.

The other candidates are lying, or lying to themselves. I, on the contrary, begin from this fundamental reality: A speculative cancer is proliferating in the world and destroying the body of the economy. We are in the midst of a depression.

The question to ask—the question the other candidates do not ask—is the following: Can we put in place a viable economic system which will prevent the unraveling of the social fabric, the disintegration of our representative system of government, and the devolution into war of a world whose economy is contracting?

My answer is "yes." Yes, on condition that we do three things: Identify the enemy; fight for a new program, and organize a resistance against the enemy.

I. Identifying the enemy

People would have us believe that there exists a supreme entity called "markets," to which we must submit, because that is the natural state of society. Nothing could be further from the truth: The markets have a face. It is the face of the oligarchy, of the City of London and Wall Street, of the American Federal Reserve and the International Monetary Fund. The outposts of their policy domestically are the Treasury, the Banque de France, and the incestuous little world of finance, of cabinet ministers and the pen-pushing Court journalists. This financial dictatorship is the cause of the unemployment. To pretend to combat unemployment with-

out confronting this dictatorship is a fraud.

This dictatorship is also an intellectual one. It claims a monopoly over thought, and everywhere creates the obsession with gambling and speculation, and the lure of immediate gain, which are degrading and destroying human labor. The insane speculation in derivatives, the drug traffic, and the real estate casino are at the heart of this system.

I know that several years ago, you did not believe me. Now, with what is happening around the world today—the crash of Mexico, of Barings, of American cities—and here at home—the fall of Crédit Lyonnais, the morality revealed by the Tapie Affair or by the Grenoble administration—you know we cannot continue this way. Whoever does not start by attacking the enemy, condemns his country to impotence and to the loss of its soul, and delivers it over to ideologies of Blood and Soil and Race.

That is why we must change the rules of the game.

II. A new program for peace, growth, and jobs

France in the year 2000 is not a vision of misery, but an outlook of growth, of the launching of discoveries for the common good. We can and must think on a grand scale. . . .

For that, it is necessary to take up a great fight against injustice. France and Europe must enter the lists in two causes: the battle against poverty and unemployment, and the struggle for international peace. These two causes are indissolubly linked, because the driving force for peace can only be mutual economic development—and that is the only source of employment.

To establish the new rules of the game, I propose the following commitments:

- Eliminate the financial cancer and set in motion a new East-West and North-South Marshall Plan, redirecting money flows into infrastructure and production.

- To do this, we must put into orderly bankruptcy the agents of the international monetary and financial system who are already bankrupt in fact. In any case, the present system is in the process of foundering: We must act before the chaos of its collapse irrevocably ruins the economy.

- This approach presupposes that the state has retaken control of credit and the coining of money. France must spearhead a European effort to reestablish the initiative, the power, and the dignity of the state, which today are a laughingstock.

- A Franco-German alliance (on condition that such an alliance breaks with the monetarist control of the Bundesbank and the Banque de France) must constitute the point of departure for fighting this battle—it must do so by adopting common scientific, infrastructure, and industrial policies, and the

new Marshall Plan as the outlook and direction for Eurasia and Eurafica. . . .

- A common defense based on the application of new physical principles, a space policy, and a massive effort in public health—man himself is the frontier of life—must lead to productive spinoffs in the civilian economy, with all their multiplier effects. We trace three paths into the future: long-distance action by way of, e.g., lasers, particle-beam weapons; the fight for life, in particular strengthening the immune system, and mastering the science of the life of the cell; and the production of energy at lower cost and without waste (controlled thermonuclear fusion and super-conductivity).

For the debate on “management,” we must substitute in our country once more a debate on ideas, a real debate on the goals of policy and politics. To do that, it is necessary that we be honest with ourselves and stop tolerating the intolerable, both in our foreign policy and our domestic policy.

Foreign policy

- Break our new *Entente Cordiale* with the City of London. We cannot pretend to be a republic at the same time that we strike a pact with an oligarchy which is ruining its own country. We cannot defend world peace and at the same time ally with the party of financial warfare.

- Stop our sinister complicity with the policy of genocide in Bosnia, masked by a “humanitarian” hypocrisy. Here I undertake a four-point commitment: lift the siege on the cities and towns of Bosnia—not only Sarajevo—including by force, if necessary; maintain the territorial integrity of Bosnia-Herzegovina; prevent the dismemberment of Croatia; and try those responsible for genocide. It is false to say that we have no military means for imposing a just peace, and unacceptable to permit ourselves to be blackmailed. . . . Finally, the essential thing: All the states of former Yugoslavia—including Serbia—would benefit from a European reconstruction. That is the dimension missing from the great projects of the Delors Plan.

- Put in place a commission of inquiry on Rwanda, to bring to light those people at home and abroad who are responsible for the genocide, notably English and French nationals.

- Redefine France’s policy in Algeria and Lebanon—in Algeria, by supporting the peace plan defined by the democratic forces and “Islamist” patriots; in Lebanon, in demanding an end to the double occupation, Syrian and Israeli.

- Redefine our African policy, from the perspective of a cooperative accord with the Mandela government to develop the entire continent, inasmuch as Mandela leads a country whose resources are sufficient to undertake this effort with us.

- Support with real financial assistance the Mideast

Peace Plan, mobilizing French technologies to relieve the shortage of usable water and to make the desert bloom.

Domestic policy

- With the European framework and the anti-monetarist foundations we have defined, and only with them, an increase in wages in France becomes not only possible, but necessary. It is absurd to say that it was inflated salaries which caused the unemployment! A Europe in which rates of unemployment and indebtedness grow simultaneously, in which the interest rates grow more rapidly than productivity, and in which the revenues of capital are decontrolled—untaxed—while those of labor are ground down, is a Europe which is being backed against the wall.

It is absurd to pretend that it is necessary to reduce social entitlements and retirement benefits, when the real cause of the “hole” in social security is the fact that, for 20 years, the total salaries of society, upon which the financing of social security depends, have been reduced. We have indeed been too generous—but too generous to financiers’ income! It is necessary, with a bold policy of renewed economic growth, to return to a social policy which provides housing, does not exclude people from its benefits, and provides aid to the family.

- National education must respect and heighten the creative powers of children, in enabling them to relive the great moments of our history and the great discoveries of our scholars and scientists. The effort of school and business must be coordinated so that this creative capacity nourishes the economy.

- We must put in place a real policy of land-use planning, and not a caricature of a policy. That means taking a cartographer’s approach to France—evaluating it by square kilometer, by household, and by inhabitant—an approach in which everything proceeds in the same spirit, if not in the same way.

- We must organize a renaissance in the countryside and, in the context of the new Marshall Plan, a new world food policy. It is insane for Europe to impose a policy of ploughing land under, when hundreds of millions of people need food.

- Yes, fiscal reform is necessary—but to favor productive investment and to tax the revenues of financier income, not to stop taxing most securities and to deregulate their operations. A single European country can’t do it? That’s true; if it tried, money and investment would simply go elsewhere. That’s why a policy involving all the member countries of the European Union . . . must carry out this reform, in a concerted effort.

In brief, the choice is simple: Do we want to continue to allow the financial bubble to inflate, and in so doing to destroy our social fabric, or do we want to do the opposite—invest in production and labor?

III. Recreating debate on ideas, arousing a Resistance

We must stop the drift toward a dictatorship of opinion, the bludgeonings of television, under the control of the "markets," and the generalized poll-taking, pollsters' mania. In a word, we must create free citizens for the common enterprise which alone can open the future to us.

My objective is to bring about a rebirth of representative democracy capable of reestablishing the principle of the participation of each in the elaboration of policies for all, giving each his part to play in the overall growth and experience of our time.

To do that, we need men of resolve, of daring, of foresight, who reject impotence and who reestablish, through their struggles, respect for policy.

I propose some exemplary ways for freeing ourselves from the misery of our civic life:

- Fighting against the ideology of immediate success, of the selection and survival of the fittest and the exclusion of the weakest, by enhancing the creative powers of all and rediscovering the harmony between the conscience of the individual and the common good;

- Defending our republican principle of secularism . . . by enrichment at school through contact with religious and humanist experience and tradition. The difference should inspire more curiosity than fear, if fundamental values are shared;

- Reestablishing the deliberative powers of the National Assembly and the Senate. . . ;

- Reinforcing the power of the judiciary in its legitimate functions, but not permitting it to go beyond them. We need citizens' justice, inasmuch as our system no longer respects the principle of equality before the law: Our system is too slow, too remote, too expensive, and too dependent on the state and the media. It is necessary to ensure the application of existing law and procedures . . . then reinforce the methods.

IV. Mobilization

I know that a tiny minority of Frenchmen, entrenched place-holders, accuse me of being an irresponsible utopian. I answer that, on the contrary, it is their figures and calculations which are worth nothing, absolutely nothing: A breath of crisis—an increase in interest rates or rates of exchange—is enough to wipe out all their value. To be utopian—that's to speechify on the bridge of the Titanic.

My commitment is to draw our country toward the most audacious choices, because today those are the most reasonable choices. It is thus that we may find once more, I hope, that enthusiasm which is love of beauty.

'Let's put space back on the horizon'

Jacques Cheminade is the only French presidential candidate promoting an ambitious space program. Europe should be part of a vast Moon-Mars project, he says, in a campaign pamphlet devoted to organizing support for such a program.

Exploring and colonizing space is one of the grand adventures for humanity that Jacques Cheminade proposes in his platform, both as a means of stimulating new discoveries and of overcoming the economic crisis here on Earth. The other candidates, when they are not ideologically anti-science, seek only immediate advantages in having access to space (telecommunications, industrialization in micro-gravity, etc.). They lack any long-term strategy for conquering and developing outer space, although only such an approach can awaken the enthusiasm of the population and get crowds of people pouring into the space centers today, just as they turned out en masse in the 1930s to meet Mermoz, Saint Exupéry, and other heroes of the first postal flights.

As Cheminade notes in the very beginning of his platform, only an economic policy free of monetarism and unbridled liberalism, could generate the resources necessary for an ambitious space program, an indispensable key to future growth. In times of austerity and crisis management such as we have now, it has no chance.

First of all, writes Cheminade, France would need to reestablish the momentum of the space program of the 1960s, when clearly defined medium- and long-term objectives served as a general orientation for all space activities and were maintained, in spite of temporary setbacks or the arguments of those for whom Europe was doomed to remain a minor actor in space. The Ariane rocket was the product of this voluntarist approach, which has since been lost.

In 1986, Europe adopted a four-point program in The Hague, which would have put the continent on an equal footing with the United States and the U.S.S.R. The program included the heavy launcher Ariane 5, the space plane Hermes, which would have insured European autonomy in manned flight and interventions into orbit, the APM Columbus module, which was to be hooked up to the future American space station, and the autonomous module MTFP as a first step toward a totally independent space station.

Since then, writes Cheminade, the programs were slashed one after the other, for financial reasons and because of a lack of coherence. Hermes and Columbus should have been presented, he argues, as the first indispensable steps