
France

1995 Campaign Fraud Haunts 2012 Election

by Bertrand Buisson

This statement by the spokesman for Jacques Cheminade's 2012 Presidential campaign has been translated from French and edited for the benefit of EIR's non-French readers. Cheminade's campaign website is www.cheminade2012.fr.

In 1995, the contenders in the French Presidential election included Jacques Chirac and incumbent Prime Minister Edouard Balladur (both of the conservative RPR party), Lionel Jospin (Socialist), an assortment of extreme right- and leftwingers, and Jacques Cheminade, an associate of Lyndon LaRouche. After two election rounds and skullduggery on the scale medieval Byzantium, Chirac emerged as the winner. Balladur had promised Chirac he would not run against him, but did anyway; the current President. Nicolas Sarkozy, who was Balladur's budget minister, became his campaign manager; and despite their internecine quarrels, the French establishment joined forces to clobber Cheminade.

The next Presidential election is in Spring 2012, and Cheminade is again a candidate. Sarkozy, elected in 2007, is expected to run for a second term.

Today, the ghosts of the 1995 Presidential election campaign are rising from the crypts to shape the 2012 campaign. New revelations have emerged about fraud committed by the Balladur campaign; Sarkozy's role in them, and the coverup perpetrated by the same Constitutional Council which sabotaged Cheminade's election effort. In 1995, the Council, fronting for the Paris "elites," sentenced Cheminade to pay a draconian fine for speaking out against France's "entente cordiale" with the London-centered financial oligarchy that is now imposing even greater austerity upon the French people.

Judge Renaud Van Ruymbeke, in a ruling of Oct. 6, 2010, on "corruption, misuse of collective assets, and aggravated concealment," declared his intention to investigate the 1995 cash deposit of 10 million French francs (FF) into Balladur's campaign account, which is suspected of coming from illegal kickbacks from the 1994 Agosta military contract for French submarines to be delivered to Pakistan under then-Prime Minister Balladur. A Luxembourg police report implicates Sarkozy, stating that as Balladur's budget minister, he co-

ordinated and validated the opening of two offshore funds that were used for moving this dirty money in and out of the country. Some are now saying that Sarkozy, as Balladur's campaign manager, was also the unofficial campaign treasurer at the time of the scandalous cash deposit.



Jacques Cheminade

EIRNS

Ghosts from the Past

On Oct. 11, 1995, the Constitutional Council, which is in charge of examining the candidates' finances, validated Balladur's account, thus allowing him to be reimbursed for his campaign expenses; but rejected Cheminade's account, on no legal basis, throwing him into personal

bankruptcy. Wrongdoings around Balladur's account have been well known for years, but, on Oct. 8, 2010, the daily *Libération* revealed that after weeks of investigation during the Summer of 1995, the Council's examiners had recommended that the executive board reject Balladur's account. In their report, leaked by *Libération*, they had clearly established that Balladur's actual campaign expenses were far beyond the legal limits, and that the campaign could not show where the FF10 million cash deposit came from. Three days after *Libération's* revelation, in an investigative report prominently featuring Cheminade, the online publication *Mediapart* revealed how the Constitutional Council's president had forced examiners to modify their conclusions several times, until the Balladur account came out squeaky clean. Expenses were lowered to fit the law, and the FF10 million fraud simply disappeared.

Cheminade's 'Dissident' Candidacy

Dubbed the "surprise" candidate in 1995, Cheminade's campaign was a bad surprise for the political es-

tablishment that had been selling out France to the financial interests for 20 years.

Having resigned as a high-ranking civil servant, to lead an independent political movement, Cheminade had dared to speak loudly about the “secrets known only to the inner elites.” He denounced the “financial cancer” of speculation (derivatives, offshore drug-money laundering, and the real-estate casino) that was looting the physical economy, led by “the City of London, Wall Street, and the IMF,” with the disgusting complicity of “the French Treasury Department, the Banque de France, and of this small incestuous network comprised of financiers, public administration executives, and fawning pen-pushers.”

In 1995, the Cheminade campaign’s strategy was to mobilize the population on these fundamental issues, using the official framework of the very election in which the future of the nation is supposed to be discussed. Beyond his attacks on the financial oligarchy, Cheminade clearly put the alternative on the table, by calling for bankruptcy reorganization, establishing a credit system in the interests of the general welfare, and launching international high-tech infrastructure projects.

From the oligarchy’s perspective, his campaign and career had to be destroyed.

The Constitutional Council’s rejection of Cheminade’s campaign account was purely politically motivated, and perpetrated without any pretense to due process or equal treatment of Presidential candidates.

The Council’s indictment of Cheminade bore on FF1.7 million of receipts (one-sixth the amount of Balladur’s cash deposit); it was never brought to the attention of Cheminade during the procedure, thus denying him the right of self-defense. In the case of Balladur, the candidate and his staff were contacted repeatedly by examiners about the “irregularities,” before the Council itself performed the facelift on the account!

The Council reclassified Cheminade’s FF1.7 million in loans—one-third of his total receipts—as donations, on the grounds that the lenders had not exacted any interest for the loans. This very decision is against the law, since France’s Civil Code states that what makes a loan a loan, is the intent that it be repaid, not whether there is interest charged. The Council also claimed that these loans had been taken out after the campaign closing date—even though the Cheminade campaign possessed the contracts signed *before* that

date, which documents the Council never requested!

Political Harassment

Not only was Cheminade denied reimbursement for his expenses, unlike the other eight candidates, but a previously unheard-of campaign of harassment against him ensued, to force reimbursement of FF1 million advanced by the Interior Ministry to all official candidates. In July 1996, a bailiff was sent to Cheminade’s apartment to seize his furniture and books, and ordered several levies on his bank account between August and November 1998, when the state took statutory property rights over his apartment.

To this very day, Cheminade is threatened with eviction at any moment.

Legal proceedings continued until 2002, and in July 2006, just after Cheminade had opened a bank account for transferring funds to his 2007 campaign, this money was seized by legal order. Then, on April 16, 2010, the State sent a legal notice demanding payment of EU171,325.46!

The Paris elites did everything they could in 1995 to prevent Cheminade’s voice from being heard, even though the national media has the legal obligation to give all candidates equal access. Day after day, for two weeks, Cheminade was said to be “Saddam Hussein’s candidate,” accused of “robbing elderly women,” a dangerous “cult guru,” an “anti-Semite,” and a “racist” working for a “U.S. far-right extremist billionaire,” as cowardly journalists followed the anti-LaRouche script dictated from London.

The National Commission for Campaign Finances admitted that when it came to Cheminade, “equal treatment for the presentation of his candidacy, comments, and statements had not been respected.” The High Council of Audiovisual Media (which regulates TV and radio) stated that air time for candidates was “close to absolute equality, except for M. Cheminade,” who got only 45 minutes on national TV and radio networks, whereas other candidates got an average of 1 hour and 25 minutes.

The 1995 fraud against Cheminade is not a thing of the past, because the past always comes back to haunt evildoers. Today, everything depends on those who are ready to fight for justice and truth, to turn this tragicomedy into the opportunity to reverse the downward-spiraling crisis, and to break with the political smallness that is leading us to the darkest decades ever. The fight is not a matter for 2012: It has already begun, right before your eyes.