

have to nurture those creative powers of man. And that can not be done unless the state is actually there to provide the support and protection for the average citizen.

Now, I would be remiss if I didn't ask you one more question, which is: No one can avoid discussion of 2007 politics. And not a day goes by in Nigeria, or a week goes by, without discussion of the 2007 election, and of how a President from the South-South zone is now in order, that the North has to allow a South-South President, and that you're put forward as a very popular, likely candidate. I don't know if your moderator this morning threw your hat into the ring, in his opening introduction of you, but how do you view the election and this discussion of the need for a South-South candidate?

**Odili:** I think it's an idea whose time is right. My attitude is that of constructive engagement. When you take the history of the country, and run through it to the present date, and look at the kind of challenges that the nation has faced in the past, and how the nation managed to survive all those challenges, vis-à-vis the role of the various components, it makes you appreciate the need for us—as Nigerians—to look at the points being made by the various components.

The South-South, if you want to say, has paid her dues, has contributed enormously, with the growth, and at some critical points, the survival of the nation. That is not just the basis for the pressures from the South-South for 2007. It is the fact, that there are developmental challenges here. And nobody recognizes a man he hasn't seen before. The need to confront the developmental challenges in the South-South—*are very strong.*

A few days ago, I listened to one of the Presidential aspirants from some other part of the country, actually confess that just last week was his first visit to the Niger Delta! You know, I found that instructive. So, how do you appreciate the enormity of the developmental challenges that are here? We think that the nation is a chain, and at the moment the weakest link in the national chain is the Niger Delta, the South-South. And that weakness is born out of the years of neglect, the lack of development, and so, the quickest way we can strengthen the national chain is to strengthen the weakness of the weakest link.

And so, my appeal would be for a national understanding of this demand from the South-South, in *national* interests. And nobody's asking for a compromise on the quality of who it will please God to make the successor to President Obasanjo; no, whoever is most qualified to occupy that position.

**EIR:** Are you a qualified candidate, yet? Do you have a position?

**Odili:** We have a saying in my place, that “the dancer does not see his back.” I don't know what they do in your part of the world.

## French State Wants To Silence Presidential Candidate Cheminade

*The following statement was released on Aug. 5 by Jacques Cheminade, the head of the LaRouche movement in France, and a candidate in the French Presidential election of 2007, running in support of a New Bretton Woods agreement, and in defense of the tradition of the French nation-state, which fought for and inspired the American Revolution.*

Through an injunction dated July 31, 2006, Mr. Balgo Bin Harish, a bailiff of justice, ordered the seizure of Jacques Cheminade's bank account No. 410701774736 at the Crédit Coopératif de Paris. That is the account Mr. Cheminade intended to use to channel funds into his campaign account for the 2007 French Presidential elections. Thus, while his Presidential account itself was not seized—they couldn't do so since it is under the name of his financial association—the account which was to feed money into the Presidential campaign account, was shut down.

The Public Treasury is indeed demanding from Mr. Cheminade payment of 171,525.46 euros, which corresponds to the reimbursement of money extended to him in advance by the state (1 million francs, plus previous costs) during the 1995 Presidential elections.<sup>1</sup>

During that election, where Mr. Cheminade was the candidate having spent the least (4.7 million francs, against FF91 million for Mr. Balladur FF89 million for Mr. Jospin, and FF120 million for Mr. Chirac, according to official figures), the Constitutional Council, headed by Roland Dumas, rejected his campaign accounts in a decision dating from Oct. 11, 1995.

Following that decision, the state had demanded restitution of the million francs advanced and took a mortgage on Cheminade's two-room apartment as payment. In several occasions, from Aug. 6, 1996 to Nov. 10, 1998, seizures were carried out on the bank accounts of Mr. Cheminade.

Since 1998, however, no initiative had been taken by the French state. The present initiative of the Public Treasury, renewing the harassment strategy, merits two observations:

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1. In the French Presidential elections, as soon as the candidacy is accepted, the state advances the equivalent of formerly 1 million francs to each candidate, in order to start his campaign. This million is considered part of the overall campaign expenses to be refunded by the state, if the campaign accounts are certified by the state.



EIRNS/Helen Möller

*Jacques Cheminade at a town meeting in Germany on July 27. Cheminade, the leader of the LaRouche movement in France and a contender in France's 2007 Presidential election, has earned the bitter hatred of the French financier oligarchy.*

1. It occurs at a time when Mr. Cheminade is the only candidate to denounce the takeover of French economic life by several oligarchical financial groups: Euronext by the New York Stock Exchange, Arcelor by Mittal Steel, GDF by Suez, and several other “guided” privatizations. Especially, Mr. Cheminade attacks the role played by Mr. Felix Rohatyn, former U.S. Ambassador in Paris, by the Lazard Frères group, and other multinational investment banks (Merrill Lynch, Goldman Sachs, Morgan Stanley, Citigroup, JP Morgan, etc.) in the dismantling of French interests. Mr. Cheminade also attacked the way in which Ms. Clara Gaymard<sup>2</sup> and Anne Lauvergeon<sup>3</sup> manage their respective careers, and in particular, the way in which Ms. Lauvergeon named Mr. Spencer

2. Clara Gaymard-Lejeune was until recently, when she accepted the presidency of General Electric France, the president of the French Agency for International Investments (AFII). Mr. Cheminade attacked here the conflict of interest and treasonous nature of such swaps.

3. Anne Lauvergeon is the president of Areva, France's state-owned nuclear reactor production company. Lauvergeon was President François Mitterrand's “sherpa” for many years, and then, before joining Areva, spent a few years at Lazard Frères Paris.

Abraham, former U.S. Energy Secretary and avowed neo-conservative member of the Federalist Society, to head the Areva subsidiary in the United States.

2. The decision made by the Constitutional Council in 1995, upon which the present legal proceedings are based, was groundless and politically motivated. Mr. Cheminade was accused of having obtained too many loans from physical persons, too long after the date of the election. Those loans having been extended without interest—something the Constitutional Council interpreted as a hidden intention to make a campaign contribution—were re-qualified from loans into contributions going beyond the authorized limits per physical person. This curious juridical construction, made up to fit a particular aim, led Mr. Cheminade to a situation of de facto personal ruin because of a “simple error.” In fact, the National Commission of Campaign Accounts and Political Financing (CNCCFP), to which the verification of Presidential campaign accounts has since been attributed, judged, on the contrary, that the loans of physical persons to political parties must be made without interest. Understand it as one may, or rather, one understands all too well.

Mr. Cheminade is clearly considered to be a troublemaker. This is no reason for the French state to hound him, as it is notorious that at least two other candidates in the Presidential election benefitted from the indulgence of Mr. Dumas, then president of the Constitutional Council, and of his colleagues.

To attempt, 12 years later (1995-2006), to block the Presidential account of a man having little financial means, is to act like a small-time Fouché. That is not worthy of the Republic.

It is worth noting that for the 1995 Presidential election, the Conseil Supérieur de l'Audiovisuel (Higher Audiovisual Council) acknowledged, in a communiqué of April 24, 1995, that Mr. Cheminade had been treated inequitably in terms of air time (45 minutes for him against 1 hour and 25 minutes for each of the other candidates) and that the National Commission of Control of the Campaign noted (letter of April 20, 1998) that the “balanced treatment of the presentation of candidates, of their comments and their declarations” had not been respected in certain programs insofar as Mr. Cheminade was concerned.

It is therefore clear that he is being subjected to a new harassment campaign, because of his declarations and unambiguous denunciation of initiatives aimed at dismantling the means of the French nation-state. Therefore, to show interest in his case is not only to defend a just cause, but also public liberties and the concrete means to gain access to freedom of speech in a State of Law.

At any rate, it should be noted that the bailiffs' injunctions are always sent during the Summer: The previous bailiff came to Mr. Cheminade's home on July 26, 1996, and the second one, today, declared his injunction on July 31, 2006. Ten years have passed, but the methods to silence a “troublemaker,” remain.