

# Stalinist daily l'Humanité defends French government in Cahuzac scandal

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In its April 3 editorial, the French Stalinist daily paper *l'Humanité* tried to use the confession by ex-budget minister Jérôme Cahuzac that he had held an undeclared bank account in Switzerland for 20 years, to defend the Socialist Party (PS) government and the bourgeois republic as a whole.

In his editorial, Patrick Apel-Muller briefly notes what all the other newspapers have been forced to admit, after having largely scorned the information brought to light in the affair—that Cahuzac evaded his taxes and lied about it for months. Cahuzac cynically presented himself as an unwavering supporter of austerity, who was also firmly fighting tax evasion and, in his words, for “equal opportunities”, and the kind of “justice which requires a sacrifice shared by all”.

Having briefly exerted his moral glands, Apel-Muller then passes on to what really motivates him: defending the role of the PS and the French Republic in this affair. The editorial's main theme, stated twice, is that Cahuzac's wrongdoing is “personal”.

Apel-Muller tries to couch this affirmation in a general denunciation of “money” in which politics is immersed. This only serves to camouflage his uncritical acceptance of claims that Cahuzac lied to his government colleagues and President François Hollande for four months, and that they all genuinely believed him.

If *l'Humanité* and the Stalinist French Communist Party (PCF) insist that the Cahuzac affair is “personal”, it is above all because they want to cover up the class character of the austerity policy carried out by the PS. In fact, Cahuzac's tax evasion is merely the reflection, in the private conduct of the minister, of the fraudulent, anti-working class orientation of the entire PS government, which pursues austerity and the enrichment of the ruling elite while claiming to be a

“left” party.

The PCF is profoundly implicated in this policy. It has participated in PS governments since the 1980s and still plays a decisive role in the General Confederation of Labour (CGT) union, which negotiates the attacks on workers' social rights with Hollande.

Apel-Muller cynically invokes François Mitterrand, the former PS president from 1981 to 1995, as a moral authority, quoting him as saying, “It is money which rots men's consciences”. This reference to the PS's historic leader—one of the French politicians most mired in scandal—in order to preach morality to the current PS is truly fantastical.

Mitterrand was close to the violent far-right Cagoule movement in the 1930s, becoming a civil servant under the fascist Vichy regime, and claimed after the Liberation from the Nazi occupation that he had belonged to a resistance movement.

The movement linked to General de Gaulle in the National Council of the Resistance (CNR) included representatives of all tendencies that wanted to save the bourgeois state, from monarchists to Stalinists. Nevertheless, it was necessary for Mitterrand to introduce several decrees under his presidency in 1986 and 1992 in order for his movement to be officially classified as having been a resistance movement.

In office, Mitterrand carried out the “austerity turn” in 1983, followed by the state's terrorist attack on the Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior* in 1985, and the involvement of France in the Rwandan genocide of 1994.

The current PS is Mitterrand's creation. He founded it in 1971 to serve his presidential ambitions based on the idea of an alliance with the PCF, then the largest party in France, which would deliver its electorate to the PS and political personnel capable of undertaking a

direct offensive against the working class. Cahuzac's tax evasion is not simply a "personal" issue, but the logical outcome of the PS's long history of bankrupt, anti-working class politics.

Apel-Muller continues by brandishing the threat of a fascist "wave of brown shirts" emerging as a result of the Cahuzac scandal. This aims simply to taint as fascists all those who might be tempted to draw broader conclusions from the affair and to look for an opposition from the left and from the standpoint of the working class to the policies of the PS and the PCF.

The revelations that Cahuzac's Swiss bank account was opened by a friend and ex-member of the student fascist organisation GUD (Union Defense Group) and a close collaborator today of the neo-fascist National Front leader Marine Le Pen, indicate a continuity in the ties between the PS and the extreme right that *l'Humanité* prefers to ignore. The fact that Mitterrand knowingly boosted the National Front (FN) in the 1980s in order to divide the right-wing vote is widely known, however.

Apel-Muller concludes by establishing a false dichotomy between a vague critique of the PS's current unpopular austerity policies, which he admits are "pitiless for the poor," and a critique of corruption. Only the former, in his eyes, presents any interest. On this basis, he claims one must "re-embellish the colours of the Republic, [and] take into account the public interest."

That is to say, he tells the working class faced with social attacks organised by bourgeois hypocrites like Cahuzac to make common cause with their exploiters in an idealised Republic. The reality of the French Republic is that corruption goes hand in hand with a political programme made to measure for the big bourgeoisie.

Precisely because of this, *l'Humanité*, like many other newspapers, was hostile to the *Médiapart* investigation that launched the affair from the start—announcing on December 7, just three days after the first revelations on the *Médiapart* web site that the affair "is running out of steam".

For the social layers represented by *L'Humanité*, notably the CGT bureaucracy, as for the higher layers of the bourgeoisie, it was essential to protect Cahuzac and the PS government at all costs. Their ardour to implement the European Union's austerity programme

constitutes the best possible guarantee from the standpoint of the international financial markets.



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