

Scientific tuning taking over in Italy

by Liliana Celani

On April 9, 1988, Lyndon LaRouche's proposal to revive the classical tuning of $C=256$ and inaugurate a revolution in culture was launched at a Schiller Institute conference in Milan, Italy attended by world famous singers Renata Tebaldi and Piero Cappuccilli, and by Norbert Brainin, first violinist of the Amadeus Quartet and a close friend of LaRouche. They were the first endorsers of the Schiller Institute petition which demanded that "Italy first, and then the whole world, adopt officially the tuning fork which Giuseppe Verdi already had Italy adopt in 1884, $A=432$ corresponding to $C=256$, also rightly known as the 'scientific tuning fork.' "

Since then, LaRouche's proposal has come a long way. The Schiller Institute petition to go back to "Verdi's A," as it has been called in the meantime in the world press, has been endorsed by more than 1,000 musicians from all over the world.

A bill to adopt Verdi's tuning fork was presented in July 1988 by two Italian senators, Carlo Boggio and Pietro Mezzapesa, both belonging to the majority and ruling party, the Christian Democracy, and is currently being discussed by the Senate Cultural Commission, which hopes to be able to approve it in February.

Musical circles in Italy, Germany, and France considered particularly important for the outcome of the legislative proposal the testimony given by Prof. Bruno Barosi of the Cremona Violin Building Institute and by violinist Norbert Brainin, who were able to prove, with the scientific equipment of the Cremona institute, and by performing a famous Bach Adagio at the two pitches of $A=432$ and $A=440$, that the Stradivari violin of Professor Brainin, like most old Cre-

mona instruments, gains in timbre and solidity with Verdi's tuning. They showed, too, that the same violins risk cracking with the incredibly high tuning used in many concert halls (which reach and surpass $A=450$, more than half a tone higher than most classical composers wrote for and instruments were built for).

Another crucial proof was given by Piero Cappuccilli, one of the world's great "Verdi baritones," who sang at a Schiller Institute conference in Rome on Nov. 24, 1988 the famous Verdi aria from *Don Carlos*, "Per me è giunto il di supremo" at $A=432$ and at $A=440$, emphasizing how "Verdi's true color and correct register shifts for the voice are possible only with Verdi's tuning."

As the statements we are publishing in this section demonstrate, in fact, it is not true that great opera voices do not exist any longer. They are just being destroyed by high tuning, as music is being destroyed by a totally wrong conception of "artistic freedom." An "artistic freedom" which destroys voices and violins is actually a "crime against art," as Maestro Arturo Sacchetti, a well-known organist and conductor from Rome, put it speaking on Jan. 20, 1988 at the Schiller Institute Martin Luther King Tribunal conference in Rome. "I hope next time we meet we will speak about the progress voices are making thanks to the Verdi tuning legislation," says tenor Carlo Bergonzi in his interview.

The same hope was expressed by soprano Renata Tebaldi, who will address the issue of Verdi's tuning and the urgency of a new renaissance in culture at a Schiller Institute conference in Parma, the ancient center of the Italian "bel canto" tradition, near Verdi's birthplace, on Feb. 10.