

'Retirees—Freedom for LaRouche' slate of 230 on ballot in Rome

by Thoula Frangos, Claudio Rossi, and Giorgio Prinzi

A new electoral alliance has been formed in Rome to strengthen the cause of economic justice and the defense of life against the new wave of austerity. This party is called the "Lega Pensionati—Libertà per LaRouche," and its program leads with the demand to liberate statesman and economist Lyndon H. LaRouche from imprisonment in the United States. The new party is fielding a slate of 230 candidates for the upcoming Roman city elections on Oct. 29 and 30. There are 80 candidates running for the 80 seats of the city council and 150 candidates running in 17 of Rome's 20 districts for district councilman.

Rome, a city of 4 million, is not only the Italian capital but also the historic world center of Christianity. And it is precisely here that the new party decided to launch its program. The candidates are focusing their attack on the escalating severe austerity policy of the government.

Taxes are going up and the basic services like medical care, transportation, and housing are becoming unaffordable for many. Of course the hardest hit are the old people whose already small pensions cannot stretch much further. Meanwhile, the world's leading exponent for economic justice, a man who has proposed an economic program that excludes austerity and guarantees real economic growth, is a political prisoner of powerful people who don't want his policies to take root.

So the alliance came together—liberate LaRouche and stop the insane economic policies that are violating human rights, starting with those of the senior citizens.

The other major plank of the party's platform is to discredit the growing "green" movement in Italy, a movement which not only has caused major setbacks in productivity by attacking basic industry and agriculture, but has also increased austerity through new taxes to fund its demands. Italy's

Parliament, which of course convenes in Rome, is now discussing an "environmental tax," which would go to fund the green movement's causes. In the last week of September, the price of gasoline jumped by 15 liras a liter (nearly 5¢ a gallon in U.S. equivalence) in order to make the so-called "green" (unleaded) gasoline artificially competitive.

The 230 candidates are themselves an alliance of the different sectors of the economy, many of them hit by the austerity policies and the environmental swindles. Among the candidates are farmers, cattlemen, industrialists from the plastics industry, activists from the pro-life movement, engineers, architects, teachers, and musicians. They will present a program for the city of Rome: a program of major infrastructural projects particularly in health and transportation, and measures to save the historic center of the city.

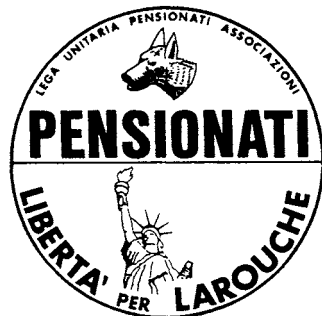
Ballot position secured

On Sept. 29, when the doors of the electoral office of the City Council of Rome opened at 8 o'clock, the list Retired League—Freedom for LaRouche succeeded in obtaining the second position on the ballot.

The Italian Social Movement (MSI), the party that got the first position, mobilized hundreds of goons to make sure that no one else could get in before them, and had actually kept a watch around the electoral office for two months in advance. The conquest of the first position has always been a fighting issue among the main parties in Rome.

During the night, a group of representatives of "Freedom for LaRouche," together with some feisty retirees, defied cold and stormy weather to stand outside in the rain, to secure the second position. The symbol of the alliance has the Italian word for "retired" in large letters in the upper part and "Libertà per LaRouche" with a drawing of the Statue of Liberty.

Needless to say Rome's municipal elections are much more important than ordinary administrative elections, because they are carefully watched by all the political parties and by the whole country. In this particular election, the results are expected to influence the national administrative elections coming in the spring.



Interview: Rita Matteuzzi

Mrs. Rita Borioni Matteuzzi, a candidate for the Rome City Council on the "Retired League—Freedom for LaRouche" alliance slate, was interviewed by Giorgio Prinzi in Rome.

EIR: A problem in which you have particular experience is the health issue—the question of health service or the lack of it. Would you indicate what is required to fully satisfy the needs of the citizenry?

Matteuzzi: I hope to avoid repeating commonplaces or the usual long list of justified complaints of the voting public. Instead, let me make a statement of principle. In general the services, and the health service in particular, must, as services, exist as a function of the Person, be based upon respect for Man as the bearer of his intrinsic dignity and inalienable natural rights, which cannot be renounced, and are moreover guaranteed by the Constitution of the Italian Republic.

As to what ought to be done to have a model health service, the answer is partly implicit in the statement of principle just enunciated. The difficulty, if there is one, is to translate that into concrete actions, since among the public administrators we lack individuals who fully refer back to these principles, sometimes because they are distracted by the "daily grind" or more often, and here I am especially addressing the situation in Rome, because they are steeped in a different and unfortunately dominant pseudo-culture which is the negation of the Person, of Man, and of Life itself.

EIR: Should we infer that you believe there is a fundamental outlook which is prejudicial to any practical implementation?

Matteuzzi: Unhesitatingly, I would say yes. Every action of Man arises from a philosophical, cultural, and political vision, defining values, which shape and characterize it.

The breakdown of the National Health Service, besides resulting from technical-administrative reasons, comes from the culture of pragmatic utilitarianism, which leads to setting aside, as useless, the subject who is not capable of expressing full psycho-physical effectiveness and who therefore is not completely autonomous.

The structural malfunctioning of the health service can be definitively summed up in the aberrant outlook of considering the sick person as a "cost center" from whom one should try to attain all possible savings, applying the economic logic of cost-benefit, by which a seriously ill or terminally ill person has to be "helped" to die instead of being treated and respected as a person.

EIR: You are firmly against euthanasia, therefore?

Matteuzzi: We must not be deceived by the etymology of this word which means "good death." Death is never good,

especially not if it arrives as a "mercy killing" to bring suffering to an end. Death is the greatest mystery of our life and is intimately connected to life itself.

I maintain that no one has the right to decide on the life of a human being. Personally I am convinced that not even the person himself has the absolute freedom to dispose of his own life, considering, among other things, that in a dramatic situation such as the one we are outlining, outside conditions can or could be such as to compromise one's full volitional faculties.

On the other hand, the right of the dying or gravely ill person to be treated with all means available to science that may mitigate the sufferings of the disease or the anguish of passing away, remains inviolate.

EIR: Is your absolute defense of life to be understood as extending to the fetus as well?

Matteuzzi: Yes. I think that the defense of the life of the unborn child is a principle, if one admits that there is a scale of values among principles, to be affirmed with the greatest vigor.

The conceived child, in fact, is not capable of communicating on his own with the outside, his desire to possess his own, unrepeatable and unique future life, of which he is the "legitimate owner." Even the law decriminalizing abortion foresees, in its first clause, the safeguarding of the life of the unborn. The application of abortion as a method of contraception not only violates the spirit of the law itself, but violates, above all, that right to life on the part of the unborn child to which I referred a little earlier.

EIR: In relation to the abortion issue, some have proposed making their firm opposition concrete by subtracting from their own taxes a percentage equivalent to the amount allocated by the national budget to this item. Do you agree?

Matteuzzi: I agree with this position. If it is a true principle that no law, if it is intrinsically wicked, can bind the conscience, then the resulting fiscal imposition cannot be juridically binding.

It is my opinion that citizens' tax contributions should be spent in defending higher principles of life. When these contributions serve to violate the unwritten laws, I maintain that they cannot be bound by any written law, whatever the consequences may be.

EIR: Don't you think this position could be dangerous for civil society? Others have proposed to object to military spending. In this manner tax objectors could become a tool for paralyzing the very functioning of the state apparatus.

Matteuzzi: I think there is an abyss of difference between the two. Abortion concerns the individual and personal sphere, whereas the defense of one's nation concerns a collective and social aspect. For all the various hypothetical contingencies you refer to, I maintain that this fundamental criterion has to be upheld.