

Italian parliamentarians call on President Clinton to free LaRouche

On April 2, in Rome, Italy, three members of the Italian Parliament held a news conference to announce a parliamentary initiative for the liberation of American political leader, economist, and statesman Lyndon LaRouche, who has been unjustly imprisoned in the United States. A petition to U.S. President William Clinton, bearing the signatures of 60 members of the Italian parliament, was presented by Emma Bonino, member of the national and European Parliament, president of the Radical Party of Italy, and representative of the European Federalist Group. Mrs. Bonino was joined at the press conference by Sen. Flaminio Piccoli, a leader of the Italian Christian Democracy; Sergio D'Elia, coordinator of the International Initiative for the Abolition of the Death Penalty; and LaRouche's wife, Helga Zepp-LaRouche.

Only a few days earlier, on March 31, their colleague, former Judge Carlo Palermo, had raised a formal parliamentary inquiry into the politically motivated jailing of LaRouche in January 1989. (For the text of the inquiry, see EIR's editorial in the April 9 issue.)

Then on April 7, Antonio Parlato (MSI) also submitted a parliamentary question to the Italian government on the LaRouche case, pointing out that "political, cultural, and even religious representatives have raised the case of Lyndon LaRouche, imprisoned for two years [sic] in the United States for a small tax crime, who is supposed to serve four more years [sic]." Parlato asks whether the government will take action, "on the basis of the prominent international call in favor of the liberation of Lyndon LaRouche, in the name of the freedom of thought, and toward the U.N. commission for the defense of human rights, based in Geneva."

Although the parliamentarians quoted below expressed widely divergent views on LaRouche's ideas and policy proposals, they were all united in their outrage over the blatantly political nature of the prosecution of LaRouche. What follows are excerpts from the April 2 press conference.

Mrs. Bonino: We have called this press conference to present a parliamentary initiative made by Italian parliamentarians who are joining an initiative already signed by European parliamentarians and other parliamentarians from around the world on the case of Lyndon LaRouche. We have also prepared for you, as you will see later, a detailed dossier regarding this case. . . . We have distributed among the parliamentarians an appeal which has already circulated at the

European Parliament and in other national parliaments, relating to this case. Mr. LaRouche is an American citizen, born in Rochester [N.H.], he is an economist, and he was a Democratic candidate for the White House. At present he is 70 years old, and for four years he has been serving, in a penitentiary in Rochester, Minnesota, a 15-year prison sentence which was given to him in 1989 by Judge Bryan of the Virginia court. The charges against him were: conspiracy to commit mail fraud, and conspiracy to hinder the regular functioning of the tax system, and they had to do with repayment of loans to the electoral campaign of Mr. LaRouche—who was, as I said, after all, a candidate—for a total of \$294,000. A white-collar crime of this level, I wanted just to underline, is never punished with such a draconian sentence, if there are not also political motivations. And furthermore, I wished to underline that LaRouche is still serving this sentence, even though he is over 70 years of age.

The sentence of the Alexandria court is at present the object of a motion for a new trial presented by the former American Attorney General Ramsey Clark, and contradicts the outcome of a previous trial which took place over the same charges, which in itself is unconstitutional, in another court, that of Boston, in 1982, presided over by Judge Keeton. Judge Keeton declared a mistrial after six months of debate, because of the obvious proofs of misconduct on the part of the government, which was obviously the charge. The jurors of the Boston court admitted afterward to the press that they would have pronounced LaRouche and all the other defendants innocent of all charges if the trial had not ended in a mistrial.

The same trial was then instead transferred in 1989 to the court of Alexandria, and, under Judge Bryan, it ended after only three weeks with all defendants found guilty. On Oct. 25, 1989, another judge, Judge Bostetter (also of Alexandria) issued a ruling which confirms the innocence of LaRouche and other defendants, declaring that the forced bankruptcy imposed by the U.S. government against three publishing companies close to LaRouche, which led to the shutdown of one publication (perhaps because it reflected the political ideas of his movement), had been decided by an act of bad faith by the government. The forced bankruptcy in fact made impossible the repayment of the loans taken out during the electoral campaign, of which I spoke at the beginning. Despite this, Judge Bryan rejected the appeal; he has rejected



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the motion for a new trial and the motion calling on him to recuse himself, although he has shown himself clearly to have been a biased judge.

Since his arrest, Mr. LaRouche has been subjected, despite his age, to heavy labor in jail for several hours a day, work which has never been interrupted, even following an operation which he underwent in 1990, and despite his present precarious health.

This initiative has been spread through various parliaments all over the world, and we have also placed here a list of American personages who have signed the appeal. It has been taken up again also now with the change in administration. In effect, the initiative is directed to the current President Clinton in the hope that certain political obstacles and political pressures which have seemed to us totally obvious in the documents we have seen (we spoke of this directly with Ramsey Clark when he came to the Radical Party congress on the topic of abolishing the death penalty, and so among other things, we also spoke about this). The political influence has seemed to us, from these papers, very heavy, and this is why the appeal today is directed to Bill Clinton in the hope that the change in administration might at least lead to a review of the trial.

We are not at all asking, I would like this to be clear, nor are we affirming (I am not in a position to affirm) LaRouche's innocence; I am not a judge, and I refuse to be one, it is not my area of competence; but I think I can maintain that the elements in these papers may lead to a review of the trial.

I would also like to add a statement for myself. . . . I

want to make it clear that in supporting the international campaign for the review and the possible liberation of Lyndon LaRouche, I have intended to affirm the principle that freedom of opinion and political expression must be defended at all costs, above all in a case in which the person exercising it might perhaps be someone the furthest away from me in terms of his political, economic, or any other type of ideas. I think that the meaning of justice is precisely that of defending not so much one's friends—that seems to me even too easy a matter—I think that the affirmation of justice is that of defending the rights of possible political adversaries.

Lyndon LaRouche is the head of a movement of which I personally do not share almost any of their analyses, but all the more reason why I fight for his rights and that they must be affirmed. We are divided, for example, on the question of drugs: He is a prohibitionist, I am not. I am perplexed by, and in any case do not share, his prescriptions for the economy, and I do not agree with his analyses of the internal and external events and misdeeds of the United States. We may agree on other subjects, such as the abolition of the death penalty. But I wanted to stress this not to take any distance—because I am not close, so I don't need to take my distance—but to affirm for my own case, that justice is the same, under any flag, in any part of the world, under any aspect, and all the more reason why I feel committed in this case as in others. . . .

The enemies of Europe jailed LaRouche

Piccoli: I, too, have been a great admirer of Hon. Bonino, and always, for years, even when I might have been of a different opinion than her chief, [Marco] Pannella, in all of these causes I have also been in agreement: on the abolition of the death penalty, all the things that we have worked for together always in full understanding. Well, this time, too, I am participating in the LaRouche case . . . because LaRouche is an economist who has advanced many ideas of social Christianity; he has been a careful student of the encyclicals of the Church, and he has advanced many ideas, especially in the economic area, some of which I find myself fully in accord with—for example, his battle against the huge banking corporations which even today, in my view, are meddling in the currency markets of the entire world.

I do not believe it is poor, penniless fellows who run the operations to ruin the lira, to destroy the franc, to yank up the pound sterling one day and then next day to cast it down, etc. I am convinced that behind this are great corporations which have deep interests, and the international financial system is much affected by them. Hence, I believe that to a great extent the campaign against LaRouche happened because he annoyed the big American corporations, because he was a man who, if by chance he had become President, with the American powers he would probably have hit sectors which are the bosses, the political and economic culprits, often with great success, with great usefulness to the world, often with diversity and taking risky positions.

I am convinced that many of the things happening even in our country are due certainly to errors and grave deviations by political officials, but they are to a great extent guided and directed by people who are interested in weakening Europe, in impeding Europe from becoming in effect a great competitor on the international level, of the superpowers. I am convinced of these things; I said them, I repeat them, I hope they don't put me in prison, because now it's easy. This is why the LaRouche case has always interested me. Then when they came to talk to me about it, since I saw that the cause was in the hands of Mrs. Bonino, who has always done these things with a great spirit of solidarity, with great altruism—I am certainly not for the abolition of prohibitionism [on drugs], although I think it should be tempered, that we have to study completely different models from those we now find in the jails, which are frightful, and that therefore you have done well to go to battle on this. . . .

Mrs. Bonino is admirable because she says outright: I don't agree on these things, but otherwise I believe that he is one of those prisoners who is held in prison out of fear that their ideas may make headway; surely for me this is why LaRouche has undergone these trials.

Then the other details, the repayment of loans—you will find them here [in the dossier]—but we know perfectly well what can be fabricated against a person in political life; one can invent everything, and the opposite of everything. . . .

I hoped to be able to be part of a group which was going to the United States to speak with the President, but I could

not go because of other matters. However, I propose, together with Honorable Bonino and a few others, that we should find a way to go. . . .

I maintain that the Italian press should be interested in this case, also because American life involves everyone, which has a value for humanity; everything that happens in America, because of its power, its development, also its freedom, for the way in which it has managed to mix different races and always succeeded in overcoming so many problems.

But there are some heavy sides which turn up every so often, and they have to do with personages who could be a nuisance to the major sources of the economy: They might try to change the course of things. I am convinced that in economics we need to change the course of things. Just yesterday, they showed me that in the Bank of Italy, gold was pegged to paper money, and then I saw how little gold was valued at, and how paper money has become an object of negotiation for sale and speculation; and therefore I think that, especially for the generation of young economists coming up, there is a lot to be thought about in the economic events which are taking place in our country, and which are often regurgitations and copies of what occur in the great powers: Germany, the United States, Japan. Whereas, in my view, if we want to create a situation of equity and justice, above all the financial part, the monetary part needs to be reviewed and corrected. Here, too, in Italy it is easier to go to prison for saying these things, than it is to be walking around free. But I say them anyway.

LaRouche is 'dissident in the American gulag'

"And the Dissident Ended Up in the American Gulag" was the title of a feature article in the March 31 issue of the Italian weekly L'Italia. Translated excerpts of the article follow:

In Italy, the reorganization of the debt will never occur because it is a colony of the International Monetary Fund. Its political and financial sovereignty has long since evaporated; it no longer exists. And in this regard, the masonry is greatly to blame. The masonry in Italy is in fact an institutional element. In the 1970s, in order to prevent a government of national recovery, it went so far as to manipulate the Red Brigades. The author of this detailed exposé is not a conspiracy theorist or an international spy, but Lyndon H. LaRouche, 70, a refined and appreciated scholar, proponent of an economics subordinated to the laws of ethics and the higher interests of na-

tions. A successful politician . . . he has been for nearly a year in the middle of an intricate detective story, in what is becoming a delicate international case.

Taking advantage of a minor tax evasion (a pecuniary distraction), the U.S. authorities sentenced him to the maximum penalty (six years) [sic]. For two years [sic] he has been in prison, treated like a common criminal. "For his ideas," declares his wife. "Because of political persecution," stresses his lawyer. . . .

What is the truth? Why so much dogged ferocity?

Lyndon H. LaRouche, in his writings, in his denunciations, in his public interventions, allegedly committed the "grave error" of pointing out, to Americans and non-Americans, the necessity and importance of a "national" road to economic development, counterposed to the "multinational" route to development pursued by the mightiest financial and banking lobbies which, LaRouche says, have looted, sacked, and impoverished nations and peoples. . . .

LaRouche's "party" is growing. To free the economist from the web of U.S. justice just about everybody has been moving. From Spain to Jordan, from the European Parliament to Italy. . . .