

In Memoriam

The Beauty of Rosa Parks

by Amelia Boynton Robinson

Amelia Boynton Robinson is widely known as the heroine of the Civil Rights movement, beaten and left for dead at the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, friend and colleague to Dr. Martin Luther King, and now friend and collaborator of Lyndon and Helga Zepp-LaRouche.

What a beautiful memory! The memory of a woman, though frail, awoke people throughout America from their complacency, two generations or more ago, in Montgomery, Alabama. History was made when she, Rosa Parks, sat on the bus in Montgomery, Alabama, and refused to give up her seat to a white man, who was standing on a crowded bus. Rather than become a coward, she refused to give up her rights as an American citizen, knowing that she could have been beaten, or killed (If she had been killed, Southern courts would have called that “justifiable homicide,” because it was said, “blacks have no rights”). But she turned her fear into faith, and her faith became stronger, when it lit up in her mind that she was right and will stand by her principles, until death, hoping others will follow the same determination, to be free.

If Mrs. Parks had not had her strong faith, knowing she would firmly stand by her belief, there might not have been a bus boycott, a Congressman John Lewis, who helps to put morals in our laws, or an Atlanta Mayor Andrew Young, the first black mayor of a major Southern city, being a political example for the minority. If Mrs. Parks had been weak enough to give up her seat, there might not have been an Amelia Boynton Robinson, who was beaten and left for dead on the Edmund Pettus Bridge on Bloody Sunday, March 7, 1965, in Selma, Alabama, or a Bruce

Carver Boynton, whose case *Boynton v. Commonwealth of Virginia*, broke down segregation in interstate travel.

If Rosa Parks had not sat on the bus until she was forced off, and slammed in jail, there might not have been a Martin Luther King, who shook the entire world, lighting a candle, a spark of conscience turning hate into love, and violence into non-violence, if Mrs. Parks had not firmly stood by her belief in the face of atrocities.



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Rosa Parks (1913-2005)

White segregationists hated her because she disturbed their “way of life.” Black people feared her because their association with her might cause them the loss of their jobs. I know, because I, too, lost friends who feared associating with me, when I disturbed the “way of life” of the white segregationists.

Through it all, this earthly angel left a legacy for all, man, woman, and child, for she, by her Creator, urged all to stand the storm, live the proper life of love, long-suffering in sacrifice, and in non-violence.

To we, who are still living, Rosa Parks would like to say, in the words of William Cullen Bryant’s “Thanatopsis”:

So live, that when thy summons comes to join
The innumerable caravan, that moves
To the pale realms of shade, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death,
Thou go not, like the quarry-slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon, but sustain’ d
and sooth’ d
By an unfaltering trust, approach thy grave,
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams.