
Amelia Robinson in Italy

'Help Us Dump Cheney, Stop This Illegal War'

by Liliana Gorini

Amelia Boynton Robinson, the 94-year-old heroine of the African-American civil rights movement, vice president of the U.S. Schiller Institute, and close collaborator of Lyndon and Helga LaRouche, was on an official visit to Rome Nov. 28 to Dec. 4. She was received by the vice president of the Italian Chamber of Deputies, Hon. Alfredo Biondi, on Nov. 29, together with a delegation of women parliamentarians from the Democrats of the Left Party (DS), and Paolo Raimondi and Liliana Gorini, president and vice president of the Italian Civil Rights Movement Solidarity, LaRouche's co-thinkers in Italy.

Her visit came at an important political moment in Italy, as indicated by the high-level meetings she had, and the extensive press coverage she received, compared to her visit to Rome two years ago. The right-wing government of Premier Silvio Berlusconi is in deep trouble, because of Italy's presence in Iraq, with so-called "peace-keeping troops" who have found themselves involved in a war without end, and without sense. Despite some attempts by Berlusconi and his Econom-

ics Minister, Giulio Tremonti, to challenge the European Union's Maastricht restrictions on investment, and to promote national credit for infrastructural development, the general free-market policy of the government has made the Italian economic crisis even worse, and the population no longer believes Berlusconi's assurances that the recovery is just around the corner.

LaRouche's New Bretton Woods proposal had already been discussed in April 2005, in the General Assembly of the Italian Parliament, thanks to a petition to the government presented by the Left (even endorsed by representatives of the government coalition during the debate), which rejected the idea that financial speculation (as indicated by the large-scale Parmalat and Cirio bankruptcies) was "under control," as the government had claimed.

The official invitation to Mrs. Robinson at this time, precisely when the opposition is preparing for next year's national elections, after which it plans to replace Berlusconi with a left-wing prime minister, indicated the tremendous interest in the country on what the "true America" is doing to stop Cheney and the Iraq War, and to revive Roosevelt's tradition in the Democratic Party, around LaRouche's economic proposals. This became clear on the first day of her visit, when Hon. Silvana Pisa, who was leading the delegation of women parliamentarians of the DS who were received by Biondi, told Biondi during the official reception that Mrs. Robinson "represents the true America, and the Italian left is not anti-American, as people in the government claim; it just supports this America rather than Bush's." Biondi, who belongs to Berlusconi's government coalition, responded well to Amelia Robinson's comments on Bush's "illegal war," and

thanked her for her "beautiful words" about how she learned as a child living in Alabama, to be "color blind," and only look at the beauty that all human beings have inside themselves, as God's creatures.

Robinson then met 30 women parliamentarians of the DS, who were soon joined by their speaker of the House, and former speaker of the House Luciano Violante. Introducing the guest, Hon. Elena Montecchi told the audience: "I spend one month in the United States each year, and in 2004 I was there during the Presidential campaign, and I constantly met the LaRouche Youth Movement on various campuses, campaigning for LaRouche's New Bretton Woods. It's an honor for us to have you here at the Parliament, Mrs. Robinson, since your fights for voting rights in the '60s and to stop the war today are for us a reference point."



American civil rights heroine Amelia Boynton Robinson was invited to Rome for an official visit Nov. 28 to Dec. 4, at the time the opposition to the pro-free market Berlusconi government is preparing for next year's national elections, in which it plans to replace Berlusconi. Here she is meeting with women parliamentarians of the DS party.

Robinson's Message

The message brought by Mrs. Robinson to this meeting at the Chamber of Deputies, and also to the seat of the European Parliament in Rome, was very clear: "The war in Iraq is illegal; it is opposed by the majority of the American people, and has been imposed by a group around Vice President Dick Cheney, using lies and false evidence. Italy can help us get rid of Cheney, by pulling out its troops from Iraq, and this will send a clear message to President Bush, who lives in the illusion he is being supported." At the European Parliament, where she met Lucia Annunziata, a famous Italian journalist and former head of RAI, the national TV, and Sen. Michele Lauria, she defined Bush as "selected, not elected." She reminded Senator Lauria—who had some problems with this definition, since America is considered an example of democracy—of the enormous funding Bush received from big corporations, at a time when he was just a "womanizer, with alcohol and drug problems," and also of the vote suppression in the last election, which was investigated by the U.S. Congress. She emphasized that Bush was chosen precisely because of his state of mind, since it would make it easier for Cheney and other warmongers to "pull the strings. . . . Now it is thanks to LaRouche and his youth movement," she continued, "which is distributing millions of copies of literature at the Congress, and all over Washington D.C., that we have a concrete possibility to change American policy. I implore you: Pull out your troops, and ally with the true America, that of Dr. King, that of Franklin D. Roosevelt, that of LaRouche."

Robinson Honored for Her Civil Rights Battles

Robinson attended a conference organized by Articolo 21 (an organization set up to defend freedom of expression, as guaranteed by Article 21 of the Italian Constitution) and the daily *Il Manifesto*, to present a film on Bush's use of chemical weapons (white phosphorous) against Iraqi civilians in Fallujah. The editor-in-chief of *Il Manifesto*, Gabriele Polo, asked Robinson how this film has been received in the United States. "I have not seen it on American TV, but I have learned from a journalist of UPI based in Germany, named Benjamin, that in Fort Gordon, in Georgia, 80 U.S. soldiers back from Iraq with mental and physical problems are kept in a barracks without sanitation and without seeing any doctor."

Later, at a conference organized by the DS youth, she spoke of her battles in Alabama, along with her late husband Bill Boynton, 30 years before Dr. King came to the state, and then with Dr. King to achieve the Voting Rights Act of 1965, but also her battles today, alongside the LaRouche Youth Movement. Many young people asked her questions, and then



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Amelia Robinson asked Italy to ally with the "true America, that of Dr. King, that of Franklin D. Roosevelt, that of LaRouche," and help to get rid of Vice President Cheney, so the Iraq War could be ended. Here she is meeting with former Rome Mayor Francesco Rutelli.

queued to have her autograph the Italian edition of her autobiography, *Bridge Over Jordan*.

An Italian copy of her book was officially presented the next morning at Rome's Capitol Hill, the seat of the mayor and City Council, by Maurizio Bertolucci, president of the Council Committee for Voting Rights to Foreigners; Franca Eckert Coen, advisor to Mayor Veltroni on multi-ethnic policies; and Bernardino Gasparri, president of the Permanent Council Committee on Social Policies, who read some pages from the autobiography, and also quoted from LaRouche's speech in Talladega, Alabama in 2004, about the "immortality" of Dr. King.

The next day, Robinson spoke to students, first at Montale High School, at a conference commemorating Rosa Parks and her bus ride in Montgomery; and then at the University Department of Communication (Roma Tre).

She had many political meetings. One was at the Regional Congress of the DS, to which she brought the greetings of the "true America." On the last day of her trip, she visited the national office of another party of the left coalition, La Margherita, whose general secretary, Francesco Rutelli, introduced her to a number of foreign party representatives, including a Congresswoman from California.

The two main left dailies in Italy, *l'Unità* and *Il Manifesto*, covered her visit, and the second national channel (RAI 2 Nettuno) will air a portrait of her at the end of the year, not only in Italy, but also in Iraq, Morocco, and Syria, in the context of a series of lessons for college students on the history of the United States.