
LYM in Alabama, Georgia

Amelia Robinson: 'Put Your Boxing Gloves On!'

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For ten days in November, four members of the LaRouche Youth Movement (LYM) traveled through Alabama into Georgia with 95-year-old civil rights heroine Amelia

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Amelia Boynton Robinson, the 95-year-old heroine of the civil rights movement, with LYM members (from left) Kesha Rogers, Ardena Clark, and Wesley Irwin, at the grave of Booker T. Washington in Tuskegee, Ala. Urging them to “put your boxing gloves on,” she fought alongside them to break through ignorance and complacency among audiences commemorating Dr. Martin Luther King.

Boynton Robinson, the vice-chairman of the Schiller Institute, for a week-long celebration honoring Martin Luther King’s dream of a “beloved community.” Amelia invited the LYM to stay with her for a week of celebration, including civil rights rallies every evening at a different Southern Baptist Church, starting in Selma, Alabama, and continuing throughout the week all the way to Columbus, Georgia.

Amelia Boynton had been beaten and gassed nearly to death on “Bloody Sunday,” March 7, 1965, in the historic march across the Edmund Pettus Bridge. She was targeted because of her leadership in the civil rights movement: She had invited Martin Luther King to Selma, and hosted him at her home many times. She and her late husband Samuel Boynton had led the fight for voting rights.

Upon the LYM group’s arrival in Selma, it was quite surprising to see that of the approximately 30 people in attendance the first night, very few were under the age of 45 and only two were non-white. The four LYM youth, of all different skin tones, traveling with a 95-year-old legend, were quite the singularity.

The leading organizers of the event, Judy Cummings, a ’60s folk singer, and Rev. John Alfred, a civil rights activist and former president of the Southern Christian Leadership Council, cordially invited Amelia and the LYM to the “sharing circle,” and postponed all further planned events until a camera could be set up for Amelia to give a beautiful inspirational message to begin the week. The LYM members introduced themselves and briefed the group on LaRouche PAC’s mobilization for impeachment of Bush and Cheney, and for

an economic policy revolution, as “what King would have wanted,” Amelia spoke about how the LYM had worked night and day to secure a Democratic Party election victory. Later, when people suggested that she might want to rest, she exclaimed, “I wouldn’t let the doctor keep me, because I wanted to be *here!*” She then popped a surprise on the LYM and told everyone that we would sing for them. After the first canon, we sang the Bush mental illness song, “Tourette’s Syndrome,” which received laughter and applause. The LYM put literature on the table, and organized several people.

But soon, a lead organizer of the event suggested that the LYM-Bush song and the idea of impeachment were not the type of messages they wanted to be sending throughout the week, and that “attacks on people” were not allowed.

Here Amelia intervened, on the true nature of Dr. Martin Luther King, who named the names—in the spirit of *hating* the policy, but *not* the person expressing it, while never letting the *person* responsible off the hook.

The church events at the beginning of the week were focussed on Montgomery, Waugh, and Tuskegee, Alabama. The LYM organized on Alabama State, Auburn University, and Tuskegee University campuses during the day, addressing three classes, and circulating approximately 35 bundles of LaRouche PAC pamphlets, including 6 bundles to churches, and about 70 DVDs of LaRouche’s webcasts.

In Selma, at the First Baptist Church, there was a very memorable moment when Amelia, after a 30-year absence, returned to the church she had attended for 40-plus years. There were many who knew her, and she was asked to say something, to which she responded by making a statement about how God has a purpose for us all, and that we must strive to find what that purpose is by being the best people we can be. She was given standing ovations.

The entire church then met outside, and we all proceeded to cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge. One woman who, like Amelia, had been on the 1965 Selma-to-Montgomery March, got out of her wheelchair and walked to the top part of the bridge in a symbolic gesture, before riding the rest of the way down. As we drove across, Amelia, who recalled how she had been beaten, gassed, and left for dead on that very bridge, commented on the lack of depth of understanding about what Dr. King actually represented, and the power that *fear* has over people when it comes to fighting today for the same mission for *economic* justice that Dr. King had.

The Legacy of Dr. King

By the close of the third day, about the time that issues like environmentalism were being featured—falsely—as the

true meaning of Dr. King's struggle, Amelia intervened, telling Rev. John Alfred that she was with the Schiller Institute (which had not been noted in the program) and was proud of it, and that she wanted the LYM to speak. She gripped his hands with hers and expressed to him the real principle of Martin Luther King: a constant commitment to truth, regardless of popular opinion. Soon, a delegation from the other organizations involved in the events visited Mrs. Robinson, and after they finished expressing their concerns about the message of the LYM, Amelia asked them what they knew about Lyndon LaRouche. As Amelia suspected, they knew little, only rumors, scandals, and second-hand reports. Amelia said that she thought it was important that the LYM speak because they—the youth—were the ones who were saving the country, and they had a right to speak. Leon "Chief" Frazier, a former police chief and close collaborator of Amelia's, jumped in, admonishing those who wanted to "tone down" the LYM. "Don't ask this woman to support you and then tell them, 'Don't say anything disrespectful, you might upset people.' That's disgraceful to me," said Frazier, who has battled the "powers that be," in his long law enforcement career against drug trafficking. "Too many lives are being destroyed. I believe the youth are intelligent enough to say anything they think or feel. Bush is *bad*. Cheney is *bad*. They're bad for this nation. Anybody ought to be able to say that! The 1,000 grandmas that are coming to the march on Saturday will say that. Those grandmas are going to say this system is screwed up . . . because it *is* screwed up! There's going to be fear and frustration in life, and that's natural, so what we need to do is *just let it all hang out*. There's got to be change, and we need to listen to what these youth have to say."

It was a crucial discussion to have. The delegation asked the LYM, what did they want to say? This author told them that Dr. King did make people uncomfortable by telling the truth, and that he would want us to name the names. "Bush is dumb, dumb and insane. He's a human being, so we don't hate *him*, but we can hate his policies. To end the policies, we must impeach the people who represent the policies. We've got to fight for the truth." Kesha Rogers, who had inspired the Texas Democratic Party with her campaign for party chairman earlier this year, spoke about the failure of the Boomer generation to secure a future for the youth, detailing the LYM education program and what we do to provide leadership to the Congress and population.

And so, on Nov. 15, at the Butler Chapel in Tuskegee, 70 people heard Amelia Boynton Robinson, Wesley Irwin (this author), and Kesha Rogers speak truth to power from the pulpit of a Southern Baptist Church. Amelia talked about the power that fear has over people, and the role of the youth in leading us out of our fear. She stressed the importance of speaking out against those people who would spread evil throughout the world. She highlighted the LYM election victory, in mobilizing the youth on the campuses and held up a

letter from Bill Clinton, saying that people had better expect big things in the next five weeks concerning the economic meltdown. She then introduced the LYM as the young people who were fighting to save the nation.

Irwin quoted King saying, "If a man has nothing for which to give his life, then he isn't fit to live," and said that the reason Mrs. Robinson has probably lived so long, is that she's been looking for fights for which she was willing to give her life for nearly a century. He then outlined the ongoing collapse of the U.S. physical economy since the time of the Nixon-Shultz Administration, and an idea of the economic-philosophical solution.

'Living the Dream'

Rogers then added the knockout punch, also taking up the degeneracy found on the campuses while organizing, and the withdrawal of the youth generation from history. She quoted Martin Luther King, "An individual has not truly lived until he can break from the narrow confines of individualistic concerns to the broader concern of all humanity," and said that our society has been conditioned by greed and popular opinion to avoid this fight.

She pointed out that today our generation has hardly any idea of what people like Amelia have done for humanity, even though she is featured on displays in students' own school libraries! "Living the dream means fighting for the truth," including the "promotion of Classical culture." Kesha then introduced the motet "Jesu, meine Freude," by Johann Sebastian Bach, and the LYM sang two sections of it, bringing Amelia up to stand in between the four youth during the performance.

It was hard to find a dry eye in the crowd.

Afterwards, nearly every person, including the organizers who had previously objected to the LYM, came up to hug us or take literature, many of them in a state of good, cognitive shock.

The final organizing day in the South, the LYM traveled to Columbus, Georgia for the culminating "School of the ('Assassins') Americas" protest, attended by some 20,000 people. The LYM distributed some 40 bundles of LaRouche PAC pamphlets—"Is Goebbels on Your Campus?" and "The End of the Truman Era"—along with leaflets about impeaching Cheney and Bush, and several copies of Amelia's autobiography, *Bridge Across Jordan*. The question asked to us by many youth was, "Where are you guys? Why aren't you on our campus *here* in Alabama, or Georgia?" It was a question that the LYM is immediately taking up by even further mastering the idea of the "Pythagorean comma" in music, found in works composed in the method of composers like Bach, as well as in the discoveries Johannes Kepler made concerning the harmonic ordering of our Solar System. The LYM plans to return to the South soon, and organize with an even more powerful intellectual arsenal, side-by-side with, and in the footsteps of, Amelia Boynton Robinson.