

## Gore Dems Flee Crisis, Fight LaRouche's Leadership

by Debra Hanania Freeman

Congressional debate on July 18-19 on funding for the District of Columbia, including funding for D.C. General Hospital, gave the lie to Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton's months-long insistence that the fate of D.C. General is "not a Congressional matter." It was a line that Holmes Norton had used with the stated intention to stop Lyndon LaRouche's influence on Congress on this vital matter of the general welfare. LaRouche forces had waged a national mobilization, and had won a victory, when a House-Senate conference committee removed from the funding bill, an endorsement of the D.C. Financial Control Board's illegal closing of the hospital.

On July 11, in a message to a town meeting honoring the staff of the public hospital just days before its closure, LaRouche—already a declared candidate for the 2004 Democratic presidential nomination—said that, "Up to a point in time, our efforts to save D.C. General Hospital as a full-service, fully funded public hospital, had succeeded in reaching the objective set forth in the series of webcasts conducted by me during the relevant weeks following the fiasco of Nov. 7, 2000. The mobilization of citizens had brought the issue to the point that members of Congress had signed onto overriding the Control Board to save D.C. General. But, then, Democratic Party forces intervened, to pressure members of Congress into abruptly reversing their immediately prior commitment to save the hospital."

LaRouche went on to assert that, without a firm and aggressive commitment to restore the general welfare principle, government has no moral authority, and the nation little chance of survival.

At the time of the meeting, an aggressive propaganda

campaign was being waged by the likes of the late KKKatie Graham's *Washington Post*, D.C. Mayor Anthony Williams, and D.C. Delegate Holmes Norton, aimed at convincing citizens that with the hospital's July 13 closure, the fight was over. LaRouche disagreed: "The fight is going on. The fight is going to get tougher. People in the Congress have let us down. But they're going to be hit again by the issue. This issue is going to come back. It's not a done deal; it's not going to go away. . . . This is the beginning, not the end."

### Gore Dems Pressure Against LaRouche

Those gathered, and hundreds others not present that night, knew that Congress had let them down, and they were angry. In the short span of time between Sen. James Jeffords' defection from the Republican Party, and discussions between Senators Tom Daschle (D) and John McCain (R), many Democratic officials who had rallied to defend the hospital had backed away. They believed that with the balance of power in the Senate shifting to the Democrats, they had options to avoid LaRouche's leadership, as Holmes Norton and others were demanding.

Succumbing to pressure from Gore Democrats, some, among them South Dakota's Senators Tom Daschle and Tim Johnson, went so far as to withdraw their names from public statements supporting the continued operation of the capital city's only public hospital. But, LaRouche's July 11 remarks kept people focussed on the critical issue at hand: the restoration of a policy commitment to protect the general welfare, particularly as the onrushing financial and economic crash hits the United States with full force.

Less than two weeks later, with the unravelling of the debt

of Argentina and Turkey, and the global financial system cracking, LaRouche and the movement he leads, enjoy growing recognition internationally as the only institution in the United States capable of getting anything done. Fearing further political vindication of LaRouche, leading establishment news-outlets, including the *Washington Post*, have orchestrated a coordinated shift, suddenly warning that the global economic turndown is about to spiral out of control, and exploring the G-8 gathering in Italy to do something about it.

Is it that they suddenly understand the reality of the situation? Highly placed Washington sources say "No." Instead, they note, with every ratcheting down of the global financial system, the credibility and authority of LaRouche ratchets up. Internationally, articles featuring Lyndon LaRouche's Eurasian Land-Bridge development perspective are becoming more and more commonplace, especially in the immediate wake of LaRouche's historic June 29 address in the Russian Parliament (Duma).

The "LaRouche factor" was also responsible for the major July 19 victory in Congress in the ongoing D.C. General battle. With an intense 24-hour mobilization, LaRouche successfully blocked the Al Gore "New Democrats" from putting Congressional imprimatur on the shutdown of D.C. General Hospital and on the lies used to justify it. A House-Senate Conference Committee withdrew language containing an obscene provision, that would have endorsed the Financial Control Board's illegal ratification of the contract that privatized the hospital.

The language which had been inserted into the Supplemental Appropriations bill at the request of Control Board Chair Alice Rivlin, would have essentially repealed the legislative authority of the City Council of the District of Columbia, which has cast two unanimous votes to block the hospital's closure. Rep. Norton opposed the measure, when it became clear that the measure simply could not be openly defended in Congress without severe political consequences.

## **Power To Reopen Hospital Saved**

With the language taken out of the bill, the D.C. City Council retains the power, not only to revoke the April actions by the Financial Control Board that shut the hospital down, but also to restore the hospital to full-service status. The only remaining question is whether they have the political will to do so.

The victory in this battle is seen as having significantly strengthened LaRouche's position in the ongoing fight to restore the hospital. Congress has now done precisely what Delegate Norton has emphatically insisted they would "never do": They have started a public debate concerning the hospital's future. On May 9, and at numerous other times, Norton has knowingly lied that "There is no D.C. supplemental before the Congress. We are informed by the appropriate committees that none will be submitted or considered. In addition, the

contract for the new health-care system in the District . . . is not subject to approval by the Congress."

Now, not only has the Congress refused to ratify the Control Board's illegal, quasi-legislative actions of April 30, but, with the Congress having now considered the plight of D.C. General Hospital as a matter of legislative business, no one can claim that D.C. General is not the responsibility of the Congress. They have deliberated, and Eleanor Holmes Norton, along with the Gore Democrats who have backed her up, are revealed as either liars or incompetents. More importantly, though, the absolutely rotten role played by Senate Democrats under Tom Daschle's leadership, in what LaRouche has called a "go along to get to Hell" mode, stands exposed.

Back in late February, word went out from the highest levels of the Democratic Party personally associated with former President Bill Clinton, that LaRouche was absolutely right in declaring the fight to save D.C. General Hospital a matter of international strategic importance, and deserved support in that fight. This was largely driven by panic at the Bush apparatus's complete willingness to ignore the U.S. Constitution, and to smash any remaining remnants of the general welfare principle in matters of public policy. Over the following few weeks, the entire Democratic leadership of the House and the Senate issued public endorsements of the D.C. General fight.

Then, when control of the Senate shifted to the Democrats, the Gore crowd, who had led the party to a crushing defeat the previous November, seemed to crawl out of their worm hills, fostering the idea, in a completely insane and immoral flight from reality, that working with LaRouche was no longer necessary; that "other options" were now available to contain the Bush crowd. One well-placed Washington source compared the action to a man dying of thirst in the desert believing that a six-pack of ice-cold beer is just a short distance away.

LaRouche had said then that those who stayed and fought had a chance of victory. He said that the issue would come back with greater force, in a broader fight for a general welfare policy, as well as a fight "to restore to this national a general health-care policy consistent with the intention of Hill-Burton." It was the fight which had identified LaRouche during his bid for the Year 2000 Presidential nomination.

These recent actions open the door for an immediate escalation of a citizens' drive on Capitol Hill that insists that anyone with any integrity in the Congress will listen to LaRouche. It is against this backdrop that on July 24, LaRouche will deliver a history-shaping address to a Washington D.C. audience, broadcast internationally via the Internet, his fifth post-Nov. 7, 2000 election webcast. In it, he will outline urgent measures that must be taken by governments around the world, including that of the United States, to avert financial, monetary, and economic collapse.