

Congresswoman Waters Sends Public Apology To LaRouche

by Dennis Speed

On Nov. 14, at a Congressional briefing on “Public Hospitals In Crisis: Is The Social Safety Net Unraveling?” chaired by Reps. John Conyers and Dennis Kucinich, California Congresswoman Maxine Waters stated, “Let me just say this. And I am not [a person] without controversy. We’ve had a group of people coming to this Congress, trying to focus us on what was happening with D.C. General Hospital. And, we, basically, told them, ‘It’s not our district. It’s not a national issue.’ And a lot of people shied away from that because the LaRouche organization was at the forefront, of trying to help us understand what was going on. We should all apologize. And I do now. I apologize because, you’re right. It is a national issue. *And we could have understood this.* And second, I think we have to say to our colleagues in the District: ‘We want to help you. Because to help you, we help ourselves with this issue.’ And having said that, I think that many of us are going to have to refocus.”

Waters’ remarks were met by applause from Congress-

sional aides and staffers. A bit later, Waters referenced “Sept. 11” as a watershed, after which the fact that “LaRouche was right” was unquestionable.

After Sept. 11, the “D.C. General issue” ceased to exist. The lack of emergency preparedness of American cities, including the nation’s capital, to respond to biological or chemical disasters, whether perpetrated by terrorists, or accidents, as well as the incapacity to treat mass outbreaks of disease, such as a Spanish Flu epidemic, was underscored with a vengeance, as anthrax killed small numbers, and threatened many more—including members of Congress. Washington’s self-imposed unpreparedness took the lives of postal workers, and tragically “proved” what LaRouche had warned of earlier.

The District’s Congresswoman, Eleanor Holmes Norton, had deliberately road-blocked every attempt by her colleagues to respond to the nation’s painfully self-evident public health crisis, terrorizing them that they would be branded as “collaborators of Lyndon LaRouche.” That, combined with the withdrawal of support for D.C. General Hospital by Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle (S.D.), Sen. Tim Johnson (S.D.), and other prominent Democrats who did not want to alienate Al “Born To Lose” Gore, had succeeded in closing the facility in July. Scores of D.C. residents died directly as a result of this action, imposed as “fiscal prudence” against the unanimous voice of the City Council, by the now-defunct Financial Control Board, and with the assistance of the now-deceased Katharine Meyer Graham and her anti-LaRouche *Washington Post*.

In July, the D.C. news-weekly *The Hill* reported: “Norton’s public position is ‘My hands are tied.’ . . . A recent Norton official statement said: ‘D.C. General is a local issue to be resolved in the District and not by any member of the Congress.’” But that was always only a cover story. On March 22, Norton stated, “There has to be a plan. The Control



U.S. Rep. Maxine Waters (D-Calif.).

Board has deferred to the Mayor and the Council and they have to come up with a plan on how they are going to close this damn place down.”

On May 9, Norton’s office sent a memo, marked “confidential,” to her Congressional colleagues “Re: D.C. General Hospital is a D.C. Issue and is Not Before the Congress. . . . Tomorrow, May 10, a mass march and lobby day have been scheduled. There may be more such activity in the weeks ahead. . . . [In] many of the groups who have come to Congresswoman Norton’s office, the majority of the participants have been followers of Lyndon LaRouche, and the publicity and events are being coordinated by LaRouche and the Schiller Institute, a LaRouche front. . . .”

In August, Sen. Mary Landrieu (D-La.), who had earlier insisted that she would act on D.C. General only after consultation with Norton, moved to insert a paragraph into the 2001 Supplemental Appropriations bill: “This section ratifies and approves, and gives the full force of federal law to the action of the District of Columbia Financial Responsibility and Management Authority on April 30, 2001 [to shutdown D.C. General].” The cat was out of the bag. Norton had lied, and blindsided her colleagues.

The significance of Waters’ apology should be seen in light of the above; but also, in the context of the changed post-Sept. 11 environment, and LaRouche’s role in exposing the coup-in-progress against the Bush Administration as of that date. Senator Daschle must now, for the General Welfare of the people of the United States, reverse himself. He should act, perhaps against the wishes of Senate Minority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) et al., to defend the health of U.S. citizens, starting with restoring and expanding D.C. General’s public health functions.

Why Postal Workers Died: No Public Health Defense

by Lynne Speed and Edward Spannaus

The chronology of events leading up to the deaths of two Washington, D.C. postal workers from pulmonary anthrax on Oct. 21-22, stands as a stinging indictment of the bureaucratic, axiomatically-flawed apparatus which continues to leave the nation unprepared even after the events of Sept. 11 and the subsequent anthrax attacks.

Especially dramatic is the transcript of the 911 phone call made by postal worker Thomas L. Morris, Jr., early in the morning of Oct. 21. In that call, Morris said he suspected that he had been exposed to anthrax a week earlier, on Oct. 13, when an envelope with powder in it was found at the Brentwood processing center; but that postal officials had never let him know if it was anthrax or not. Morris saw his own doctor at his local Kaiser-Permanente HMO center in suburban Prince

Georges County on Oct. 18, but the doctor only prescribed Tylenol. After his 911 call, Morris was taken to Greater Southeast Community Hospital, where he died later that day.

The unnecessary deaths of these workers, both misdiagnosed by private, for-profit health-care providers, in the absence of a competent public-health system, underscores the urgency of citizens acting on 2004 Presidential precandidate Lyndon LaRouche’s Oct. 28 call to “Build a National Defense Against Germ Warfare” (*EIR*, Nov. 9).

Morris and his co-worker John Curseen became, tragically, like so many others, victims of the mass murder policy known as “shareholder values,” which in the last quarter-century has overridden the Constitutional principle of the “general welfare” and “common good.” The destructive doctrine of “saving money,” rather than “saving lives,” has now placed in jeopardy the lives of every American.

In this context, LaRouche has stated that restoring D.C. General Hospital in the nation’s capital is indispensable and obvious, but it is not sufficient. What is required is an immediate full war-time mobilization to restore the national defense protection provided by public and related measures of sanitation. This means rebuilding our nation’s infrastructure, including safe water, plentiful and affordable supplies of energy, improved public transportation, and public health institutions, which all have been dismantled, step by step, over the past three recent decades, under the destructive dogmas of “privatization,” “deregulation,” and “free trade.”

Chronology

Saturday, Oct. 13: Thomas L. Morris, Jr. and a few other postal workers at the Brentwood Post Office notice, and bring to the attention of supervisors, a suspicious letter, leaking white powder, which they fear might contain anthrax. This is two days before the anthrax letter is received in the office of Sen. Tom Daschle! The suspicious letter is set aside and sent to the FBI for testing (it was later reported to test negative, but the results were never provided to the postal workers, nor was a further investigation conducted).

Monday, Oct. 15: Immediately after the Daschle letter is discovered, testing and treatment begins at Congress for 4,000 Congressional staffers and others who work in the buildings. But for the next five days, there is *no testing or treatment* of the postal workers at the Brentwood facility, through which the Daschle letter was processed. There are, however, a series of press conferences, which include top Federal and, later, District of Columbia officials. *Not one* of them proposes the type of emergency measures which would have been required to protect the lives of the postal workers.

Tuesday-Wednesday, Oct. 16-17: On Tuesday, Brentwood postal workers Morris and Curseen begin feeling sick; the next day, postal worker Leroy Richmond is ill.

Thursday, Oct. 18: At a press conference at the Brentwood facility, postal workers are told that there is no need for them to be tested. The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) also says that no environmental testing at Brentwood is needed.