

Coalition to Save D.C. Hospital Announces Strategy for Victory

by Michele Steinberg and Dennis Speed

The campaign to save D.C. General Hospital, the single remaining public hospital in the United States capital, has become an international movement rooted in the principle of the General Welfare clause of the U.S. Constitution. *International*, because the forces that seek to shut D.C. General, do so on behalf of financial forces engaged in destroying nations through the use of planned epidemics, as well as the willfully uncontrolled spread of disease. This policy option is not new, and was spelled out in the work of both H.G. Wells and Bertrand Russell. It was exposed by Lyndon LaRouche and associates as early as 1980, in *The New Dark Ages Conspiracy*.

Russell, in his *Impact of Science on Society*, stated, "If a Black Death could spread throughout the world once in every generation, survivors could procreate freely without making the world too full. The state of affairs might be unpleasant, but what of it?" Wells said, in *Anticipations of the Reaction to Mechanical and Scientific Progress Upon Human Life and Thought*, that "The men of the New Republic will not be squeamish either in facing or inflicting death. . . . They will have ideals that will make killing worthwhile."

This "New Republic," called by George Bush, Sr. the "New World Order," and its "New Republicans" typified by Conservative Revolution ideologue Newt Gingrich, intend to end public health care *globally*, using "globalization" to do so. They are the made-for-TV Zarathustras, dedicated, as was President George Bush, Jr.'s grandfather, Prescott Bush, to imposing Nazi financial austerity, in the name of "ending corruption," by purging society of the lives not worthy to be lived.

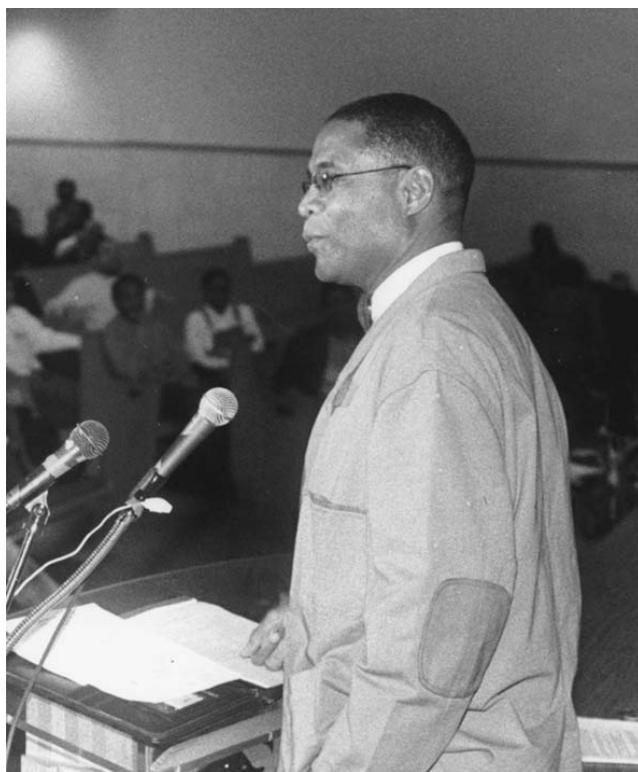
Many citizens throughout the world who have up to now assumed that it was "not their place" to challenge these policies, are now beginning to fight back. That process developed in Washington, D.C., in a dialogue, via webcast, between LaRouche, and Dr. Abdul Alim Muhammad, founder and director of Washington's Abundant Life Clinic. It has now caught the attention of medical professionals and others worldwide. Recently, for example, doctors in Germany have allied themselves with the fight for D.C. General Hospital, "in defense of the general welfare."

Doctors at Berlin's Moabit Hospital, faced with the same shutdown process being fought in Washington, sent a statement to the Coalition To Save D.C. General Hospital, saying, "The doctors and the medical personnel of Moabit Hospital

have been fighting for years to maintain their hospital in the center of Berlin, a hospital which also has a long Jewish tradition, and want to ensure that in the future medical care will be provided in the area where the hospital stands. . . . Now we find out, that you have similar problems in Washington, D.C., with your hospital, and therefore, with this letter, want to convey our solidarity. We want to motivate you, to fight for the hospital, so that you can continue the important work for the patients who have been entrusted to your care. . . ."

Eleventh Mass Meeting in Washington

In the United States, such support has been built through the circulation of an FDR-PAC petition which grew out of a discussion between Lyndon LaRouche and a group of elected



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officials, trade unionists, and constituency leaders in Washington, D.C. in February. Called "It is time to draw the line: Saving D.C. General Hospital is a matter of international importance," the statement has been signed by more than 400 current and former elected officials, religious and community leaders, and medical professionals from all over the world. In part, the petition states: "There can be no argument that the world has entered the greatest financial and economic crisis in modern history. In the context of that crisis, the United States is at a crossroads. Either we re-adopt the commitment to the General Welfare clause of the U.S. Constitution that was the basis of Franklin Roosevelt's policies and of Dr. Martin Luther King's, or we will find our nation going the way of Nazi Germany. . . . There is no middle ground."

On April 18, organizers held their eleventh town meeting, attended by some 400 citizens, as well as major media at the Union Temple Baptist Church of Rev. Willie Wilson. The meeting came on the heels of the April 12 City Council decision defying the Mayor and Control Board, voting up of the funds to keep a *public* D.C. General operating as "the center of the District's health care system." The City Council move was such a shock to the Washington "elite" that the vote was immediately called "disgusting" by the *Washington Post*, the newspaper owned by KKK-Katie Graham. Graham is queen bee of the "Invisible Empire" of financiers who plan to "whiten" Washington with a vast "Negro Removal" program centered on the shutdown of D.C. General and destruction of medical and other critical services.

Reverend Wilson, perhaps the most important constituency figure in D.C. in the election of Mayor Anthony Williams, has now led the fight against the Mayor's incompetent, and dangerous, campaign to shut D.C. General. Wilson announced that on April 28, the church would conduct an all-day "trash-burning," in which he invited citizens to collect the mayor's "letter to citizens" defending the plan to shut the hospital.

The Philosophy of Victory

Moderator Dr. Abdul Alim Muhammad, Minister of Health of the Nation of Islam, as well as a founding member of the Coalition to Save D.C. General, told the cheering crowd, "We can smell victory in the air." On Thursday, April 12, the Washington, D.C. City Council voted unanimously, 13-0, to reject the attempt of the Mayor, and the D.C. Control board, to allot \$75 million (actually more) to the seedy, shady Doctors Community Healthcare Corporation (DCHC) to close D.C. General. Instead, the Council acted to keep D.C. General as a public hospital, by allocating \$21 million for its functioning until Sept. 30.

Sept. 30 is both the end of the fiscal year, and the end of the five-year dictatorial rule of D.C. by the Control Board. Any attempt to extend the Control Board's dominance over the electorate of that city past that five-year deadline, will lead

to a political explosion. This is especially true, since it has come to light that Williams and Alice Rivlin, head of the Control Board, are now proposing to give to DCHC \$83 million for the first year of operation of D.C. General, when the Congress would allocate earlier only \$45 million. Members of D.C. General's Public Benefits Corporation (PBC), who are allied with the doctors and nurses in the call to keep the hospital fully staffed and fully funded, have offered a proposal to run the hospital for only \$75 million!

In essence, DCHC will be paid *more*, because it will ensure the deconstruction of D.C. General, *and the African-American community that lives there*. It is simply the "blood money" for implementing the *Washington Post's* Katharine Graham's 50-year-old policy for "Negro Removal" for the District.

Dr. Alim recounted how the coalition meetings had triggered a citizens' quest for truth, and uncovered, with the work of the FDR-PAC, that in reality, DCHC has been accused of crimes — looting the hospitals it takes over, and stripping them bare of assets and cash flows.

Two members of the D.C. City Council, Kevin Chavous and Phil Mendelson, made surprise appearances at the meeting. They joined the podium group to thank the citizens for their perseverance and determination, and to announce that they will continue the fight on behalf of the people who supported them. Chavous and Mendelson expressed their pride in the Council, that the action to fund D.C. General with \$21.5 million in operating expenses, was by a very rare *unanimous*, 13-0, vote.

Chavous reported Mayor Williams's announcement that he will veto that vote; but Chavous predicted that not only will the Council members deliver the minimum 9 votes to override the veto, but the vote will be 13-0 once again. He told the citizens to keep on fighting, because, after the City Council overrides the veto, the D.C. General budget will go *back* to the Control Board and then to Congress.

Congress Is Target

Chavous made it clear to the audience that, as far as he was concerned, D.C. citizens had "nothing to lose" by challenging the "Negro Removal" plan. "The media said, 'Councilman, don't you feel you're threatening home rule by doing something Congress doesn't want you to do? I said, well, what are they going to do? Take away our right to vote? What are they going to do, take away our budget autonomy? What are they going to do, take away our voting members of Congress? What are they going to do? Put in a control board to oversee what we do? [all things Congress has already done to the city]. You know, under these circumstances, I take my chances. Sometimes, when your back's against the wall, you have nowhere to go but forward. The vote was a vote to move forward."

Joining Dr. Alim at the podium were Dr. Joycelyn Elders,



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former Surgeon General of the United States, who had flown from Little Rock, Arkansas to be there; Dr. Simmon Wilcox, past president of the Medical Staff of Aliquippa Community Hospital of Beaver County, Pa., where a victory had just been won to prevent DCHC from destroying that hospital; Dennis Speed, the Northeast coordinator of the Schiller Institute; Dr. Michal Ann Young, president of the Medical/Dental Staff, D.C. General Hospital; civil rights veteran, Rev. James L. Bevel, once Director of Non-violent Political Action for Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.; and Lynne Speed from the Schiller Institute and Coalition to Save D.C. General Hospital.

Dr. Alim noted that with this kind of representation, the fight for D.C. General Hospital had turned into a “movement.” He explained that *now*, because the Congressional *fiat* that governs the District of Columbia makes the Congress the seat of ultimate decisions about the District, the issue of D.C. General has become the domain of *every citizen* of the United States. Any and all citizens can lobby every member of the U.S. Congress to vote for saving D.C. General.

Recalling the several months of work by the Coalition, Dr. Alim said that “this is a movement of love,” beginning with love of God. He said that the only way we can serve God is to serve our fellow man, especially the poor, and the least

of our brethren. “D.C. General is sacred ground, it is consecrated for the poor.” Alim reminded the crowd that, as Jesus said that the “poor will always be among us,” the doors must always be opened to those poor, “for the love of humanity.” He said that the citizens must turn out in “platoons, squads, and brigades” to demonstrate outside the Mayor’s office on Thursday, and march with the coalition to Capitol Hill to win this fight.

Schiller Institute leader Dennis Speed, citing a major article by Lyndon LaRouche on “The Philosophy of Victory” (see *EIR*, March 2, 2001), drew the participants to see the larger picture they were acting in. Speed gave a strategic briefing on the needless crises being *created* by the arrogant and stupid Washington elites—the economic and financial collapse, the Middle East bloodbath, the looming strategic crisis in China. LaRouche’s article is sub-titled, “Can We Change the Universe?” and Speed identified that, as the subject of the fight for D.C. General—to realize the human *purpose* for change, and to create a government of the people, by the people and for the people. He asked how elected officials can represent the “will of the people” who elected them, if the people are so indifferent that they have no “will.”

Speed recounted that at Howard University, a medical student named Robert Henderson had committed suicide on April 6, and that he was the third student to die at the Univer-

sity in the last three weeks. Two of the three had committed suicide. How ironic, Speed said, that a *medical* student at this African-American university, in the city in which the fight for D.C. General was raging, felt that his life had no purpose. This student could have been at this meeting, or last week's meeting, and seen that this movement, this fight for the General Welfare, gives purpose to every life.

Challenge From 1960s Civil Rights Leader

Rev. James Bevel is a legendary figure in the American civil rights movement, and was also the 1992 candidate for the Vice-Presidency of the United States with Lyndon LaRouche, then in jail. Bevel, who had been called to Birmingham on Good Friday of 1963 by Dr. Martin Luther King, as King entered the Birmingham jail, and immediately devised the bold 1963 Birmingham "Children's March" that broke the

back of segregation in Alabama, inspired and challenged D.C. citizens to spread the General Welfare movement further than anything seen in their lifetime.

Bevel pointed out that while the U.S. government provides a *means* for true personal sovereignty, people who refuse to exercise it act like animals, instead of citizens. Bevel said that *no citizen* can ever truly be "oppressed" by another—neither the "powerless" by the "powerful," nor the "black" by the "white." He spoke of the "government," not as bureaucracy, but as the Constitution and Declaration of Independence of 1776, in the which, the Founding Fathers of America wrote of "inalienable rights," and "self-evident truths," such that "*all men are created equal.*" Bevel blasted the belief that the American founding documents were designed to exclude black Americans, or anyone else, and located the success of this battle for D.C. General in the real fight that is necessary:

'Time to Get Serious'

The following interchange took place between Dr. Abdul Alim Muhammed of the Nation of Islam and Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr., at the conference of the International Caucus of Labor Committees and Schiller Institute in Reston, Virginia on Feb. 17-18, 2001.

Dr. Abdul Alim Muhammed: Greetings to you Mr. LaRouche. I'm very pleased to be here. As you know, I'm from Washington, D.C., which is the center of a lot of what you're talking about. And there are some of us in the District, who are attempting to be citizens, and to stand up on our hind legs, as you put it, but the barbarians are inside the gates. And they have occupied the high places in the powerful places, and among other . . . things that we're presently fighting to preserve, is the public health sector . . . especially D.C. General Hospital. As you probably know, there are probably 200,000 or more government-certified poor people who live in the District, 100,000 of whom have no health insurance, who rely almost completely on the public-health sector that's being dismantled.

The troubles at D.C. General Hospital have been imposed from the top down. Congress has specifically limited the amount of money that the District government can spend on public health. So, a hospital that last year had a budgeted amount of about \$120 million, only has \$60 million this year, and is slated to run out of money sometime in March, and the doors of the hospital are expected to close by April 1.

So, I'm just asking . . . how those of us who wish to be citizens, need to respond to this rather urgent emergency,

that has already cost lives. I mean, we can already count the number of people who have died as a result of the difficulties imposed on D.C. General Hospital. Thank you.

Lyndon LaRouche: I think what we have to do is, first of all—I think we have to use that. We have to probably put a death count against the management of this operation there, and keep building it up. Because we're in a, strategically, in a Valley Forge-type of situation, in which all the forces in government, in the majority, are against us. But it's not hopeless.

For example, the problem is, we came up against Ashcroft's nomination. Now, my associates and I did what was necessary, with a lot of help from a lot of people. We mobilized enough to get the votes, which if Daschle and company had stuck to it, would have tied up the Ashcroft nomination. We'd organized that number of votes. But then, because we didn't have the muscle to enforce what we had won, some of them finked out on us.

Now, there are two sides to that: One side is, we lost that particular fight; but we didn't lose it really. Because we're fighting a war, and we lost one battle, we had to retreat. But we made a show of force, and we got our forces united by fighting that battle. So, what we have to do, is look at these situations, as we take these battles on, and we make them cost as much, politically, to the enemy as possible, to give as much morale, and moralization to the victims and friends as possible, to build a movement of conscience around this issue.

We have to understand also, that this administration, while it seems momentarily all powerful—or, they'd like to convince people of such—is not. We're dealing with a doomed emperor. He's on a short fuse. And therefore, we have to get the troops mobilized and moving in. Lives are lost in wars, lives that should not be lost. We're losing

"You must bring out your neighbors, students, children—make them all act like citizens by *taking* their inalienable rights." Organizing takes work, he stressed—meetings every night, planning each next step until victory.

Dr. Simmon Wilcox from Aliquippa Community Hospital received a standing ovation for his, and his fellow doctors', defeat of the very Doctors Community Health Care Corp. which was tapped by the Control Board to ruin D.C. General. Dr. Wilcox, who has traveled throughout the world, practicing medicine in Jamaica, South Africa, and other nations, told the audience that the excellence of American public health was once a "crowning jewel" that set this nation apart. He said he had never thought he would see those hospitals closed and looted, as was now being done in the name of profit-making.

Dr. Wilcox recalled how DCHC had come in with a "better bid" than a proposal to incorporate Aliquippa into a univer-

lives already. We've got to keep the death toll—not for George Bush; he's not going to be impressed; he's going to delight in the number of people that die. He's never shown, himself, much compassion for anybody. Remember, "Well, if innocent people have to die on death row, that's good for my politics, therefore, they'll die." And he'll do the same thing with Washington, D.C. . . .

We just have to keep fighting. And not be discouraged by the defeats we take. Because we've got to win. The question is when? How soon? I think we ought to keep the score. But keep the score for the purpose of getting *the people* to understand. The people who agree with us, but who aren't fighting. *Get them to understand!* "Look, the reason we're not winning is because we don't have enough support from you guys. So get serious and start organizing more of your friends and neighbors, and we might have enough muscle, so you don't face a defeat, as we did with Ashcroft. If we had had more strength to support what we did in organizing Democrats to come around on the Ashcroft issue, we'd have won it. The reason we didn't win it, all the way, is because we didn't have enough support."

So, the key thing now, is on this issue, like the D.C. General Hospital, is to do two things: Continue the fight and expand it. But also, let's take this thing to the other parts of the country, and build up a national movement on this thing, and take the D.C. General case, and use it not only as a D.C. issue, but make this a *national* issue: "Look, look at what they're doing to us in Washington. What do you think they're going to do to you in New York? What do you think they're going to do to you in Boston? Or Detroit? Or elsewhere? You guys have got to get on board here. We've got to win a national battle in Washington, for the sake of the whole country."

And so, I think we've got to go in that direction.

sity network that would have brought in the finest doctors and research facilities in the area. The hospital "accountants" praised DCHC for the "very high rating it had gotten from Wall Street," and for its "great website." The doctors at Aliquippa, however, "being more interested in knowing the medical performance after these people take over a hospital," did their own "due diligence" check. They found that DCHC's takeovers of other financially limited hospitals had destroyed those facilities completely, resulting in lawsuits that showed extensive fraud. Dr. Wilcox especially thanked the LaRouche movement for coming out to Aliquippa "within 24 hours" of speaking to him on the phone about DCHC, and providing the crucial information that led the hospital board to *cancel* the deal with DCHC completely.

Dr. Joycelyn Elders, possibly the most controversial U.S. Surgeon General in recent times, because of her well-known outspokenness, raised the issue beyond the fate of the one hospital: "You are not fighting about a hospital and that alone." She told the assembled citizens that the budget-cutters and "control boards" of the world will never lack money to build a new jail, but they never have funds to build the schools that America's young black men should be going to *instead* of prison. Children are graduating high school with diplomas that *they cannot read*, she went on. "We believe in having health care for the haves, and *sick* care for the have-nots. We always go out and vote up taxes to build a jail. But when we start talking about schools, hospitals, about health care for the poor, where are we? 'We don't have the money.' "

'Why Did You Come Here?'

Attacking the continual media reports in the Washington area for months, that the takeover and closure of the city's public hospital was "a done deal," Dr. Elders reported that the first question the media asked her when she arrived today for the mass meeting was, " 'Why did you come here?' I was asked two or three times, since I arrived, why have you come in now? It's all over. It's all done. Well, you see, I'm a doctor. And I am saying that nobody is ever dead until there is not another heartbeat, that I can't make come about. You just have to keep fighting. You have to keep on working. You set a goal to save D.C. General. Don't let that be an end in itself—keep fighting. Don't let the fear of failure stop you. . . . If you disappear, the hospital will disappear."

Elders, a veteran of political and civil rights battles, told the crowd she has been falsely called an atheist—and then humorously quoted her church's bishop on the big, important battles like that going on in Washington: "When you are dancing with a bear, don't sit down to rest; keep dancing until the *bear gets tired.*"

The Coalition to Save D.C. General stands now within sight of a victory for the principle of the general welfare—if it can now mobilize citizens all over the United States to make every member of Congress answer to the issue of that principle.