

nomination has already been pulled as a result of this change-over, that of Rep. Chris Cox (R-Calif.) for a seat on the U.S. Court of Appeals in California. Cox's nomination was opposed by both of California's Senators, Barbara Boxer (D) and Dianne Feinstein (D), making it very unlikely, with Democrats in control of the committee, that the nomination would ever go through.

Jeffords, since he will be voting with the Democrats on organization matters, was given the chairmanship of the Environment and Public Works Committee. Harry Reid (D-Nev.), the assistant Democratic Leader, who was also the ranking member on that committee, denied that giving Jeffords that chairmanship was a "deal maker." During an interview on Fox News Sunday on May 27, Reid said that the GOP had offered Jeffords "everything but the kitchen sink," and Jeffords had refused. Reid said that there never was any discussion of a chairmanship for Jeffords until the day after he announced his switch. "There never was any question," he said, "that this was something that had been bothering Jim for a long, long time."

Beginning of the End for the GOP?

For Republicans, their problems are not over. While a challenge to soon-to-be Minority Leader Trent Lott (R-Miss.) has yet to emerge, there is clearly an undercurrent of dissatisfaction with his leadership. Don Nickles (Okla.), the assistant Republican leader, admitted frankly that the members of the GOP caucus are "shell shocked" by Jeffords's departure, an admission that they weren't expecting Jeffords to leave. Much more blunt was John McCain (R-Ariz.), who, in a May 24 statement, attacked the "short-sighted party operatives," and some Republican members of Congress, who "unfairly targetted" Jeffords "for abuse." "Tolerance of dissent," McCain said, "is the hallmark of a mature party, and it is well past time for the Republican Party to grow up." McCain was echoed by Susan Collins (R-Me.), who warned, in an interview with the *Washington Post*, that the Republican Party risks becoming a regional party (of the Southern states), and a regional party "has difficulty winning a national election."

While Lott is putting a strong face forward, rumors are wildly circulating through the press of further possible defections. These rumors revolve around McCain and Lincoln Chaffee (R-R.I.). According to these rumors, McCain has been holding talks with Kennedy and John Edwards (D-N.C.), with whom he is co-sponsoring a Patients' Bill of Rights bill, about changing his party affiliation. Chaffee's unease with the GOP is clearly indicated by his lack of enthusiasm for Bush's budget and tax agenda, which he has been voting against. When these rumors are taken together with continuing questions about the health of Strom Thurmond (R-S.C.), the GOP would appear to have no where to go, but downhill.

Congress Showdown Looms over D.C. General

by Paul Gallagher and Edward Spannaus

At the end of May, the national mobilization led by Lyndon LaRouche's movement had brought Congress to the brink of intervening to reopen Washington's D.C. General Hospital; that Congress actually do so, is an "indispensible victory" to be won for the principle of the general welfare of the whole nation. This mobilization, as Capitol Hill sources have told its leaders, is unprecedented in their experience, as a sustained, broadly based lobbying effort from all over the nation, from ordinary citizens to elected leaders in the states.

As a result, the top Democratic leaders in Congress have now called for saving D.C. General. On May 28 and 29, House Minority Leader Richard Gephardt (Mo.), and soon-to-be Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle (S.D.) told public audiences that they are committed to saving D.C. General. House Democratic Whip David Bonior (Mich.) has already issued a statement. Daschle, in addition, signed the national support statement, "It's Time to Draw the Line," of the Coalition to Save D.C. General, at an appearance in his home state. In that same week, the statement was signed by California Congresswomen Loretta Sanchez and Grace Napolitano, bringing to seven the number of U.S. Representatives and Senators who had signed the statement or made public pledges to restore the capital's only public hospital.

The hospital was forcibly privatized on April 30 and is being dismantled by an "emergency" *fiat* of the unelected D.C. Financial Control Board, over the unanimous opposition of the elected City Council, and at the cost of at least seven or eight unnecessary deaths in the month of May. The closing of D.C. General's emergency room to ambulances has spread chaos throughout the city's hospitals.

What is now urgently required, by mid-June, is the passage of a Congressional joint resolution, rejecting the Control Board's privatization measures, and approving instead the City Council's supplemental budget which will keep D.C. General fully operating. The issue of D.C. General, and the need to override the Control Board's action—in which it exceeded its own Congressionally granted authority—is now under widespread discussion among Democrats and moderate Republicans in Congress, but what is required is for a couple of members of Congress to step forward and introduce a joint resolution to reinstate D.C. General as a full-service public hospital.

This has been called, by Coalition leader Dr. Abdul Alim

Catania Rips Washington Post

During a May 31 hearing held by a D.C. City Council committee, Councilman Jack Graham pointed to the lack of news media attention to the impact of the shutdown of D.C. General Hospital, and noted that there is little reporting of what is happening to the patients at D.C. General.

When Council member David Catania added that Katharine Graham's *Washington Post* was not present at the hearing, a *Post* reporter, not previously assigned to the story, then identified herself. "You're here, but your colleague has no integrity," Catania declared, referring to Avram Goldstein, who has been the primary *Post* reporter on the D.C. General shutdown. "Let me put that on the record."

"Av Goldstein has no integrity on the subject," Catania continued, "and he will not report the fact that our emergency rooms are full. He will not report the fact of Medivac [medical helicopter] flights to Baltimore for our trauma patients. He will not report anything that negatively reflects on this [privatization] plan. And so that is not journalistic integrity." Catania said that he has heard Goldstein promoting the privatization plan; that Goldstein has long ago given up any notion of impartiality, "and the residents of this city will suffer as a result."

Muhammad and by Lyndon LaRouche, the "indispensable victory." That it is possible at all, is a breakthrough unexpected by many only weeks ago, when the Control Board delivered its *diktat* and Katharine Graham's *Washington Post* declared the public hospital dead. The LaRouche movement has transformed the situation by mobilizing on the understanding that Bush's policies in general were failing and causing a backlash at home and abroad, and that therefore the American citizenry could move the Congress to act on the fundamental principle of the General Welfare.

'Rolling Blackouts of Emergency Rooms'

It was made chillingly clear by reports at the Coalition's 19th weekly town meeting on May 30, and at a Council hearing on May 31, that a dangerous state of chaos has descended on the city's hospital emergency rooms since the shutdown of D.C. General began—a chaos as deadly and undeniable, as it is steadily denied and covered up by the *Washington Post*, Mayor Anthony Williams, and the Control

Board. The chaos is worst at Greater Southeast Community Hospital, the privatized possession of the disreputable Doctors Community Healthcare Corp. (DCHC), to which D.C. General was handed over by the Control Board, with a fat \$100 million-plus contract to close it down and "replace" its 200-year irreplaceable service.

One mother's report at the town meeting captured the state of disaster. She described how, knowing D.C. General was closing down, she had taken her son, who had suffered a serious hernia, to Greater Southeast's emergency room. There they waited over an hour, until she overheard a nurse, looking at her son, saying, "I sure hope he doesn't need surgery!" Dumbfounded by this comment suggestive of a battle-front hospital, the woman headed for Howard University Hospital. After another long wait, she had to leave Howard because, without medical insurance, the hospital was demanding payment in advance; she took her son on to Washington Hospital Center, where she saw two waiting rooms full of people waiting for emergency room admission. There, six hours into the ordeal, her son was finally seen, and two hours later, operated on.

He, and his mother, were among the fortunate survivors of this forced medical triage. D.C. General nurse Charlene Gordon, also a Coalition leader, told the May 30 meeting that according to her harrowing, on-the-scene experience at D.C. General, the unnecessary death toll from the closing is at least seven or eight. Gordon also gave the telling report that the emergency room had been reopened to ambulance traffic by the city Health Department—a sure sign of how bad the citywide overwhelming of emergency rooms is, and how chaotic the Control Board's "smooth transition" has become. The ironic occasion for this, was a weekend rock-concert which brought 65,000 fans from the Maryland and Virginia suburbs to RFK Stadium, next door to D.C. General. Numerous youths were brought to D.C. General with injuries, and many then had to be transferred to other hospitals because of D.C. General's lack of capacity to treat them.

A public airing of the impact of the closing of D.C. General took place on May 31, at a hearing of the City Council's Committee on Public Services, on the subject of "D.C. General Employment Transition Plan." Testimony at that hearing showed that the promises made by the Mayor and the Control Board about maintenance of services and a "smooth transition," were all lies and deception. Testimony was taken from city officials, and from representatives of unions and hospital employees. Among others testifying at the hearing were leaders of the Coalition to Save D.C. General, including nurse Charlene Gordon and Rev. Mildred King.

Council member David Catania, the committee chairman, opened the hearing by noting that the promises of cheaper costs and more services, were already being broken. "This privatization scheme has unleashed a health-care emer-

gency that has yet to come to public attention,” Catania said. He described how emergency rooms all over the city are being overwhelmed, and he addressed a point to people who live near other hospitals in the more affluent parts of D.C. “If you think, that ‘this doesn’t affect me,’ think again.” He pointed out that there have been periods of time when only two of the city’s 14 emergency rooms have been accepting patients, and he warned: “Those of us who are insured and who live near major medical institutions have had our access to health care compromised by this scheme.” He stressed repeatedly that the crisis created by the closing of D.C. General affects everyone in Washington, no matter where they live, or whether they have insurance or not.

Catania, a Republican, also said that there are right ways and wrong ways to privatize. He pointed to the situation in California, where, he said, privatization and deregulation have led to rolling blackouts of electricity. “What we have here in the District,” Catania declared, “are rolling blackouts of emergency rooms”—a theme he repeated a number of times during the hearing. “We had a safety net, and now the safety net is gone,” Catania said at the conclusion of the hearing.

Lives Are Being Lost

The re-opening of the emergency room, and the announcement that up to 80 in-patient beds will be retained, may be the clearest indication that the Mayor and Control Board are feeling the pressure from the rising death toll and the effect on the District’s other hospitals.

But, even so, the dismantling of the hospital is continuing, and lives are still being lost because the most serious trauma cases must be sent to more distant hospitals, and because units such as the top-flight Pediatrics and Obstetrics unit are being shut down. Hundreds of the employees have been laid off, top management summarily fired for opposing the privatization, and supplies are being looted by the unhappy Greater Southeast Hospital.

A hospital, Dr. Muhammad told the May 30 meeting, cannot be “reopened for a day” or a week to cover the fundamental immorality of the privatization and closing. “We have to rise above the usual, to seize the historic moment,” he said. “Genocide is not going to be allowed in the District of Columbia; we will achieve adequate health care here, and nationwide, and around the world. We can reverse the descent into chaos.”

The Coalition planned its 20th and largest town meeting for the evening of June 6, to be preceded by a mass funeral procession through southeast Washington for the dead victims of the shutdown. State legislators from several states were expected to attend, and to take part in lobbying of Congress on June 7. And a hearing will be held in Federal court on June 8, on the challenge to the Control Board brought by Council members Catania and Kevin Chavous.

Interview: Elliot Greenspan

LaRouche Democrat Runs For New Jersey Governor

Greenspan, a candidate for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination, was interviewed by Mary Jane Freeman on May 31.

EIR: Your slogan is, “Vote for a Sane Greenspan, Instead!” What does that mean?

Greenspan: We’ve had 35 years of insanity in the United States, associated with the insane Greenspan, Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan. These have been so-called “post-industrial” ideas — crazy ideas, which have infected the minds of our people: Deregulation. Free trade. Speculation. Hedonism. “Get the Government Off My Back.” We’ve got a gambling psychosis. You cannot sustain a productive economy with these policies. . . . The “great oracle,” the “great magician,” Alan Greenspan. He is more responsible for this insanity than perhaps anyone in the nation, by insisting on the illusion of its success. . . .

This is a primary election. The Democratic primary is June 26. There are two Democrats on the ballot: the sane Greenspan, and Mayor Jim McGreevey of Woodbridge, who almost beat Christie Whitman four years ago for Governor.

EIR: So, you are running against Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan, and not the other candidates?

Greenspan: The other candidates are living in Alan Greenspan’s virtual reality. They are denying, much as Bush and Gore did in the Presidential race, the reality of the worst economic and financial collapse in modern history, which is in process. LaRouche was right. Alan Greenspan’s bubble has begun bursting over the last 15 months, with the collapse of the “new economy” fraud. This represents a potential liberation for our citizens. If they will learn the lessons of their folly, basing their future on this funny-money speculative bubble, then they can come back to their senses. They need leadership to do so, and that’s LaRouche and that’s my campaign.

EIR: You say the “1990 Whitmanite tax-cutters and budget balancers’ ” policies looted the state. What is the state of the New Jersey economy today?

Greenspan: The manufacturing base has been collapsing for 30 years. Now the rest is going, and the reality of that crash is quickly dawning on the other candidates, and on the people