

that there's a revolt building up among Democrats, and others, like the case of [Arizona Republican Sen. John] McCain, who's playing a different kind of role. They're revolting against this, which means you have the opening where people are going to say, we have to go back to the people. They all know, at the top, despite the propaganda from the big press, that this present world financial system is now coming down.

Nothing can save it. Greenspin is over, he's finished. It's just a matter of when.

So, at this point, people who are concerned, realize we have to go back in the direction of Franklin Roosevelt's policies on the economy, which means, back to the idea of the general welfare. Under those conditions, if we could convince the voters, that we mean business, that we're actually going to restore the principle of the general welfare for all the population, we can get the political force needed to turn this around.

So, the D.C. General Hospital is not a thing in itself; it has the merit of being a thing in itself, but it's only winnable, because the forces in motion—which have to be kicked a little bit now and then—these forces in motion are capable of turning the situation around.

WOL: All right. Lyndon LaRouche has been our guest. Mr. LaRouche, we thank you, and we look forward to talking to you again soon, sometime, okay?

Saving D.C. General 'Is an American Issue'

On June 5, Ray Flynn, former Mayor of Boston, former U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican, and current National President of the Catholic Alliance, and Dr. Abdul Alim Muhammad, Minister of Health of the Nation of Islam and a leader of the Coalition to Save D.C. General Hospital, were interviewed by host Mark Thompson on his WOL radio show in Washington, D.C. In addition to the immediate impact the interview had in the fight to save Washington, D.C.'s only public hospital, the dialogue between these Christian and Muslim leaders also serves as a significant example of the power of the ecumenical alliance for the common good.

WOL: I have a very distinguished guest, former Mayor of Boston, Massachusetts and also the former Ambassador to the Vatican. He is Mayor Raymond L. Flynn. Mayor Flynn, how are you, sir?

Mayor Flynn: Good morning, how are you today?

WOL: Fine, glad to have you on board.

Mayor Flynn: Thank you for having me.

WOL: I see that you have decided from your very lofty position, so to speak—I know you come from Boston, I know that you represented that city well—but you decided to weigh in on our plight here in Washington, D.C., with regard to D.C. General Hospital. Tell us why you've chosen to do that.

Mayor Flynn: Well, I'm no expert on Washington, D.C. politics and what's going on there. I'm like everyone else that once in a while travels there and admires the city; it's a beautiful city, and I have a number of friends there, but when I became aware of this D.C. General Hospital issue, it reminded me so much of the bizarre dismantling of Boston City Hospital, a hospital where I was born, a hospital where both my mother and father died. And at the time, I was living in Rome, 3,000 miles away, just having assumed the position of U.S. Ambassador to the Vatican. But I saw what happened to the Boston City Hospital, I see the same thing happening to D.C. General Hospital, a well-respected, institutional, full-service hospital. It saddens me to see the health-care mission of this hospital, which has served the weak and the poor and needy in this nation's capital for over 200 years, being abused, abused in this sort of way, as the same thing which has happened in Boston.

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WOL: Describe for us if you would, exactly what did happen in Boston.

Mayor Flynn: Well, the hospital was getting run down, it was one of the oldest public hospitals in the country, and we built a brand new hospital, principally to serve the concerns, not only of the poor, but I also attended the hospital as the city's Mayor, and a lot of prominent people did, because it had a wonderful mission, and it gave terrific medical care. But a bunch of private people looking for money for profit, came in after we had built a new, state-of-the-art public hospital with taxpayers' money. And what happened was, that the city government turned that hospital over to a private organization. And they're running it now, and the mission of having a public hospital in Boston has lost, after the taxpayers' built the hospital and supported it all those years.

WOL: But it seems to be a trend taking place in many cities around the country, unfortunately. Why is that?

Mayor Flynn: Well, I think they're seeing that there is a lot of money in it. The area where the hospital is located, is an area that is going upscale, a lot of affluent people moving into the district. And in some cases, they don't like the clientele that used the hospital. There was a methadone clinic in the hospital, and they like their nice brownstone luxury condominium apartments, and they don't want to be dealing with homeless people and looking out the window and seeing homeless people out there. And even though the hospital has been there for more than 200 years, I think it's more of a class thing, and some of the most prominent people—including the *Boston Globe*, I might add, the most influential newspaper in all of New England—rallied behind this takeover of the Boston City Hospital, taking it away from the government and the working-class people, and handing it over to the private interests. And they made a strong case, and their voice was never challenged by the city politicians, unfortunately.

WOL: . . . Dr. Abdul Alim Muhammad, of the Coalition To Save D.C. General, are you on board with us?

Dr. Muhammad: Yes, How are you today?

WOL: Fine, just fine. There are some events beginning tomorrow?

Dr. Muhammad: That's right, tomorrow we want to kick off a three-day movement of the people of the District of Columbia to save their hospital, because at this point it's only the people themselves, and perhaps their representatives on the City Council, who can save the day. . . .

WOL: Mayor Flynn, in Boston, was it the same type of uproar? I know you were at the time serving at the Vatican, but certainly you would have been aware of the community fighting this in the same way. Were you aware of the same kind of demonstration?

Mayor Flynn: No, there wasn't. That's why I applaud Washington, D.C., and I hope they can get this message across the country, because I assume this is happening in other cities as well. What happened in Boston, is the people just assumed the government was on their side, that they would never let anything like this happen to them and their community. And as a result of that, they were betrayed. And so, they were just waiting for government to do the work for them, and as we well know, it's not for the various religious and activists organizations, and even the media—no one will really stand up and take on the powerful interests of the city. And that's what happened in Boston: They were sleeping, the people were sleeping, and the powerful interests came right in and stole this hospital.

WOL: Dr. Muhammad, there has been a lot of movement around this issue, and clearly this is very significant, to have someone of Ray Flynn's stature to sign on in support of D.C. General Hospital. Will this help on the Hill to get the type of intervention and support from the Congress that you are looking for? I think that when we last talked, last week, it was Congress weighing in to support, was the only hope, right?

Dr. Muhammad: It takes all of the above. It takes all of us, the people, to understand that our interests are at stake, and that we have been betrayed by the powers that be. It takes the City Council, to pick up the phone and to call certain members of Congress, who are waiting for a signal from City Council to move, and to introduce a joint resolution of the Senate and the House to put a stop to the Control Board. It takes the likes of a former Mayor Flynn, and literally hundreds of other elected and former elected officials from all over the country, to weigh in on this issue. And even internationally, we have gotten support from as far away as China, as far away as Germany, and other countries throughout the world, because all of them understand that Washington, D.C. is at the center of world power, and if public health can't be defended in Washington, D.C., then what hope do they have for public health anywhere else in the world?

WOL: Mayor Flynn, your support of this, will it go as far as your making some calls to your friends on the Hill to ask in support of D.C. General?

Mayor Flynn: Yes, I think that's very, very important, and I really intend to do this, because I'm really outraged, not only for what is happening in D.C., but for what happened in Boston as well, and I applaud the good people of Washington, D.C. for mobilizing and coming together. This may in fact unite the city of Washington as well.

I would just add one thing of constructive [comment], as well: The powers that be in this case, might be the Congress, it might be the media. There's only one place where you are going to get the media's attention. I understand

the *Washington Post* has weighed in, in support of this unconscionable transfer. I'd bring the people right outside the *Post*, so when they look out their windows, there they are. And they'll see what's going on. They can't ignore that one.

WOL: Well, you all heard that one, the former Mayor of Boston has encouraged us to go outside of the *Washington Post*. We appreciate that one, we need a little help from the outside, Mayor Flynn, and we appreciate that one a great deal. . . . What do you think of Mayor Flynn's suggestion, Dr. Alim, about demonstrating at the *Washington Post*?

Dr. Muhammad: I think that's an absolutely wonderful suggestion, and we intend to take him up on it. Because, part of what has happened which makes the closing of D.C. General Hospital possible, is the media campaign, is the twisting of the truth, where in fact there is a public health catastrophe taking place as we speak, where, all over the city, emergency rooms are backed up, hospitals are clogged up with patients, as a result of the closure, or near-closure of D.C. General Hospital, and the media are not covering that.

So, part of what makes this possible, is the fact that the people are being denied access to the truth. The *Washington Post* has played a leading role in the doing of that, the *Washington Post* is the leading member of the . . . Federal City Council, that has designated this "Negro Removal" program that involves the closing of the hospital. So, we need to be there and let them know that we are the citizens of the District of Columbia, and we cannot be moved around like cattle, just at the whim of the rich and the famous and the powerful.

WOL: Mayor Flynn, I commend you for being so well versed on the politics of Washington. You said you weren't here, but clearly you know the politics, because this is a one-horse town, and the *Washington Post* tends to be that fourth branch of government here, shall we say. I don't know if you have that same problem with the *Boston Globe* or not?

Mayor Flynn: I think most major cities have the similar problem. We have it here with the *Boston Globe*.

I was very impressed with what the minister had to say. I think I could perhaps add to this, that the rest of the country is watching this war in Washington between the Republican politicians and the Democratic politicians, particularly on this takeover of the U.S. Senate. While the press is watching the war among politicians, there is also another war being waged, and that is the war against the poor in Washington, D.C. and in cities across America. Unfortunately, the press is not covering that one.

WOL: No indeed. . . . I'll put this question out to both of you. Once again I'll begin with you Dr. Abdul Alim Muhammad: The shift now, in power in the Senate, does that help us to expedite what we need to get done on the Hill?

Dr. Muhammad: Absolutely. Senator Daschle, who is now going to be the Majority Leader in the Senate, has signed on in support of D.C. General Hospital. Senator Kennedy from Massachusetts is going to be the new chair of the Health Committee, and we met with the members of his staff last week, and we intend to go back again in the future. And so, we have the line-up in the Congress, if only we can get our own City Council to follow up on their previous good work, and just ask Congress to step in and fulfill its mandate, which is to review these kinds of contracts that the Control Board signs on behalf of the citizens. And if they do that, then we think we can stop this thing before it goes any further.

WOL: Indeed. . . . Now, there are some other events taking place?

Dr. Muhammad: Yes, tomorrow's event is to honor the eight who have already died as a result of these changes. . . . On Thursday [June 7], there's going to be a rally from the hospital, and a march to Congress itself . . . to continue the citizens' lobbying effort—one unprecedented in the history of this country. Then, Friday, the U.S. District Court is going to hear this case, and we want the judge to be able to look out of his chamber window and to see crowds of people who are bearing witness that D.C. deserves its own full-service, fully funded public hospital. . . .

WOL: So, Mayor Flynn, when might we see you down here in Washington?

Mayor Flynn: I've joined onto the *amicus curiae* brief, the "friend of the court" brief.

WOL: Good.

Mayor Flynn: I'm president of this national organization, called Catholic Alliance—a national organization. We support the effort that is being made to save D.C. General Hospital as well, and for those of our listeners out there who may be Catholic, or even non-Catholic, I would urge them to support this effort as well. This isn't a Catholic issue, this isn't a black issue, this is an American issue, and we've all got to be involved.

WOL: . . . All right, folks. . . . We'll have to see, exactly what this all means, and what will happen on the Hill. And, it is also very interesting to see the dynamic here as well, because we have not heard from Congresswoman [Eleanor Holmes] Norton. I know she has said she has wanted to stay out of it—it was a city issue. But I'm not sure how much longer the Congresswoman, or Congress itself, can stay out of this. And that to me—I don't want to be accused of criticizing her, I don't want to be accused of that—but it is something that has to be considered and taken very, very seriously. As a matter of fact, in the next day or two, we will see if we can get Congresswoman Norton on board to talk about this and see where things are.