

Every Child is Our Child

For 50 years and into the future

Following in the footsteps of legendary UNICEF Ambassadors Audrey Hepburn and Harry Belafonte, Laurence Fishburne traveled to war-torn Liberia during a three-day mission with the U.S. Committee for UNICEF, the United Nations Children's Fund. It was the first goodwill mission for the actor, playwright, director, and producer who was appointed a National Ambassador for the U.S. Committee for UNICEF in June 1996.

While in Liberia, a country currently surviving with no electrical power or running water, Mr. Fishburne visited numerous UNICEF-assisted projects that aid the many women and children who have been affected by a seven-year civil war. It is estimated that more than 15,000 children were recruited to serve as soldiers for the armed factions, forcing them to participate and witness violent acts of brutality.

UNICEF is currently helping war-affected youth rebuild their lives by teaching them trades that will enable them to earn a living in the future. Mr. Fishburne visited two such projects where children ages 8-17 are being trained in agriculture, sewing, tool-making, carpentry, and soap-making. The children also receive trauma counseling to help relieve the scars of war.

Reflecting on the children who have been traumatized by the war, Mr. Fishburne said, "These children are a living example of the best of human nature. They have no bitterness. They just want to gain the skills necessary to reconstruct their lives. They are truly the country's most valuable resource and I will work diligently towards helping them achieve their goals."

Mr. Fishburne also visited one of many camps that houses approximately 180,000 internally displaced Liberians. The shelters are overcrowded and lack adequate access to safe water and sanitation. The danger of outbreak of diseases, such as cholera and diarrhea, looms large. UNICEF works with local non-governmental organizations to provide medicines, latrines, and wells. Dur-



U.S. Committee For UNICEF Ambassador Laurence Fishburne Travels to War-Torn Africa on Goodwill Mission

ing the mission, Mr. Fishburne also had the opportunity to visit two schools, one of which was the scene of a 1990 massacre of 600 people, 75 percent of which were women and children.

Founded in 1847 by freed Black slaves from the southern United States, Liberia is Africa's oldest independent republic. It is bordered by Sierra Leone to the west, Guinea to the north, and Cote d'Ivoire to the east. The civil war, the bloodiest chapter in the country's history, began on December 24, 1989 and has killed more than 150,000 people. Another 750,000 people forced to flee their homes have become internally displaced, and an estimated 768,000 people are now refugees in neighboring countries.

Mr. Fishburne was accompanied on his mission by Charles J. Lyons, president of the U.S. Committee for UNICEF. Mr. Lyons said, "We were extremely pleased to lead Mr. Fishburne on this field visit to Liberia. Not only is it an important part of his continuing education about UNICEF, but we were able to visit projects that were directly

funded by money donated by the people of the United States."

In his role as a U.S. Committee for UNICEF National Ambassador, Mr. Fishburne joins Maya Angelou, Katie Couric, Jane Curtin, Edward James Kiberd, and James Olmos as a spokesperson and advocate for the U.S. Committee for UNICEF, helping to raise greater awareness and funds in the U.S. on behalf of millions of children in more than 140 developing countries.

Celebrating its 50th anniversary this year, the U.S. Committee for UNICEF works for the survival, protection, and development of children worldwide through education, advocacy, and fundraising. To make a contribution or inquire about volunteer opportunities, please call 1-800-For-Kids or write the U.S. Committee for UNICEF at 333 East 38th Street, New York, NY 10016. Additional information on Mr. Fishburne's mission to Liberia is listed under "Laurence Fishburne's Daily Diary from Africa" on the U.S. Committee for UNICEF homepage at <http://www.unicefusa.org>.

Apologizes made for Tuskegee study

President Clinton apologizes for Tuskegee Study, National Medical Association says experiment left legacy of scientific discrimination

National Medical Association's Response To President Clinton's Apology. —Randall C. Morgan, Jr., M.D., F.A.C.S., President, National Medical Association

More than 60 years ago, an agency of the U.S. government opted not to treat the symptoms of 399 poor African-American men in Alabama who suffered from advanced syphilis. The legacy of this horrible experiment, which lasted 40 years, continues to affect African Americans today and has led

to a sense of fear and general mistrust of the medical research process and the scientific community.

As a consequence, African Americans continue to suffer disproportionately from many diseases and health problems. African Americans are under-represented in clinical research, so new treatment protocols and health policies are based on racially biased clinical studies that further deny our communities the benefits of scientific advances.

President Clinton's apology does not excuse the tragedy of the

Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro male, but it may help to close this unfortunate chapter in our nation's history.

The National Medical Association, the oldest African-American medical research and put an end to the legacy of scientific discrimination.

We must avail ourselves of the opportunity to participate in research so that we truly can achieve medical equality and enjoy the benefits of scientific advances.

DNC Chairmen Gov. Roy Romer and Steve Grossman issue apology to survivors of the Tuskegee Experiment

"As Chairmen of the Democratic National Committee we join President Clinton and the nation in a long overdue apology to the survivors of 'The Tuskegee Study of Untreated Syphilis in the Negro Male,' otherwise known as the Tuskegee Experiment.

"Trust in the truest sense of the word is the ability to believe and have faith and confidence in something or someone. A quarter of a century ago when poor sharecroppers and day laborers lined up outside Tuskegee Hospital in Macon County, Alabama, they did so trusting that the U.S. Public Health Department would deliver on a

promise to treat them for syphilis. That promise was broken repeatedly for over 40 years, each time a syphilis patient was denied the penicillin, that offered a cure for the disease.

"Countless men paid with their lives for a medical study that yielded nothing more than tragedy and a lasting mistrust for the government. By participating in the Tuskegee experiment, African-Americans in the medical community sincerely believed that they could help change the racist view that Blacks were biologically inferior. Unfortunately the study deteriorated into an unethical medical experiment that re-

duced its victims to guinea pigs.

"The legacy of the Tuskegee experiment will be passed on for generations. We can not rewrite the history of what happened but we can take solace in knowing that history will not repeat itself. With this apology we are hopeful that our government and the medical community can regain the trust of not only Macon County but an entire minority community.

"An apology can never right the wrongs of the Tuskegee experiment, and while the wounds are deep, it is our hope that the healing process can begin," concluded Grossman and Romer concluded.

Statement from RNC Chairman Jim Nicholson and Co-Chairman Patricia Harrison

On behalf of all Republicans, we join today in offering apologies to the victims of the Tuskegee experiments.

In those government-sponsored experiments, promises of meals and medicine were used to induce 399 mostly uneducated blacks to participate in a study of

the long-term effects of untreated syphilis.

The results were terrible: twenty-eight victims died of syphilis, 100 others died of related complications, at least 40 wives were infected, and 19 children contracted the disease at birth.

None of this should have occurred.

The U.S. government should have prevented, not sponsored, such immoral activities.

We grieve for those victims and their families, and we pledge that we will make every effort to see that nothing of this kind ever happens to American citizens again.

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