

NATIONAL PRESS CLUB LUNCHEON WITH HELENE GAYLE,
PRESIDENT AND CEO OF CARE
AND
SHEILA JOHNSON,
OWNER OF THE WASHINGTON MYSTICS AND GLOBAL AMBASSADOR FOR CARE

SUBJECT: FIGHTING GLOBAL POVERTY

MODERATOR: JERRY ZREMSKI, NATIONAL PRESS CLUB PRESIDENT

LOCATION: NATIONAL PRESS CLUB BALLROOM, WASHINGTON, D.C.

TIME: 1:00 P.M. EDT

DATE: TUESDAY, JUNE 12, 2007

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MR. ZREMSKI: (Sounds gavel.)

Good afternoon, and welcome to the National Press Club. My name
is Jerry Zremski, and I'm the Washington Bureau Chief for the Buffalo
News and president of the National Press Club. I'd like to welcome
the Club members and their guests here today, as well as those of you
watching on C-SPAN.

We're looking forward to today's speech, and afterwards, I'll ask
as many questions as I can, time permitting. Please hold your
applause during the speech, so that we have as much time for questions
as possible. For our broadcast audience, I'd like to explain that if
you hear applause, it may be from the guests and members of the

general public who attend our luncheons, and not necessarily from the
working press. (Laughter.)

I'd now like to introduce our head table guests, and ask them to
stand briefly when their names are called. From your right: Jameela
Bay (sp), a freelance writer and a member of the Press Club; Annette

Larkin of National Public Relations; Carole Cones of Safe Blood International; Cynthia Dinkins, president of the Sheila C. Johnson Foundation; Rick Dunham of BusinessWeek, former president of the Club. Skipping over our guests and the podium, Melissa Charbonneau of CBN News, the vice chair of the National Press Club Speakers Committee. Skipping over our other speaker, Sylvia Smith of the Fort Wayne Journal-Gazette, the secretary of the National Press Club and the Speakers Committee member who organized today's lunch; Bo Cutter, the chair of the CARE board; Ann McPheeters (sp), nationally syndicated columnist; Vickie Walton-James of the Chicago Tribune; Barbara Slavin, international correspondent for USA Today; and Keith Hill of BNA, the vice chair of the National Press Club Board of Governors. (Applause.)

In the past two months, the Washington Post has mentioned Sheila Johnson in about a dozen stories. Most involved her role as president and managing partner of the Washington Mystics, but Johnson has also been the subject of a feature on horse country, a news story about development in Loudon County, a feature about business moguls and their desks and a gossip column photo. The versatility of the Post's coverage reflects the breadth of Johnson's business, personal and philanthropic interests, several of which coincide with her appearance here today with Dr. Helene Gayle, president and chief executive officer of CARE.

Johnson is co-founder, with her former husband, of Black Entertainment Television, from which she amassed a fortune and became the country's first African-American female billionaire. She is the owner and developer of a spa and inn in Loudon County, a fundraiser for charities and politicians and an philanthropist whose interests include music and education. Now Johnson is apply her can-do attitude and her prodigious networking skills to CARE, one of the most acclaimed charities in the world.

CARE started out as the organization that rescued the distressed through its famous CARE Package, but in recent years, it has broadened its focus to act as a champion of poor women around the world. "They had been watching a lot of things I was doing, and I thought I might be interested in what they were doing," Johnson told the New York Times. "I've always been a big supporter of domestic causes for women and girls."

Introducing Johnson will be Dr. Helene Gayle, a physician and renowned public health expert who just so happens to be a native of Buffalo, New York. (Laughter.) Dr. Gayle was appointed last year to head CARE. If you look just at Dr. Gayle's resume, you will see that she spent 20 years at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, including as its director of the Center for the Prevention of HIV/AIDS, sexually transmitted diseases and tuberculosis. And after that, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation wooed her to head a similar program where she administered \$1.5 billion in grants. But her resume' doesn't show her full story. Former U.S. Surgeon General David Satcher calls her a "global health diplomat" and says, "Helene Gayle may be the most trusted public health leader in the world." Helene Gayle and Sheila Johnson are here to tell the National Press Club about their odyssey and vision for reducing poverty around the world by investing in and empowering women. Dr. Gayle, Ms. Johnson,

welcome to the National Press Club. Dr. Gayle? (Applause.)

DR. GAYLE: Thank you, Jerry, for that lovely introduction and thank you all for being here with us this afternoon. It's such a pleasure for me to be here with my friend, Sheila Johnson, on what I believe is an important day, not only for CARE but for women all around the world.

Let me start by just saying a few things about the lives of women around the world and talk about some things that might surprise you or maybe even shock you. Did you know that 70 percent of the poorest people living in the world today are women and girls? That women do almost 70 percent of this world's work and in return get 5 percent of the world's income? Half a million women die each year from the complications of pregnancy and childbirth and that translates into one death every minute every day. And in certain communities women are still legally the property of their fathers and their husbands.

But today we're here to talk about how we can make all that different -- how we can change those circumstances by changing the opportunities available to women around the world. At CARE, we're an organization that's dedicated to fighting global poverty and we believe that we will be most successful in that mission if we invest in women and girls.

So first let me say a few things about CARE. Many of you may know us, as Jerry said, as a disaster relief organization because that's where our roots are, whether it was delivering lifesaving care packages to European victims after World War II, or to delivering emergency response after the 2004 tsunami in Asia, or the 2006 Pakistan earthquake. We're clearly proud of the relief work that we do and we continue to do that, but today our mission has broadened beyond that. At CARE, we seek a world where extreme poverty has been eliminated, and we have a vision of a world where everyone lives in peace and dignity and security.

We're a large organization. We have 13,000 dedicated staff that live in almost 70 countries around the world -- in Africa, in Asia, in Latin America, in the Caribbean, in the Middle East. We deliver food to families who've been displaced by war, like conflict areas like in Darfur. We give fresh water to people living in Gaza. We run schools for girls in India and Afghanistan, and we develop micro finance programs for women in Africa. In short, what we do is to work with people in communities to give them the tools to be able to lift themselves out of poverty.

We achieve our goals with a variety of funding sources. We have resources from the federal government, from corporations, from foundations, and from individuals like Sheila Johnson. We think that we've earned the trust of our donors because every dollar spent supporting CARE is a very, very cost effective investment. More than 90 percent of every dollar of our funding goes directly to programs to fight poverty, and only 10 percent goes to cover our overhead costs. So we're one of the highest ratios of any NGO in the world.

But our work is recognized not only because of how far we can stretch a dollar, but because of the importance of our mission. Of

the 6 billion people living in poverty -- living in this planet today -- our world population -- about a sixth of those, just over a billion, live in extreme poverty as defined by living on less than \$1 a day, and half of our world population lives on less than \$2 a day. While the rest of us don't live in extreme poverty, our lives are affected by it. It affects our economy, our peace, our stability, when other economies fail, and it diminishes us as a human race when we look at terrible suffering and do nothing about it.

Now, many of the factors -- there are many factors that sustain poverty, but one of them that is common to all of the things that we think about is the inequality of women and girls -- it's central to what sustains poverty around the world. And so changing the lives of women and girls is key to the work that we do. Given that fact and the statistics that I mentioned earlier, we believe that women are the greatest untapped resource the world has in the fight against global poverty.

Our belief in the importance of empowering women and girls has inspired our latest campaign, the I Am Powerful campaign. Through the I Am Powerful campaign, we hope to activate women in developed countries like the United States to use their power -- their economic power, their political power, the power of their voice -- to empower women in developing countries who suffer the most and bear the brunt of poverty. The I Am Powerful campaign is not designated only for the benefit of women. It's designated to make a difference in the lives of women and their families and their communities. We've seen time and time again how changing one woman's life will create a ripple effect that affects her family, her communities, and ultimately her nation, and hopefully the rest of our world.

So for example in Africa, children of mothers who receive five years of primary education -- that's just getting to the 5th grade in this country -- are 40 percent more likely to make it beyond their fifth birthday. When a woman just gets basic education, her agricultural productivity goes up so that she's able to put food on the table of her family and malnutrition rates go down. While we know that the greatest champions of the I Am Powerful campaign will be women rallying to help other women, men are not off the hook. (Laughter.) We need the support of men in this campaign as well because we all have a role to play in this fight, and we are all invested in the ultimate outcome.

About a year ago we asked Sheila Johnson to join the CARE -- CARE as an ambassador for the I Am Powerful campaign. She immediately agreed but told us right from the start that, "I'm not going to get involved unless I can get completely involved." Not only has she gotten involved but she's also brought her family into being involved, and we're happy to have her husband and her son with us today. It's clear to us that with Sheila we have been doubly blessed. We've not just found a supporter, we found a partner and a champion for women and girls everywhere. Today, we are so delighted to announce a gift that Sheila's making to the I Am Powerful campaign -- the largest single gift that CARE has ever received from a living donor. We are grateful to Sheila for her generosity and her belief in our work, and we are also deeply grateful that she is living. (Laughter, applause.) So now I'm going to turn the microphone over to the very live, very

dynamic Sheila Johnson to explain her gift. (Applause.)

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you, Helene, because every time she says that I get a little nervous. (Laughter.) I am really so proud to be here today and to make this announcement, and I'm so proud to be standing up here on this platform with Dr. Gayle. Helene's not just an amazing physician and an amazing woman -- she is a phenomenal leader. And the awesome thing about CARE is that it is filled with people like Helene. The staff I've met here and in the field, the board, including Bo Cutter -- it's a thrill to meet him -- who is here with us today are unmatched in their commitment and effectiveness. I joined CARE because I'm confident that under Helene's leadership CARE and the people with whom the organization works will become even more effective in fighting global poverty. Today, I'm proud to announce and increase my commitment to CARE with a \$5 million gift. (Applause.)

This money will be used for a few purposes. Most of it -- the \$4 million -- will be given to CARE as a challenge grant, enabling other donors to double the amount of their contributions. And the remainder of the gift will be used to raise CARE's public profile to spread the word of the work we're doing to help people across the country. I am really eager for people to see what I've seen.

The way CARE is transforming women's lives is truly astonishing. Shortly after getting involved with CARE, I traveled to Guatemala and Tanzania with Helene and her team. In Guatemala, my son Brett and my husband William Newman -- we visited a CARE project called Mayan Leaders. This was a women's empowerment program helping young women develop leadership skills so they play an important greater role in their families and their communities. At the start of the program, the women were encouraged to look in a mirror and explain what they saw. One woman after another said, "I see nothing. I see nothing." At the end of their time with this CARE project, they looked in the mirror again. This time they saw something. One after another said, "I see a woman with a future. I see a partner. I see a mother. I see who I am, regardless of what anyone says." These women had learned something about themselves -- their worth, their rights and their power.

I realize that CARE's "I Am Powerful" campaign is much more than a slogan. Empowering women is a solution -- a solution to ending poverty and to addressing some of the most persistent challenges we face around the world. I want to promote this solution. That means tapping into the potential of women everywhere. As the people at CARE know very well, you can't solve the world's biggest problems with fundraising alone. Yes, money helps. But it takes more than money to change the world. You need a movement, and we're here today to start a movement. For years, I've heard from women across the United States about their desire to help women abroad. When American women hear stories about the hardships women face around the world, we know that, save for the privilege of our place and time of birth, any one of us could be in their shoes.

American women want to help to improve the lives of their sisters in other countries. But many of us don't know how we can step in and make a difference. That's why CARE's "I Am Powerful" campaign is so

important. It doesn't just seek to empower women abroad to have more of a say in determining their destinies. It also empowers women in this part of the world to participate in meaningful global change. Our goal is to mobilize 3 million women across the United States to get invested in this issue. We're asking for their financial support. If I end up writing that check for the full \$4 million, that would be great. But I do need those matching dollars. We are seeking more than matching gifts. We're looking for matching actions. Beyond the financial support, we are also asking women for their energy and their ideas. We want them to get educated about the lives of women worldwide, and then to help pass that education on to others. That's why we set up our campaign's website, iampowerful.org. It's full of useful information and amazing stories of CARE in action.

We want women to become advocates and bring their mothers, their sisters, their daughters, their friends -- everyone along with them. That's how you build a global movement. One person at a time, one conversation at a time, spreading awareness and sparking change. As Margaret Mead said, "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." That's the formula we're putting to work with this campaign. We've created partnerships with a few terrific organizations that have committed resources and support for this campaign. The Parsons School for Design, which I sit as chair; the WNBA -- as you know, I own a team (laughter); the Jackie Robinson Foundation -- and Della, the executive director, is here; and the National Association of Female Executives. These are just -- this is just the beginning of organizations that are jumping on board with us.

We're thrilled to be working with these groups to strategize and realize innovative solutions to poverty worldwide. The truth is if we're going to improve the lives of women around the world, then we have to stretch beyond ourselves. We have to do more than we've done before. I mentioned the program we saw in Guatemala. At the end of it, I asked one woman how she feels now. And she looked up at me and she says, "You know what? I feel free. I feel free." Imagine the world we can create when millions -- indeed, billions -- of women can make that statement. The women that CARE reaches worldwide have the power to change the world -- their world. And we have the power to help them do it. And that's what the "I Am Powerful" movement is all about, and I'll tell you something. I am more than honored to be a representative of CARE, an ambassador of CARE and I am so honored to be a part of CARE.

Thank you. (Applause.)

MR. ZREMSKI: Thank you both very much.

We have a lot of questions, and I thought that the way I would handle this -- just for your convenience -- is to start with a few questions for Ms. Johnson and then shift over to --

MS. JOHNSON: Okay.

MR. ZREMSKI: Dr. Gayle.

MS. JOHNSON: My security won't -- (off mike.)

MR. ZREMSKI: Oh, she is? (Laughter.) Oh, okay. Well, she can always come up in case of emergency. (Laughter.)

There are so many causes -- so many organizations out there in the world. Why did you choose CARE?

MS. JOHNSON: You're right. I have done so much, and I've got to start prioritizing my life -- (laughter). But the three words -- "I am powerful" -- for some reason, it was like someone took a hold of my heart and just cupped it in their -- in my hands and I'm just squeezing it. That -- those three words to be sent chills down my spine, and I think if we all just sat here and just kept saying "I am powerful, I am powerful" -- it means so much. After I'd done my research on CARE and I really got to know Dr. Helene Gayle, I realized this was really something I had to take on. And it's not that I don't believe in everything else that I'm doing. This to me -- this particular organization and this particular movement, I think, is going to enable me to help so many thousands, millions and billions of women out there -- and men. And I figured by taking on this position as an ambassador, my tentacles can reach out a lot faster and a lot further than just working with small, specific organizations. I really think by taking this on, I can make an even greater impact. And that's why I'm here.

MR. ZREMSKI: What's in it for you? (Laughter.)

MS. JOHNSON: Satisfaction. It's the satisfaction of knowing that I've helped so many people. It's probably going to be one of the greatest legacies that I can leave to children, to my family -- you know, and you always think about -- you know, what are people going to say about you when you're on your resting place? (Laughter.) And I'm like, I want them to say, you know, she really did help others. And I also want to be an example to my son and my daughter. I want my son -- and the reason why he comes on the trips, I want him to understand what women are going through and to learn to respect women. And I think there's so many men out there that need to learn these lessons. We have to start working together. (Applause.) And my dear husband already knows that, so I don't have to worry about him. (Laughter.) But I think that there are lessons that can be learned on both sides because we can have a much better world if the two sexes could learn to work in unity. And I think this is really important.

Q Tell us about some of the partners that have signed on to the campaign so far and what their roles might be.

MS. JOHNSON: Well, I'm very excited about this. And this is probably one of the reasons why I do so much -- and I have all these pieces of the puzzle out there and right now I saw CARE as an opportunity of pulling those pieces of the puzzle together to create the big picture. And that big picture was a way of hooking up a domestic front that could really go out and help be a catalyst in this movement so that we can then go out into the world.

And I think it's important that young people in this country -- yes, we have problems here, but our young people have never seen poverty until they get outside this country -- they have never seen

problems until they get outside this country. I want to give some young people an experience where they can get -- as I said in my speech, I want them to get outside themselves and to be able to learn to share and to care about others; and to see what problems are over there, and somehow I'll solve the problems that are here in this country.

The WNBA, as you know, it's had some of the greatest women out there, both on and off the court, and I thought it would be great to have the CARE message to be televised through every arena across this country and to have everyone of those basketball players to cut a PSA that says, "I am powerful." (Applause.) "I am powerful." "I am powerful." And I just think you couldn't have a better group.

The Jackie Robinson Foundation is probably one of the most extraordinary foundations that I have seen. I spent a day up there. I have learned about the program. They've got incredible students that the foundation has mentored -- they have kept them in school, they have put them through college, and I have never seen a greater group of young people that are so inspirational to me.

Now what I want to do is to take them -- I have given them a \$200 thousand grant, they will then go abroad and spend three months in each of these different communities really working in the field, and coming back with journals to see what they can do now to apply those experiences to their lives.

Parsons School of Design, which is also very near and dear to my heart -- I've been with them for six-seven years now -- and there is so much going on at Parsons, it's more than just Project Runway. (Laughter.) But what we're trying to do, when I go out in these communities and I see the bags and the hats and the materials and everything that's being made, I'm saying, let's bring those products back here. Let's give them to the fashion design students.

I've got Kate Spade signed on, we've got a lot of these designers signed on where we can now start taking those products and helping those women build businesses, because they're just sort of at a point where, you know -- the side of the road selling all of their wares is great, but let's take it to a much higher level. And Parsons is just more than fashion design. (Applause.). We have product design, we build buildings, so all of the entire school, the entire school of Parsons, has now jumped on-board and we are putting together a curriculum where they will then actually jump on-board with CARE to improve the lives of millions around the world.

Q How can average people who don't have a lot of resources have an impact on this issue?

MS. JOHNSON: This is a very important question because I think the most important thing is if we can get with legislators to start changing legislation that can help women in this country and abroad. That is one key factor. The other is just come and volunteer with us for CARE, and actually even going out even into your own communities, and take one or two young women, and even some young men -- shake 'em a little bit, hug 'em, kiss 'em, mentor them. This would go a long way. So there's so many ways that you can do things.

And I had a retreat at my home -- you all probably read about it Reliable Source, (laughter) I tend to hit that a lot -- but it was a very important retreat. It was probably one of the most important retreats I've ever seen, where we were able to put together 34 of some very powerful women who were able to take their expertise, in each one of their fields, and they are taking -- just like through More Magazines, they're going to help us with our campaign through the magazine -- everyone had special talents there where they have jumped on-board and they're going to help us get the message out. And that's the important thing.

We have got to grow this movement. This is a movement. This isn't just something that's happening at the Press Club this afternoon. This is a movement where we're going to change the lives of every woman globally -- not only abroad, but even in this country. You all have got to start standing up for yourselves, you've got to be able to negotiate your own lives and you all have to say, "I am powerful."

(Applause.)

Q You mentioned legislation, what, in particular, would you like to see Congress do?

MS. JOHNSON: Well, Dr. Gayle, I think you'd better come up here.

(Laughter.)

Q Dr. Gayle.

DR. GAYLE: Well, that's a -- that's a great opportunity to put in a bid for our National Advocacy Conference -- it's starting tomorrow. Every year CARE has a group of what we call our CARE Action Network -- it's volunteers around the country who come together to have their voices heard on Capitol Hill and with policymakers, and to talk about the things that make a difference, and to give voice to the voiceless and make sure that the issues that affect the lives of the poorest of the poor are on the -- high on the agenda for our policymakers.

And there are a variety of different things that we're there to talk about. First of all, funding. As many of you know, the rich industrialized nations -- the Western industrialized nations all pledged to contribute 0.7 percent of their GDP for foreign assistance. Only the Scandinavian countries have met that. The United States hasn't even gotten half of the way there -- we're about 0.3 percent of our GDP goes to foreign assistance.

So first of all resources and making it known that we believe that resources should be spent to make a difference in the lives of the poorest of the poor around the world. If you do any poll today of the American public, the American public thinks that we give anywhere from 10 to 25 percent of our national income to foreign causes, and we don't even give 1 percent. So that's one way.

There are also policies that affect the lives of the poor,

whether it's looking at bills that would help to make a difference in some of the most intractable conflict areas around the world; whether it's looking at other policies like trade policies that affect whether or not poor farmers are able to get their products to market -- but there's a lot that can be done. I think it's important -- go to our website, care.org, it talks about the ways in which you can get involved in changing the minds of policymakers and putting these issues that affect the poor high on the policy agenda.

Q Okay, just a couple more questions for Ms. Johnson. Women in America, particularly African American women, are subject to demeaning imagery every day through hip-hop music. How concerned are you about that?

MS. JOHNSON: Hi Brett. (Laughter.) The reason why I'm saying that because my son is a teenager and he does watch this. I am very concerned about it. I was on MSNBC with Norah O'Donnell, we talked about this. I've talked about it with Tom Joyner. This is a very serious issue. And I don't think that anyone can say, "Well, I just watch it -- I just watch these videos and I don't really listen to the words." That's a cop-out. There are so many young people who have nothing else going in their lives. They come home from school and they turn on the BET or MTV and they watch these videos and they believe that's the way they should live their lives. They have no other role models in their lives and they believe that the bling-bling is everything and the souped-up car and having the women over and doing what else -- it's not healthy. It's not a healthy situation.

I see it time and time again. I was at the NBA All-Star Game and you could see even the residuals of what was going on there. I mean, it's a very sorry state of affairs of what's happening with our young people -- especially our young women. The self-esteem and the bar has been lowered so low. And I was out at Anacostia High School a couple of weeks ago and we had a panel and we had Mayor Fenty there.

And we really had to talk about this, but these kids really believe that's what their lives are about. That's what they're reaching for. What are they reaching for? Oh my goodness! They really have not a clue as to what life has to offer out there. And I really hope that through this campaign that I'm able to light a match under a lot of young women and men out there, because this garbage has got to go.

Now, these are -- (applause) -- now, I'm not demeaning these artists, because these artists are very talented. I have been in the room with Nelly. I have been in the room with a lot of these people, they are talented, but can they just clean up those lyrics? (Applause.) That's all we're asking. Clean up the lyrics! You know, we're tired of seeing gyrations and T&A on the screen. And you know what, if you were to watch these videos and turn the volume down completely, what do you see? It's pornography. It is pornography and it's got to stop. That's how I feel about it. (Laughter, applause.)

MR. ZREMSKI: As a woman who's been very successful in business, what kind of advice would you have, say, to a young girl who gets inundated with this kind of imagery every day? How does one break free of that and build a better life?

MS. JOHNSON: Well, I do speak to a lot of young women and this is really the key topic. And I ask them to stop watching it. I talk to them. Through an educational process you've got to keep talking to these young people. It's education. It's educating them about smart media watching.

I spoke to a group of college presidents and I have actually even -- I remember talking with Donna Shalala. I said, it'd be great if these colleges would actually have courses on smart media watching so that they can start separating reality out from this garbage that is going on. And it's just not the videos. We have a lot of bad television out there. A lot of bad television. And it's a matter of constantly putting something else in their lives. Seeing if we can trade off what they're watching on TV and hand them something else.

Now, I can get on a big shtick, because I really think that arts need to go back into the school system. I think that the arts need to go back in there because they're releasing these kids early. We have no more funds in the school. But I remember being in school and being in an orchestra. And I remember others who were in the band, who were in the chorus or they were in art classes. And I'm going to tell you, the kids that were in these arts programs had the highest grade points. The arts are so diminished -- (applause) -- in the school system.

The whole No Child Left Behind -- I mean, we're killing off more kids with this program. I'm very outspoken about that. But I just think that we -- I spoke earlier about just grabbing a couple -- two or three children -- and taking them under your wing and talking with them. This is so important. And I think if we can change the minds of 20, 30, 40 kids a year it's going to help. But there's got to be within the movement of "I Am Powerful" we're hoping to address -- at least I am in my little way -- to address some of these issues, because they're very serious and we are losing our kids at a rapid rate because they're just really out of touch with reality.

MR. ZREMSKI: One political question. One of our audience members asks about your position in the presidential race. I believe you've raised funds for Barack Obama. Is that tantamount to an endorsement and what do you think of him and Hillary Clinton?

MS. JOHNSON: Well, I like both of them very much. And I've done a lot of work for Hillary Clinton -- a lot. And she's a terrific person. But I'm an Illinois gal, you know. I'm from the Chicago area. I've known Barack for a long time. I believe in him. I just think he's probably one of the most outstanding individuals out there. He's fresh. He's fresh and he has got a persona about him that I think this world is ready for. In fact, I know they are.

In all the traveling that I do, in all the villages that I go to, they do know Barack. They really know Barack and the world is ready for Barack. And I hope this country's ready for him. Yes, it is an endorsement. I think he's one of the greatest human beings out there. And yes, I am raising money for him and I will continue to raise money for him because I think it would be wonderful to have a first black president of the United States. (Applause, cheers.)

MR. ZREMSKI: Dr. Gayle, it's your turn.

DR. GAYLE: I endorse no one. (Laughter.)

MR. ZREMSKI: We won't ask a political question.

What do you view as the largest obstacles to empowering women worldwide, aside from money?

DR. GAYLE: Well, obviously money is part of it, but I think there is a variety of things. You know, we work in kind of a three-pronged approach at CARE. We focus on people's basic human needs -- that's essential -- whether it's food, whether it's water or shelter, health services, et cetera. And so that's obviously critical, because women don't have their share of basic needs and basic services met.

But we also work on something that we call social position -- who you feel you are. And I think Sheila's comments talked a lot about how women just have a lack of a sense of their own self-worth. And if you don't work with somebody on their sense of self-worth, if they're marginalized, if they're stigmatized, if they don't have equality within their society, you're not going to make a difference. And then ultimately, you also have to change the overall environment. We call it the enabling environment. How do you work on the policies that make a difference in people's lives?

So if, as I said in my earlier comments, if you're a woman and you are legally considered to be the property of your husband or your father, you're not going to be able to have access to these other things. So we have to work on all three prongs at the same time, whether it's helping people have access to basic needs, looking at whether they're marginalized, discriminated against, face stigma in their own society and then also look at the policy framework to make sure that that also helps to support the other change. So all of those things are necessary if we're going to make a difference in women's lives.

MR. ZREMSKI: How big an obstacle do cultural traditions and religious traditions pose to your efforts and how do you get around them?

DR. GAYLE: Well, I think I kind of alluded to that in my earlier questions. Those issues that make up our broader society have a huge role in whether or not women can move forward or people in general move forward and break out of poverty. So it is critically important. But what we do is we work with communities. We work with the communities themselves to change the way they think about things.

So for instance, in Afghanistan even during the Taliban era, we were able to operate schools at a time where otherwise women were forbidden to be educated, by working with the community to understand that it was in their own interest to make sure that their women and girls were able to get educated. And we called them sewing schools, because that wasn't too in-your-face. You could say that you were working at a sewing school and women could get educated that way. But we did that because that was the way that the community felt they could continue to let women get access to education, but at the same

time not fly in the face of tradition.

So you can find a way, if you work with communities, to get around those cultural or religious barriers. But it is with working with communities to help them find solutions once they understand why it helps all of them to be able to make those changes.

MR. ZREMSKI: Will CARE incorporate comprehensive sex education and family planning into the "I Am Powerful" campaign?

DR. GAYLE: Well, let me just say, you know, the "I Am Powerful" campaign is a media campaign. It's a chance for us to get the message out about empowering women and it's building a movement, as Sheila has said, for women's empowerment. And that's in distinction to the actual programs that we run. And we have programs that are focused on women's reproductive health and HIV and other areas in which comprehensive sexual education is very much a part of it.

We believe that you have to have a comprehensive approach to those issues, and so we will make sure that in the kinds of programs we do, we do take a comprehensive approach that gives people the broad range of options that can make a difference for improving sexual health, keeping people from getting life-threatening diseases like HIV or other sexually transmitted diseases.

MR. ZREMSKI: Do you think it is possible to stop a global movement with \$5 million?

DR. GAYLE: Without a doubt. I think if you think about any movement that's started, it starts, as Sheila said, with the famous Margaret Mead quote. It does start with a handful of individuals, whether it's women's suffrage in this country, whether it was the civil rights movement. There's not a single movement -- anti-apartheid. You can think about all the movements around the world, and it started with a few people who had an idea and had a belief and put the resources together to make a difference. So I think we can have a global movement, and I think today is part of the start of that.

MR. ZREMSKI: Do men have a role in the campaign? And, if so, what is it?

DR. GAYLE: To get with it. (Laughter.) Without a doubt, men have an incredibly important role. And as I said -- (laughs) -- get with the program. No, as I said, you know, men aren't off the hook. This is about all of us. If we invest in women, all of our lives are going to be enriched. And so it is in men's interests to support what we're doing to change the lives of women and girls.

But we also note you can't do it without men. The ability for women to see themselves differently is directly linked to men's ability to see themselves differently as well. So you have to do both. It is about changing the way people view themselves. That's both men and women. And that's how we're going to have ultimate change in communities.

MR. ZREMSKI: Does CARE have any domestic --

DR. GAYLE: Plus we'll take men's money too. (Laughter.)

MR. ZREMSKI: Does CARE have any domestic programs?

DR. GAYLE: No, CARE doesn't. CARE is an international organization. Those are our roots. And I think, like any other organization, it's important to know where your niche is, where your strong points are. There are many wonderful domestic organizations that do incredible work here in this country. And so we feel like our strong suit is really continuing to work in the global arena. The needs are there. The needs are great.

But we do link with domestic organizations, and we also lend our expertise. So, for instance, with the Katrina hurricane effort, while CARE wasn't an organization working directly with that effort, we lent our expertise and we had individuals, because of our strong roots and emergency relief efforts, who gave technical assistance, who gave even personal time. So we believe strongly in giving back in ways that we can, but we feel like our organizational niche is the global and the international arena.

MR. ZREMSKI: In light of your extensive experience in running HIV-AIDS programs internationally, are you planning to establish any such programs within CARE to get involved in this issue around the world, especially in Africa?

DR. GAYLE: Yeah, CARE is very involved in global HIV efforts, and we will continue to. And I think that's an area we'll continue to have programs, and probably continue to strengthen.

Where CARE sees itself distinguishing our work perhaps from some of the other organizations that I've worked in that take primarily a technical and biomedical approach, if you look at the reasons why people contract HIV, a lot of times it has as much to do with underlying societal factors.

So for a woman, for instance, many women are at risk for HIV because they have lack of economic opportunities and oftentimes put themselves at risk sexually because they have no other economic opportunities. And so women do sell their bodies in order to put food on their children's table, because the immediate risk of their children starving today is weighed against the risk of contracting a virus that may kill them sometime in the future.

And so we know that if we can change women's economic opportunities, if we can change men's belief about sexuality and faithfulness to their wives, that if we look at some of the underlying reasons why people are at risk for HIV and change those dynamics, that we can have a huge impact.

We also know that even in the case of people who are on HIV medication, if they don't have access to food and adequate nutrition, they can't take their medications correctly, and sometimes people will go off of their medication in order to pay instead for food for themselves and their families.

So we look at those kind of factors that are the underlying issues that lead to people's vulnerability and to support their ability to take treatments when, in fact, they are infected and need to be on medication.

MR. ZREMSKI: Can you talk about the human papillomavirus and vaccine and the vaccine that can prevent cervical cancer? Is this vaccine something that you would advocate giving to girls in the U.S. and the rest of the world?

DR. GAYLE: Well, as many people know, there's now a vaccine that will protect against HPV, the human papillomavirus, that causes cervical cancer. Cervical cancer is a deadly disease. So I believe in anything that would help to prevent an infection that ultimately can lead to causing a cancer that takes the lives of women and girls around the world. So I believe -- you know, it's been shown to be safe and effective. It makes a difference in people's lives, and it ultimately could save millions of lives if it was more available both here in this country and around the world.

MR. ZREMSKI: What distinguishes your program from many other self-help programs for poor women?

DR. GAYLE: Well, I think, first of all, CARE is an organization that focuses broadly on communities. We're not a women's organization. We believe that investing in women is the best way to ultimately have a long-term impact on women and their communities. So we work with whole communities.

We also work in a way that is very comprehensive. As I mentioned before, we kind of work at it at three different levels at one time. We work at the individual level. We work on community factors. We work on societal factors and policies. And we really try to work on the things that we think both are immediate causes of poverty but also the underlying causes of poverty.

And we think that that's incredibly important if you're going to have a long-term impact on reducing and ultimately eliminating poverty. You can't just focus on the immediate. You've got to focus on what are the root causes to begin with and try to yank those roots up so that poverty doesn't keep growing back.

We also work in a comprehensive way, so we're not focusing on any one sector. We know that in some communities lack of access to clean and safe water is the thing that's utmost on their minds, and so we work on those, on access to clean and safe water; in other communities, maybe agriculture or health or access to microfinance and small loans; and that if you do those things together, you're going to have the greatest impact on changing communities.

So we work in as comprehensive a way as possible, understanding that sometimes you enter communities through whatever is the most important and most pressing need for them at that point in time.

MR. ZREMSKI: Will CARE establish timetables for its work, such as the goal of reducing poverty among women by 50 percent by the year 2025?

DR. GAYLE: Well, that sounds like a good goal. (Laughs.) Maybe we should -- well, we do set timetables. It's hard to talk about reducing goals that set hard timetables like that. We're very much a part of a community that believes that the millennium development goals -- these are the goals that the world has come together to say, "What are the things that we think make the biggest difference in reducing poverty worldwide?" And we try to do what we can to feed into those global goals that the whole world has signed on to. So we see ourselves as part of that.

And we also have more short-term goals for the programs we have, so we establish targets for the programs that we have, whether it's in microfinance and getting some percent of the community at a certain level. So we do think very seriously about setting both long-term as well as tangible goals that we can reach in the programs that we do, but also recognizing that, being in almost 70 countries, the goals are going to be somewhat different, depending on what country you're working in.

MR. ZREMSKI: One questioner writes, "You're at one of the major platforms in Washington. What specifically would you do to advise the president and Congress to do to improve U.S. overseas development aid?"

DR. GAYLE: Well, as I said earlier, first of all, I think we need to be more generous. You know, we are an incredibly rich nation. We could easily reach our 0.7 percent that we have committed to with the rest of the global community. There's no reason why, as the richest nation in the world with the largest economy, that we're not more generous as a people. We are a generous people and, you know, I think that's evident by the reason that we're here today, and there are others in the audience who have been long-time CARE supporters. So we are a generous nation and -- and you know, as I said in the -- earlier, all polls say that the U.S. public would be even more generous. So I think that, first and foremost, is a huge part of what we can do is to make it clear that we could give and we could be more generous in what we do.

But I also think, as I said, you know, we need to look at what are some of the policy considerations? What are the things, what are the trade-offs that don't allow for full growth and economic development in other countries around the world? And I think that we can do a better job in that.

MR. ZREMSKI: What --

DR. GAYLE: Just one other thing. I guess -- sorry. The other thing I would just say is that we have to make a longer-term commitment to it. I think, you know, we -- and particularly Congress, understandably, thinks in very short-term cycles. And so the appropriations, the money that we get, tends to be in these short-term cycles. And we think -- we think about the grants that we often get are in two- and three-year cycles. We've got to have people thinking in longer-term horizons.

The only way we're going to have an impact on poverty is to -- to

make a long-term commitment, a 10-, 20-year commitment, and measure ourselves by what we do in 20 years, not by what we do in two years. And we've got to get that message out there, because organizations like ours are never going to be successful in two-year grant cycles. The only way we're going to be able to be successful in our work is if all of us are willing to commit for the long haul and know that these are the kinds of things that take awhile to really have an impact. (Applause.)

MR. ZREMSKI: Aside from money, what U.S. government policies hurt or help impoverished women worldwide?

DR. GAYLE: Well, I think anything that doesn't allow economies to grow are going to help -- hurt women worldwide. And so, you know, as I've mentioned a couple of times, I think we should -- we should be looking at our trade policies, for instance. We have trade policies that subsidize people in this country not to grow food, where there are countries around the world that are growing food and would like to get their products to market. Now, I'm not sophisticated enough to understand all of the -- the issues involved, and I know it is important for us to think about our own farmers here in this country, but I think there has to be a better way. I think there has to be a greater balance that allows people to be able to make an honest living in societies that are primarily agrarian and who primarily make their resources, earn their income, by -- by agriculture. So I think that's, you know, those are the kinds of policy. And women are, in most of the societies around the world, do most of the farming. So that is -- is one example.

When we look at some of the -- the support that could go for increasing universal access to safe and clean water, women around the world take several hours a day -- you know, we were at projects in Tanzania where we talked to women who had to get up at 2:00 in the morning just to be able to walk the several-hour journey to be able to bring clean water back to their families to cook, to clean, to wash and to have reasonable hygiene. If we were able to have access to clean and safe water, it would make a huge difference in women's lives, first and foremost, and their families'. Women would be able to take that time instead and put that into productive activities. So I think there are things like that that we need to think about.

And then health. You know, women are burdened by unequal access to health, and, you know, I talked about some of the maternal mortality statistics. It's a crime that today, in this age, something that should be as natural as childbirth still takes half a million women's lives every year. So these are the kinds of things that I think we need to think about and look at what are some of the policies besides the, obviously, increasing the resources so that we can do the job that needs to be done.

MR. ZREMSKI: We're almost out of time, but before we ask the last question, I've just got a couple of important matters to take care of here. First of all, let me remind everyone of our future speakers. On June 14th, which is Thursday, John Rowe, the president and CEO of Exelon, will be here to discuss the important energy and environmental challenges facing the nation and the energy industry. On June 18th, Ayaan Hirsi Ali, author of *Infidel* and a research fellow

at the American Enterprise Institute, will be here. And on June 25th, Chad Holliday, the chairman of the Council for Competitiveness and the chairman of the board and chief executive officer of DuPont, will be with us.

Next, we have many traditions here at the National Press Club, and one is treating our guests well. Dr. Gayle -- (laughter) -- and Ms. Johnson. (Applause.) And if you'd like a cup of our delicious National Press Club coffee to go -- (laughter).

DR. GAYLE: Thank you.

MS. JOHNSON: Thank you.

MR. ZREMSKI: Sure. Thank you both very much. (Applause.)

And our last -- the last question is for Ms. Johnson, and it is this: You mentioned that you thought it was important for your son, your teenaged son, to kind of learn these lessons. How is that coming along? (Laughter.)

MS. JOHNSON: Brett, what do you think? He's gotten so much out of this. I don't know if you all -- I think it was Capitol File Magazine, he did an interview with me. I mean, he came up with every single question -- and we also have it in a little documentary piece. He asked me some of the toughest questions. He says, "Why did you drag me along on this trip?" You know? Just really important questions. Questions that he's -- they were very thoughtful, and I think he learned a lot on that trip. I think he's got a whole new perspective, first of all, of his mom -- which I hope -- and the work that I'm trying to do. And, you know, one day some time soon, I want him to really get involved in my foundation.

I think it's so important that especially young people who are very privileged to grow up the way he's grown up, we as parents have got to be really cognizant of the fact that we have got to teach them the heart of generosity. I think it's very important if anything that

-- any gift that I can give my children is that of giving back, because they are blessed with so much. And that's why I think it's been important that he has really gotten involved with this organization. We're going to work on his sister, who's very much involved in -- with animals.

But my son teaches me a lot every day. I love him so much, and I'm hoping that I'm teaching him something, and I just want him to learn, to grow up to respect women and see what we are going through, because I think he is an incredibly -- just an incredible child. I get a little choked up. He's an incredible young man with a big heart, and I want to continue to nurture that and to make him the best young man that this nation has ever seen. And maybe he can run for president. (Cheers, applause.)

MR. ZREMSKI: Thank you very much, Ms. Johnson and Dr. Gayle. Thank you all for coming today.

I'd also like to thank National Press Club staff members Melinda

Cooke, Pat Nelson, Jo Ann Booz, and Howard Rothman for organizing today's lunch. Also, thanks to the NPC library for its research. Thank you all very much. We're adjourned. (Strikes gavel.)

(Applause.)

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