



THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

The HSUS Investigates Primate Use at the New Iberia Research Center (NIRC) New Iberia, Louisiana

In a nine-month undercover investigation of the New Iberia Research Center (NIRC) in New Iberia, Louisiana – dating from December 2007 through September 2008 – The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) documented the wretched existence of chimpanzees and monkeys, caged and bred at a cost of millions to taxpayers. There is an even greater cost to the animals themselves, for devastating psychological distress is part and parcel of life for primates at NIRC. **The results of our investigation clearly illustrate why chimpanzees cannot be humanely confined and used in laboratories, and how a mandate from Congress to improve conditions and alleviate psychological distress for all primates in laboratories, has been, for all practical purposes, ignored.**

NIRC is a part of the University of Louisiana – Lafayette, and is owned by the state of Louisiana, but its funding comes primarily from large pharmaceutical contracts for drug testing and federal grants. It is one of the largest primate breeding facilities with over 6,000 monkeys and approximately 325 chimpanzees, the largest captive population of these endangered animals in any U.S. laboratory.

Chimpanzees at NIRC - Overview

The chimpanzees used in contract drug studies at NIRC endure the bleakest of conditions. Isolated in 30 square foot barren stainless steel cages, they languish in absolute boredom for months in between bouts of fear-inducing procedures. What passes for enrichment in this context are pictures of chimpanzees, islands, and cartoon characters taped to the cinderblock walls, a metal perch to sit on, and a kong-like toy.

Chimpanzees infected with Hepatitis-C were knocked down repeatedly– sometimes up to four times a day. Caretakers shoved tubes down their throats and into their stomachs in order to deliver test substances, or the chimpanzees were infused intravenously over a period of hours while they remained sedated. Their livers were repeatedly “punched” with long needles for biopsies. A worker told the HSUS investigator that the chimpanzees would “feel it” when they woke up, but no pain killers were seen given to the animals after the biopsies.

Most of the chimpanzees the HSUS investigator met at NIRC were terrified of being injected with sedatives – quite likely because they often thrash, fall, and injure themselves as they go under – and perhaps also because of the hallucinogenic effects that often accompany such knock-out drugs which can provoke tremendous fear or anxiety. They were equally terrified of the squeeze cage mechanism, which, operated by noisy drills, slowly compresses the cage to immobilize them between its walls.

Handlers also used dart guns, causing immense stress not only for the chimpanzee being targeted, but for the others who watched as the terrified animal tried to elude the gun's sharp and painful projectile. With alarming frequency, sedated chimpanzees fell from their perches, crashing down on the hard cement or thick steel mesh floors of their enclosures. Kneeling on the floor of an empty isolation cage, the HSUS investigator discovered just how painful its raised steel knobs can be. A dead-weight fall onto such flooring caused injury (which could lead to the kinds of chronic pain seen in rescued chimpanzees now in sanctuary) for those chimpanzees who underwent sedation several times a day.

During our 9-month investigation, only some 20 chimpanzees (6% of the population) were observed being used in studies, while another 300 animals inhabited the dingy buildings and windowless rooms at NIRC – from the youngest babies to the oldest – most of whom have been incarcerated for decades.

Those chimpanzees in group housing – although they have opportunities to socialize – suffer the same relentless boredom of a never-changing environment, the same dry monkey biscuits every day, and little or no effort to divert their attention away from the tedium of captivity and meet their complex psychological and cognitive needs. Videotape from our investigation shows indoor enclosures teeming with frustrated, angry male chimpanzees; with juveniles who have resorted to stereotypic rocking to compensate for the loss of their mothers; and with mothers and infants crammed on perches in what appears to be overcrowded conditions – in one cage, five mothers with five infants and one male.

There are chimpanzees at NIRC who, even though not on drug studies, are held in isolation cages in small rooms with no natural light. Lack of companionship, added to the other routine deprivations at NIRC, makes these animals' lives even more miserable than those of the rest of the population.

The baby chimpanzees at NIRC, who are torn from their mothers – some of them immediately after birth – are abandoned in NIRC's barren "nursery" at a time of life when they should be clinging to their mothers' backs and being comforted by their touch. Even as the HSUS investigator watched the antics of two youngsters through the nursery window, the psychological devastation was evident – the infants interrupted their play and began rocking – a self-comforting behavior associated with maternal deprivation and fear.

Perhaps the most pitiable residents of NIRC are the dozens of elderly chimpanzees who were taken from their mothers in the jungle decades ago and have spent practically every moment since on rock hard cement or cold stainless steel. They have lost babies, friends and partners and their right to choose what they will do, when they will do it, where they will go or even what they will eat. The HSUS investigator had a few moments to give them some special attention, and the resignation and sadness can clearly be seen in their eyes.

In these ways and many others, life at NIRC imposes terrible psychological and physical suffering on one of the largest captive populations of chimpanzees in the world. For its part, NIRC's management seems oblivious to, or dismissive of, experts' opinions about the deleterious effects of captivity on the chimpanzees' short-and-long-term mental and physical health.

Monkeys at NIRC - Overview

The HSUS investigator observed and documented hundreds of monkeys – primarily macaques – being used in active experiments at NIRC. Thousands more were held in outdoor “corn crib” enclosures – structures that the USDA found did not provide adequate heat for 900 African Green monkeys during winter months¹ – a finding that came only after a former employee told the USDA that monkeys had frozen to death in the corn cribs. During the HSUS investigation, Hurricane Gustav struck New Iberia and thousands of monkeys were left in outdoor cages at NIRC.

Video documentation of devastating psychological suffering was obtained in the monkey study rooms. Primates were so adversely affected by their captivity and the daily fear associated with routine procedures that they engaged in self-mutilation – biting their own limbs, ripping at open wounds, and pulling out their own hair. These aberrant behaviors are supposed to be addressed by laboratories with a combination of effective enrichment that may include one-on-one sessions with a caretaker, and veterinary care. At NIRC, monkeys were referred to as “test systems” and psychological well-being was seemingly at the bottom of NIRC’s priorities when it came to the care provided the monkeys.

The HSUS investigator videotaped employees forcefully yanking terrified monkeys from their cages in order to strap and bolt them into metal chair-like devices that completely immobilized them. If a drug study prohibited the sedation of the monkeys, they were forced into the restraint devices and tubes were threaded down their throats in order to deliver the test substance. An employee struck one monkey three times in the mouth with a hard metal pole in order to make him open his mouth for the tube.

Screaming, terrified baby monkeys were similarly “tubed” and force-fed test substances – their pitiful cries provoking their anxious mothers into further distress.

Monkeys sedated with Ketamine often suffered from seizures and frequently fell from perches, carts and countertops where they were piled or lined up as procedures were conducted in assembly-like fashion. Severe bruising was common in monkeys’ legs when they were bled numerous times during the day. NIRC even kept monkeys who were too sick to participate, on study, just to avoid losing data from a “test system.”

The relentless distress of both adult and infant monkeys increases the stress hormone, Cortisol, and adds a confounding variable to experiments. Seeing the conditions for and behavior of monkeys used at NIRC, it is easy to understand why 92% of all drugs that test safe and efficacious in animals, fail in, or worse, harm and kill, humans.²

¹ USDA Inspection Report Dec-07-2004, pg 2

² Food and Drug Administration statistic

Animal Welfare Act Violations at NIRC

The HSUS has filed a 108-page complaint with the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), alleging hundreds of possible violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act (AWA) at NIRC relating to chimpanzee and monkey care and use -- ranging from failure to provide adequate staffing, to failure to provide appropriate veterinary care.

The complaint contains 112 allegations of possible violations in 5 areas of the AWA relating to chimpanzees:

1. Psychological Well-Being (65)
2. Veterinary Care (10)
3. Personnel (23)
4. Housing, Primary Enclosures and Sanitation (8)
5. Transportation (6)

The complaint alleges 226 possible violations in 5 areas of the AWA relating to monkeys:

1. Psychological Well-Being (73)
2. Self-Injurious Behavior (25)
3. Veterinary Care (34)
4. Housing, Primary Enclosures and Sanitation (76)
5. Personnel (15)

Psychological Distress for Primates at NIRC

In 1985, the U.S. Congress passed the Improved Standards for Laboratory Animals Act, an amendment to the AWA requiring, among other things, “a physical environment adequate to promote the psychological well-being of primates.” The necessity of the amendment was clear to its framers, whose intention was to alleviate unnecessary distress in primates who often develop pathological behaviors due to severe confinement, little or no enrichment measures, and a total lack of control over their environments. The results of deprivation were clear enough to the Congress, a quarter century ago, as they are now clear. Primates kept in such conditions engage in self-mutilation and psychotic, repetitive behaviors, among other symptoms of severe emotional stress and suffering.

Unfortunately, enforcement of this twenty-year old congressional amendment is practically non-existent because the USDA has left it to the discretion of each research facility to decide how to accomplish the Act’s goal of promoting psychological well-being – in short, there are no specific regulations.

Not surprisingly, the most significant and pervasive area of possible AWA noncompliance observed and documented by the HSUS investigator at NIRC is the **psychological distress** caused by the deprivation of natural resources that are so important to monkeys and chimpanzees, wild or captive; isolation, which has been shown to result in psychopathology in these highly social animals; and mishandling of the primates – including striking helpless infant and adult monkeys, teasing chimpanzees with dart guns, broom handles, and even pieces of fruit. Chimpanzees can be so traumatized by a combination of these daily insults and others, especially repeated sedation and experimental procedures, that they develop Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD).³ The HSUS investigator filmed and observed innumerable

³ Building an Inner Sanctuary: Complex PTSD in Chimpanzees; Journal of Trauma & Dissociation, Vol. 9(1) 2008

monkeys tearing at their own flesh and hair, probably due to their total “lack of agency” – their inability to engage in any activities natural or instinctual.

Sterling, a 21-year-old male chimpanzee infected with Hepatitis C, represented the worst case of psychological distress in any of the chimpanzees observed by the HSUS investigator at NIRC. Sterling lived in an isolation cage in a room without any natural light that also housed two pregnant female chimpanzees. The investigator’s supervisor described Sterling as having “mental problems.” The investigator noticed that the chimpanzee had a large wound on his face and later learned that Sterling had been removed from studies permanently due to “severe self-injurious behavior.” The investigator videotaped Sterling engaging in aberrant behaviors that could qualify him as suffering from PTSD – appearing calm and then suddenly and viciously grabbing and attacking himself, sitting in a far corner of the cage and staring blankly out or turning his face to the wall, and prolonged and terrifying screams.

Monkey #02D183 had been tearing huge, gaping wounds in his legs since December 2007, and was put on drugs to control his anxiety and self-mutilation. Nevertheless, the HSUS investigator documented his self-mutilation from January 3, until May 6, 2008, during which time he would stop the behavior only to resume it. Psychotic behaviors of monkeys were so common that the investigator was told not to submit veterinary requests – such as for those pulling out their own hair. Primates who pulled their own hair out often did so until there were only patches left. NIRC sometimes hung “fleece tubes” on the outside of these animals’ cages so they would have something to manipulate but often it was too late and the self-destructive behavior would continue unabated and the fleece tube ignored

A 2004 USDA inspection report labels NIRC’s enrichment for singly-housed primates “mundane.” During the HSUS investigation, monkeys and chimpanzees had exactly the same mundane toys as were seen in 2004, such as balls and kongs, but were denied any bedding materials – perhaps the most comforting of all enrichment “devices” aside from companionship. Not even pregnant chimpanzees like Tosha and Allison, who were kept in stainless steel isolation cages, were provided bedding or blankets at NIRC.

Chimpanzees in group cages were provided with buckets, balls, milk crates, and kongs – all of which become tiresome to such inquisitive animals after a period of time. No amount of cage enrichment can satisfy the natural inclinations that all primates have to move freely with friends of their own choosing, eat what they want, and gather materials to construct their nests high off the ground in trees.

In NIRC’s application for millions of dollars from the NIH’s National Center for Research Resources (NCRR) to expand its chimpanzee holding facilities, NIRC makes two claims about its enrichment program for chimpanzees that the HSUS investigator found were not being carried out. NIRC claimed that it was 1) “Providing a liquid supplement (tang, fruit juice, etc.) to each animal, delivered in a glass first thing in the morning and last thing in the day. This aids in observing animals, bringing them near to the animal care giver, and providing for active periods in the morning and afternoon,” and that 2) “Fruit and/or vegetables (apples, bananas, onions, potatoes, watermelons, etc.) are fed a minimum of one daily 7 days a week.”⁴

Bradshaw , Capaldo, Lindner, Grow

⁴ Application for Federal Assistance Form 424 titled PAR-00-129 – Extramural Research Facilities Construction – Expansion of NIH Chimpanzee Holding Facilities, page 20

But, even if NIRC provided the kind of attention and food enrichment it claims to, and even if the USDA provided laboratories with specifics on how to promote psychological well-being in chimpanzees, there is a more fundamental problem associated with their captivity. It is still legal to keep chimpanzees in 5'x5' cages, 7' high (not allowing large adult chimpanzees to even fully extend their arms overhead), for their entire lives. This type of severe isolation is enough, even *with* adequate enrichment (a standard that NIRC does not meet), to result in psychopathology.⁵

The HSUS investigator met chimpanzees Rowdy, Poppy, Ross, and Barry at NIRC while they were confined in isolation cages during experiments but was sickened to find that, after the experiments ended, instead of being released into a Primadome or group cage where they could socialize, they were wheeled in their isolation cages to a small, dark room with a static-producing television, and left there.

Overcrowding can also cause psychological distress for chimpanzees, and the HSUS investigator videotaped interior cement cages at NIRC that appear overcrowded with both adults and juveniles. In 2004 and 2005, the USDA cited NIRC for overcrowding chimpanzees, but twice extended the date by which NIRC had to come into compliance with the minimum standards of the AWA. Unbelievably, the USDA caught NIRC keeping 2 chimpanzees in a ten-square-foot baboon cage during a 2004 inspection.

USDA caging requirements for monkeys are inadequate at best and cruel when considered in context with their natural environment.

The psychological distress caused by depriving infant chimpanzees and monkeys of their mothers can easily be seen in the NIRC investigation video, which shows juvenile chimpanzees engaged in body rocking and baby monkeys screaming as they are removed from their mothers' sedated bodies. Studies into the serious, prolonged deleterious effects of maternal deprivation are numerous, making it difficult to understand how such separation can even be permitted under the AWA.

Breeding and Maternal Deprivation at NIRC

Through its investigation and research efforts, The HSUS also documented rampant breeding of chimpanzees at NIRC. Despite its 1995 moratorium on breeding government-owned chimpanzees, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) gives NIRC millions in grants to continue breeding chimpanzees.

Taxpayers are supporting NIRC's excessive breeding by way of a grant and a contract that continue until 2011 and 2012 – “Establishment/Maintenance of a Biomedical Research Colony,” and “Leasing of Chimpanzees for the Conduct of Research,” respectively – which will bring into NIRC more than \$18 million in federal dollars.⁶

The leasing contract calls for NIRC to provide a minimum of four and a maximum of 12 “healthy and disease-free infant chimpanzees per year” to the government for experiments into “hepatitis, parainfluenza viruses 1-3, and Norwalk viral infections.” The contract specifies that the government will take the infants at approximately 18 months and will return them to NIRC as 4-6 year olds. Before the

⁵ Psychopathology in great apes: Concepts, treatment options and possible homologies to human psychiatric disorders; Neuroscience and Biobehavioral Reviews 30 (2006) 1246-1259 Brüne et al

⁶ <http://nirc.louisiana.edu/divisions/nihgrants.html>

infants leave NIRC, the contract states that they “shall be on solid food (pelleted monkey chow) and conditioned to confined housing prior to shipment.”⁷

Such “conditioning” requires removal from the mother at a very critical period in an infant’s life. The infants born and chosen to fulfill this contract are sent away for experiments at the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases (NIAID).

Two hundred infant chimpanzees have been born at NIRC since 1995. Although the government contract, which began in 2002, calls for a maximum of 12 infant chimpanzees per year for experimentation, NIRC bred more infants than called for by the contract in every year except for 2007 (2008 births are known only up to August 11). Minimal birth figures are as follows: 2002/18 infants; 2003/25 infants; 2004/16 infants; 2005/17 infants; 2006/17 infants; 2007/12 infants; and, by the time the HSUS investigation was over in September 2008, at least five infants had already been born. Information gleaned from the HSUS investigation shows that approximately 17 infant chimpanzees were shipped to either CDC or NIAID from 2002 to 2007. An official count has been requested from the FDA, CDC and NIAID through the Freedom of Information Act.

Results of a study of chimpanzees separated from their mothers at a mean age of 1.2 years showed that “infantile deprivation has long-term effects that can be diagnosed over two decades later in adult chimpanzees” and that “chimpanzees deprived early in infancy [mean age of 1.2 years] were more debilitated than those deprived later in infancy.”⁸ When the young chimpanzees are returned to NIRC from government laboratories, their isolation over a period of several years will have already taken a high toll.

NIRC claims in its applications for NIH funding that it makes “every effort ... to allow offspring to remain with the family group until they attain sexual maturity.”⁹ This claim seems unsubstantiated when considering the cases of Danielle and Tosha and the children born to them. Danielle gave birth to son Carter on 9/1/06. Carter was taken from his mother so she could be bred again. He was put in with 3 other toddler males, all born in 2006. Danielle gave birth to son Romo on 9/17/07, just slightly over one year after Carter was born. Similarly Torian, who was born on 9/24/07, was taken from his mother, Tosha, and placed in the NIRC “nursery.” Tosha was in an advanced state of pregnancy and confined in a barren stainless steel cage waiting to give birth when the HSUS investigation ended in September 2008.

The trauma to a mother chimpanzee of having her infants repeatedly taken away from her cannot be overstated. Karen, who is one of the oldest wild caught (1958) chimpanzees still in a laboratory, has had at least six children. Linda, who was wild caught in 1968, has had at least 11 infants. Yet these adult female chimpanzees do not live in a social group with any of their children today.

⁷ November 10, 2008 response from NIH to HSUS regarding “Leasing of Chimpanzees for the Conduct of Research,” pg 1 of “Statement of Work” dated August 26, 2002

⁸ Differential Onset of Infantile Deprivation Produces Distinctive Long-Term Effects in Adult Ex-Laboratory Chimpanzees (*Pan troglodytes*) 2008 Wiley InterScience Kalcher et al

⁹ Grant application to NIH for “Establishment and Maintenance of Chimpanzee Biomedical Research Colony” page 2 BB, PHS form 398

NIRC breeds monkeys by the thousands, sells them to other laboratories, and uses them in contract experiments for pharmaceutical companies. As is the case with chimpanzees, NIRC receives millions to breed Rhesus Macaques – the most commonly used monkey in laboratories.¹⁰

Elderly Chimpanzees at NIRC

Unlike some monkeys at NIRC, who are often used in experiments and then killed, there are many elderly chimpanzees at NIRC who have, for decades, lead restricted lives inside concrete rooms. Most have outside access to areas smaller even than the inside of their cells, but with no access to the enrichment they would like perhaps more than anything – something to nest and lie in – something as simple as straw. Simba, born in 1967, engages in behavior indicative of relentless frustration and anger. Jerry, born in 1968, and caged with Nickey, appears debilitated and may require veterinary care for what appears to be a problem with his mouth.

HSUS is calling for the immediate retirement of these wild caught, elder chimpanzees still held at NIRC, and any others born in 1985 or before, whether they were captured from the wild or domestically bred:

1. Karen NIRC ID A192, Year of Capture 1958
2. Lady Bird NIRC ID A100, Year of Capture 1960
3. Sandy NIRC ID A185, Year of Capture 1960
4. Julius NIRC ID A202, Year of Capture 1960
5. Eric NIRC ID A254, Year of Capture 1963
6. Kathy NIRC ID A247, Year of Capture 1964
7. Penny NIRC ID A236, Year of Capture 1964
8. Willis NIRC ID A148, Year of Capture 1965
9. Phyllis NIRC ID A182, Year of Capture 1966
10. Terry NIRC ID A224, Year of Capture 1966
11. Simba NIRC ID X019, Year of Capture 1967
12. Margaret NIRC ID A336, Year of Capture 1967
13. Jerry NIRC ID A169, Year of Capture 1968
14. Linda NIRC ID A237, Year of Capture 1968
15. Queenie NIRC ID A320, Year of Capture 1968
16. Andy NIRC ID A264, Year of Capture 1968
17. Jessica NIRC ID A332, Year of Capture 1968
18. Paco NIRC ID A245, Year of Capture 1968
19. Debbie NIRC ID A223, Year of Capture 1968
20. Bacchus NIRC ID A333, Year of Capture 1968
21. Claudia NIRC ID X081, Year of Capture 1970
22. Sharon NIRC ID X038, Year of Capture 1970
23. Marilyn NIRC ID X150, Year of Capture 1970
24. Cindy NIRC ID X119, Year of Capture 1973
25. Judd NIRC ID X161, Year of Capture 1976
26. Nickey NIRC ID X105, Year of Capture 1977

¹⁰ <http://nirc.louisiana.edu/divisions/nihgrants.html>

A Courageous Whistleblower at NIRC

The problems uncovered at NIRC by The HSUS investigator are apparently neither recent nor unusual. In September 2002, NIRC hired Narriman Fakier as a “coordinator” for approximately 100 chimpanzees. By February 2004, Ms. Fakier was being given an order to resign or be fired. What she tried to set right at NIRC was directly related to the care of chimpanzees. Her effort cost her job and resulted in a complaint to the USDA and a lawsuit that persists to this day. Some of those who Fakier fingered as being indifferent or worse to the plight of the NIRC chimpanzees are still at NIRC.

Fakier’s recounting of her problems (and those of the chimpanzees) at NIRC are memorialized in an affidavit taken by the USDA’s Investigative and Enforcement Services in 2005. Within the affidavit, many things catch the reader’s eye – big and small – making Fakier’s story all too believable, such as: “I spent a huge amount of my time interacting one on one with my chimps. I had bales of hay ordered on a weekly basis to give to the chimps in my different rooms. My attempts to get other chimp areas to do the same proved fruitless.”

According to Fakier, much worse befell the chimpanzees at NIRC during her tenure than being without hay:

“In December of 2003, as I drove up to building 10B, I noticed one of my female employees standing outside. As I approached her, I could see that she was visibly upset. When I asked what was wrong, she informed me that another employee [redacted] had just been in room 100 burning some of the chimps with a lighter. He had also thrown a 5-gallon bucket of very hot water on Chimp Dali. I called Johnny and told him of the problem and asked him to come out to the area ASAP. I went into the room where the chimps were housed and saw scorched hair of [sic] the back of several chimps’ hands. Chimp Dali was hiding on the floor of her cage and would not come up when I approached her cage. When I called her name she jumped to the back of her stall. A caretaker and I went to the back of her stall to observe her and could tell that she was very frightened. Dali is an aggressive chimp and is not known to cower or show fear. She was exhibiting that behavior to us. I stroked her and talked to her to calm her down a little.”

Fakier reportedly immediately fired the cruel employee who said he considered his offense just a “game,” but when she told her boss, Johnny, that her staff would be spending more time with the chimpanzees to help them recover from their trauma, according to her affidavit, he responded with a smirk telling Fakier that “they [the chimps] would get over it.”

Dali, the chimpanzee who Fakier claimed was soaked with hot water, was still at NIRC when the HSUS investigation ended in September 2008. Dali is 20 years old and is owned by the NIH.

Fakier says that she also complained for four months that Wilma, born in 1993, and also owned by the federal government, was self-mutilating. Finally, Wilma was put on a low dose of Prozac, but she was still mutilating herself when Fakier left NIRC. Wilma was still at NIRC when the HSUS investigator left.

Fakier's 2005 affidavit also refers to NIRC ignoring her repeated complaints and requests for help concerning Jack, who was "pulling his hair out on his lower legs" and "Chimp Bud who was being badly beaten by his cagemates."

On May 2, 2008, the HSUS investigator filmed a terrified Jack, with huge patches of his hair still missing throughout his body, being threatened by a dart gun. After Jack's sedation, he was unceremoniously dragged out of his cage through standing water in the hallway. Hair pulling is another form of self-mutilation and is a sign of extreme stress in caged primates just as feather pulling is for caged birds.

Two days before she was told to quit or be fired, Fakier complained about a plan to place "10 very young chimps in the "terror dome," room 100, at 10B." The room was referred to as the "terror dome" because of the overcrowding of aggressive adult chimpanzees who would be caged directly across from the 3-year-old chimpanzees. According to Fakier, the young ones had never been separated from one another and the plan to move them into building 10B included the youngsters being singly housed and unable to see or touch each other.

The HSUS investigator came to know quite well a chimpanzee named Siafu, also owned by the NIH. While visiting Siafu in his isolation squeeze cage where he stayed for months during the investigation, the investigator was troubled by Siafu's unusual – seemingly distressed and strident – movements as he sat on the floor of his cage, looking intently at the investigator. It was not until the investigation had ended and The HSUS received documents pertaining to the Narriman Fakier case through the Freedom of Information Act, that we learned a sad truth. Siafu may have been trying to communicate something to the HSUS investigator. From Fakier's affidavit:

"Chimp Siafu at Building 10B was taught at least some sign language before he got to us. I discussed several times with [redacted] about trying to learn to communicate with him and talking with people who had worked with him before. Siafu would sign to us but because we had no idea of what he was saying, he would get very agitated, repeatedly signing. Nothing was ever done for him."

Narriman Fakier may have been the best thing to happen to the chimpanzees at NIRC in a long time. Unfortunately, her time there was cut short by NIRC's unwillingness to accept her compassion for the animals and her ideas on how to put simple kindness into play at NIRC.

The HSUS Appeals to the Government in Behalf of All Primates

The HSUS has taken swift action on five fronts. We have:

- introduced federal legislation to phase out invasive research on chimpanzees and retire all government-owned chimpanzees to sanctuaries,
- filed a formal complaint with the U.S. Department of Agriculture concerning violations of the federal Animal Welfare Act that we believe occurred at NIRC – most notably the lab’s failure to provide an environment adequate to promote the psychological well-being of primates – and asked the agency to thoroughly investigate our allegations,
- asked Thomas Vilsack, the Secretary of Agriculture, to meet with The HSUS and primate experts to discuss the failure of the USDA’s current approach to ensuring the psychological well-being of primates in laboratories, and to support our effort to retire elder chimpanzees,
- requested that the Acting Health and Human Services Secretary Charles Johnson meet with us to discuss supporting the newly-introduced federal legislation, and
- asked Governor Bobby Jindal of Louisiana to take timely action on behalf of 26 elderly, wild caught chimpanzees languishing at NIRC, by requesting their retirement to the federally-funded chimpanzee sanctuary, Chimp Haven.

The HSUS has been advocating for chimpanzees for decades. In 1987, when the NIH abruptly pulled its sponsorship of a conference on chimpanzee enrichment, designed by chimpanzee experts Drs. Roger Fouts and Jane Goodall, The HSUS helped assure that the conference went forward.¹¹

Fouts and Goodall approached the NIH in April 1987 – two years after Congress passed the primate psychological well-being amendment to the federal Animal Welfare Act – about providing chimpanzees with cages measuring 20’ x 20’ instead of the standard 5’x5.’ They were rebuffed and, to this day, the standard floor space required for chimpanzees remains only 25 square feet.

The use of chimpanzees is prohibited in the UK, Netherlands, Austria, New Zealand, Belgium, Spain, the Balearic Islands, and Sweden. As is the case in implementing alternatives to the use of animals in basic toxicology studies, the United States lags behind its peer nations when it comes to getting chimpanzees out of laboratories.

Despite all that is known and appreciated about chimpanzees, despite their physiological and psychological similarities to humans, the NIH and chimpanzee laboratories across the U.S. fail to honor the moral imperative that we work together and get them out of cages – big or small.

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¹¹ Next of Kin – What Chimpanzees Have Taught Me About Who We Are – page 326 by Roger Fouts