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CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS/2003-00151

Full Item Register Number [auto] **CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS/2003-00151**

ExRef: Document Series/Year/Number **Kaye - 30th Anni.Clips - PDF**

Record Item Title

UNICEF Salutes Danny Kaye -- Newspaper clippings

Date Created / on Item
30-Sep-2003

Date Registered
30-Sep-2003

Date Closed/Superceeded

Primary Contact
Owner Location **Public Participation Section, UNICEF = 5108**
Home Location **Q, Fl 04, Rm 400, Row 036, SU 011, Lev 05, Pos 14**
Current Location **Record & Archive Manage Related Functions=80669443**

Fd1: Type: IN, OUT, INTERNAL?
Fd2: Lang ?Sender Ref or Cross Ref
F3: Format

Container Record
Container Record (Title)

CF/RAF/ZW/A0034-1991-000061329
D. KAYE CLIPS. '68 EUROPE TRIP DANNY KAYE

N1: Num of pages
0

N2: Doc Year
0

N3: Doc Number
0

Full GCG Code Plan Number
Record GCG File Plan

Da1:Date Published

Da2:Date Received

Date 3

Priority

Record Type **A02a Item Hist Corr - CF/RAI/USAA/DB01/HS**

Electronic Details

No Document

DOS File Name

Alt Bar code = RAMP-TRIM Record Number

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Notes

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\$2,200,000 was raised on these shores to restore damaged art works.

church walls after the floods of two years ago. Others had been removed before then.

Then as now, the method consisted in pasting a canvas on the face of the work to

This is more than understandable, of course, since the art of fresco painting is a

It makes one feel he is alone in church. What a church!

Paul Edwards
Danny Kaye's big night coming up

Ambassador to 900 million children

Thirty thousand children perish every day from hunger and the diseases that stalk the jungles of poverty. To more fortunate children in America, this is a statistic that cannot be tolerated without their own special form of activism and protest. On Halloween Eve, 3 1/2 million youngsters will mobilize to ring doorbells in every state in the annual UNICEF trick-or-treat fund-raising campaign led by the gifted actor, Danny Kaye.

This is the story of the metamorphosis of a great comedian to roving ambassador to 900 million children in more than 100 lands—as told by himself in Hadassah Magazine.

By DANNY KAYE

For many children of America, Halloween in recent years has come to have a very special meaning. No longer is the evening of October 31 simply a gay romp with ankle-length costumes, paint-daubed faces, comic masks and trick-or-treat. No, for them, there are indeed witches who bedevil the world, but these demons are famine and disease, as 900 million children in countries I have seen in the past 15 years can testify. No more tragic an illustration can be provided than in the case of stricken Biafra, where hundreds of thousands of children have starved to death. To the extent that the children of America this Halloween collect precious pennies in our annual UNICEF drive, to that extent they will be rescuing countless lives in this war-torn land and elsewhere.

It is not alone the native children who are the innocent victims of the brutal civil war between the Federal Nigerian government and the breakaway

eastern region that has proclaimed itself the state of Biafra. There are millions of mothers, too, uncounted thousands of whom will surely die if food and medicine do not reach them. Some estimates put the daily death toll at 3000. A shocking figure but hardly as shocking as the 30,000 children who perish of starvation and disease throughout the world every 24 hours.

But even if it were only one village, one family, one soul that is doomed each day, that would be as abundant in resources and in the impulse to aid the unfortunate as our is. Those who smashed their fists against the wall in helpless rage because they could do naught to pre-

vent genocide at Dachau and Auschwitz and Buchenwald can now join in common cause with 3 1/2 million children who will be gently knocking at every door October 31. Last year, together with 650,000 boys and girls in Canada, they raised \$3 million in more than 13,000 communities.

People may ask what all of this has to do with Danny Kaye, the funny man, the clown. Why should he lift his voice in concern at what is happening on a distant shore?

One cannot make fun, one cannot be joyous in my world, in my daughter's world — yes, in your world — in the face of man's inhumanity to man, no matter how remote the realm. We may not be able to put a halt to the slaugh-

ter in the jungle, but we can certainly do something to dwarf the extent of the disaster.

That something has come from UNICEF — the United Nations Children's Fund — with which I have been identified for the past 15 years. To Biafra, food and medicine and supplies have been rushed by UNICEF through the International Committee of the Red Cross on an equal basis to victims on both sides of the struggle. A minimum of 1000 tons a day is needed to stave off starvation and too often we cannot achieve our purpose.

Granted this is another black chapter in the history of a civilized race, there is a saving feature: Our children tried. It cannot be

said they turned a deaf ear to the anguish of less fortunate children elsewhere. Yes, lives were saved, and they — our children — will remember this when they grow up.

It has been thus since 1946 when by unanimous vote of the United Nations General Assembly a relief organization was established concerned exclusively with the welfare of children in more than 100 nations who have no school to attend and no teacher to instruct them — children who are the prey of hunger, malnutrition, disease and ignorance. A lifetime of supplies was extended to them initially — milk, blankets, shoes, medicine — and gradually this has been expanded to include a wide range of

services and projects — 550 in all — extending from clinics and health centers and disease control to community development and vocational training. In between are the fundamentals essential to their operation — medical personnel and equipment, nutritional programs and technical grants, stipends for midwives and nurses — all geared to push one stage beyond mere subsistence into meaningful growth.

But it is much too small a commitment: only \$42 million will be spent this year for all of these UNICEF projects, only \$42 million. Think — that's what all of the governments of the world spend on armaments every two hours! How far can \$42

million go for 900 million children with outstretched arms?

Perhaps we cannot measure our efforts in terms of projects or goals. Perhaps of equal importance is the unique contribution UNICEF has made in spanning the gap between the haves and the have-nots of the world. I can only quote the words of the Nobel Committee which in 1965 awarded UNICEF the Nobel Prize for Peace:

The most important thing . . . is the great step forward in the idea of international cooperation that UNICEF represents. . . UNICEF is forging a link of solidarity between the rich and the poor countries. . . Feeling is growing everywhere . . . that we are in reality one family in the world. . . To create a peaceful world, we must begin with the children.

Our Halloween trick-or-treat gives root to that one-family concept. Hopefully it will sprout into a living, strong organism.

I know this is possible from my own experience abroad. With the children I meet, first there is puzzlement, sometimes withdrawal. Then curiosity, a tentative reaching out. Finally, acceptance. I see it in the first glimmer of comprehension in their eyes, the first willingness to accept my hand. And when I, as an adult, can communicate with a child on his own level, often without speech, but through a smile, I become aware of love. Sometimes the approach is facilitated by a comic face. The child invariably responds by making a face right back. We have established contact. We are friends.

If I can bring joy with faces, I can also try to raise money through other attributes with which I have been gifted. Recently, I performer on the po-

dium in the Danny Kaye manner with Gadna, Israel's National Youth Orchestra. We toured Israel, Europe, Canada, Mexico, South America. Music-lovers came to know and admire these gifted Israeli musicians — and we raised money for Israel in her time of crisis. After my Halloween tour of the United States in October, I will join Maurice Chevalier for a UNICEF drive benefit in Paris in December. Beyond that, I have other plans for 1969 elsewhere.

The majority of the world's children living in Africa, Asia, the Middle East and Latin America still remain trapped in a self-perpetuating cycle of sicknesses. We here have long ago conquered deprivation, illiteracy and wretched diet.

This has not been a one-sided experience — bringing joy and laughter to young people to whom these emotions are largely alien. I, too, have benefited to an extent I never anticipated. I, David Daniel Kominski who was born in Brooklyn in 1918 to Jewish emigrants from Russia. In reaching out to help these 900 million children, I have discovered a new dimension to my own existence. I am keenly aware that I did not sit idly by when their voices were lifted in supplication. I did not turn my back to that desperate cry.

Still, I do not consider myself a hero. I am a father, a human being, a member of the brotherhood we sometimes dream about and often praise about. I did something. The children of America every Halloween are doing something. And if somewhere far off children sleep better tonight because of what we have together done, I too, sleep better. I do not ask for more.

Reprinted from Hadassah Magazine



DOING WHAT HE DOES BEST — Danny Kaye greets a Thai child native fashion and on

the youngster's own level. The boy suffers from yaws, lesions caused by protein deficiency.

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