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Helenka Pantaleoni

Interview No. 5
by Richard Polsky
April 25, 1977

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Interview with Mrs. Guido Pantaleoni
in New York, New York

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Q: This is April 25, 1977. This is a conversation with Mrs. Pantaleoni and Richard Polsky. And today we're going to start by talking a little bit about the U.S. Committee for UNICEF, how it got started, its internal structure. We, I guess, will go over again a little bit about its purposes, although we have talked about that a little bit, but we might just, Mrs. Pantaleoni, start out by talking a bit about how the committee got started, what the need was, and what prompted the founders to organize.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: We touched on that, didn't we, with Katharine Lenroot?

Q: A little bit, yes.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: It was really set up in a quasi-official relationship to the State Department. It was Katherine Lenroot being the stem-winder for that. She was anxious to have popular opinion behind her when she put in a recommendation for a financial appropriation to UNICEF. That was at that time - did we talk about trying to make it, putting a sort of illustrious big-name person in?

Q: Well, you went to Mr. Rockefeller. Is that it? Yes.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: That was later. In the beginning, they offered the post to Catherine Nimitz, and Charles Taft among others. Mary Lord was well-known, Mrs. Oswald Lord. She took it on.

At that time, time was of the essence. The Committee in those days had a charter, but it had no Board of Directors. It was just people chosen from organizations, mostly from well-known organizations, in their personal capacity.

When the thing was disbanded, when Mary Lord went into Human Rights, and I started that Citizens Committee in Washington to preserve the appropriation



from Congress, when the U.S. Committee was reconstituted in 1953 and we still couldn't find a name person - finally, Mary Lord said to me, "Well, you take it, you've got to take it". She was in a hurry because she was moving onto the Human Rights meeting in Geneva or something. So I said I would temporarily, I would serve as Acting Chairman.

Then we set up a Board. First of all, there were three of us. There were Josephine Schain, who used to be Executive Secretary of the Girl Scouts organization. She was a wonderful woman. Great force. Very intelligent. Very direct. She had sort of a Scandinavian directness of approach. And rather thorny. She was unafraid of man or beast. There's nothing she wouldn't say. She got under the skin of many people, but that was part of her strength.

Then the other person of that trio was Jean Poletti, Governor Poletti's wife. Very different type. She was very vivacious, also very honest and very intelligent, and of course, a prominent Democrat.

So we three were really the U.S. Committee in 1953. That was the beginning. We were given space temporarily by the United Nations on the seventeenth, then on the eighteenth floor of the U. N., where UNICEF was, and we were given a corner of one of the big conference rooms, where we set up a table and some chairs and a typewriter. And of course, we were like stepchildren - I shouldn't say that, being a stepmother - but we were always being pushed around. Whenever they wanted that corner for something, they'd shove us somewhere else. Then, I remember, we'd push the table around to make it more useable, until the building management came in very solemnly and said it was against the house rules for us to be pushing our own furniture around. So each time we'd have to call Maintenance. It was just like dealing with a union. It was quite funny.

But I'll never forget the image. Josephine Schain, who took on the organizations. I sort of took on a little of everything, so it made a lot of work. And Jean Poletti would sit at a typewriter, typing out letters on Trick or Treat. That was the beginning of our distribution of the Halloween thing. That was the whole U.S. Committee at that time.

Gradually, we sort of - not gradually, in fact, quite quickly - we saw we had to have a board and we had to have a staff, so Mary Lord turned over to us about a thousand dollars, which was residual funds that she had left of the old Committee, before we were reconstituted, and this paid for the moving and incidentals. Before, incidentally, we had been housed in the State

Department, and we moved from there to the United Nations. We hired one part-time secretary, Betty Little, a very bright young woman, who is now working on the Board of Directors of the UNA. She wrote letters and did a little of everything.

Then, as money began to flow in a little bit from the Trick or Treat, we kept some and took on a full-time secretary. Eventually, we took on the first Executive Secretary, who was a churchman. Maurice Pate thought we might try him out as Executive Secretary of the U.S. Committee. He was a dedicated person and extremely believing in this kind of thing, but he didn't work out. He was too nervous and too insecure and not really an administrator. He started out by hiring two rather high-powered, administrative secretaries to work in the committee. What we needed was just - we needed soldiers. We didn't need generals. We had enough generals, And these two went. They were overqualified for their jobs, so we had to release one of them, then the other, and finally the first Executive Secretary himself. Most difficult job I've ever had to do in my life was telling him that he "didn't have the technical skills that were needed".

Then, we did finally engage Norman Acton, who was with the Society of Crippled Children, which was the - what was the name of that organization? I'll look it up. But he was a very able administrator and a very nice guy and highly intelligent, and he really developed the Committee for the first five years of its existence, up to where we were making a million or two dollars income.

By that time, our Board had grown. We had a board to begin with of five people. Schain, Poletti and myself, of course. And Connie Anderson, Mrs. Arthur Forest Anderson, who was as indispensable a member of our board as we've ever had: a remarkably cool person, extremely intelligent, very selfless, she didn't want even recognition. She was as objective a person as you can imagine on the Board. She was the former president, the National President of the YWCA. That was her first love, and then we became her other love. She's still on the Corporation. When she decided she was moving out of town and she had to get off the Board of Directors, our counsel, Robert Thrun - who is another indispensable one - wrote her a letter that I think she will treasure for the rest of her life. He thought she was so rare. And, to my knowledge, it's the only time he's ever written to anybody leaving our Board. He was so impressed with her and her services.

That leads me into Robert Thrun. Since the everlasting American dollar is

sort of a measuring rod of success, I can only say that he, if we translated what he's done for the committee, I think we'd probably be owing him hundreds of thousands of dollars. Even before the U.S. Committee became the U.S. Committee, ever since the beginning of UNICEF, I've been soliciting his advice, which he's always given me very generously, and of course without any charge. And he's remained being our legal counsel, never charging, all through the life of the Committee. He moved onto our Board of Directors and eventually became Vice-President.

Mrs. Anderson was, of course, the first Vice-President. Then came Thrun, and now we have two others, Susan McKeever and Esther Walls. Susan McKeever's husband was president of the UNA. She is a very dynamic person, with a great deal of international experience, quite an activist. Esther Walls is a most charming, attractive black lady, who was Executive Director of Franklin Books and now again a well-known book publisher and is still a professional Librarian on Long Island. She is the other Vice-President.

Well, in the intermediate steps, from a board of five, it grew to seven then nine, then eleven, and finally about fifteen. And at present, we have just introduced a by-laws change to have the board consist of twenty-nine. I couldn't tell you why twenty-nine, not thirty, but I think there's a leeway for two young ones: the Board had been twenty-seven, so they added two more.

The staff also has grown from one part-time secretary, who just came in for a few hours a day, to the present permanent staff of over a hundred, and at peak time it's over two hundred. (Peak time being Halloween and greeting cards.) And then Norman Acton, after five years of service, was wooed away by the World Federation of Veterans, whatever they call it. They gave him, I think, a very handsome offer and he became Secretary-General of that. At present, he's back again with - the society is no longer Crippled Children. What is it called? I'll have to fill this in.

But after five years, he left for this other post, and Heaven seems to smile on UNICEF, for it certainly smiled on us when Lloyd Bailey came into our lives. Lloyd is a Quaker, who had been for several years Director of the Conference of Diplomats in Geneva. It was his job to get young diplomats to Geneva and tutor them, prepare them for international life. Very valuable thing, which was run by the Friends Society. Prior to that, he was the Director of UN Day, which was very much a ceremony that took place once a year on UN Day. So he had a great deal of international experience. When he came back from Geneva from the Conference for Diplomats, as Director, he wanted to

keep on with his international contacts, and Norman Acton heard that he was available. He introduced him to us, Lloyd went to see all of us on the Board, and really seemed very, very serious about joining us. His credentials were such that we found he was perfect for our purposes, and perfect indeed he turned out. I just can't see how anybody could have taken on that job and developed the Committee further and better than Lloyd Bailey. He has the most remarkable attributes. Intelligent, low key, very firm in his objective, which was to serve the children of the world and at the same time make for better international understanding in this country. He is immensely patient. There are those who think he's almost too patient. And absolutely unflappable. It sounds like, at first look, a glamorous, nice job, to be raising funds for something as glamorous as UNICEF, but there are endless pitfalls. Just the fact that it has this emotional sort of appeal. As we know, it attracts all sorts of individuals to it. And there's the old thing, that you always meet in every organization, people wanting recognition, and volunteers are hard to handle from that point of view. They don't get paid, so they want something. They want either status or they want recognition.

So he's surrounded by that. At the same time, we have limited resources for staff. The staff that he took on was way less paid than, for instance, here in UNICEF. This is true especially now, when salaries are skyrocketing here. The U. N. has something that's comparable to a union, the Staff Council, and they've got the working conditions really extremely favorable. High salaries, long vacations, a lot of sick leave, a lot of fringe benefits. So that the U.S. Committee, which works cheek by jowl with the UNICEF people, of course can't help but compare their own lot with that of the UNICEF people. That's one of the things he has to contend with.

And then finally, he's got not only his own board that he's responsible to, but he has UNICEF breathing down his neck. It's not an easy lot. Plus all the things we talked about - I think it was the last time - the three major difficulties, the misunderstandings that come up all over the country.

But I simply can't face a future without Lloyd in this committee work. I don't know. Perhaps if he ever decided to leave, and of course, he won't be with us forever, I simply can't imagine finding anybody with the capacity for growth and as well qualified as he is.

Q: That's very nice.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes. Very rare.

Q: Could you just talk a little bit specifically about - do you make an annual plan, or a two-year plan, for the U.S. Committee?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes. Increasingly, we think ahead.

Q: Could you just describe a little bit - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes. Lloyd takes soundings from various divisions; has key people, for instance, in education, and the Information Center for Children's Cultures, and what's now called Group Programmes - Halloween goes under that - and greeting cards, and of course, the Development office, which is fund-raising. He gets all of them to give their ideas and suggestions.

There's a great deal of analysis going on all the time. Also, we've had professionals come in to help us with our work, in a sort of management survey - both of greeting cards and of the Committee in general. They've had sort of teams of engineers come and take a look at us.

The planning is a very important part of our work, because when the Executive Director, Lloyd Bailey, comes to the Board, he has to justify his requests for funds. This is where, of course, the planning comes in. In some instances, it's a little bit frightening because lately - I think we touched on this - our income was down. Whether it's due to the economic conditions, or whether it's due to these things that are plaguing us around the country, it's hard to tell, but we're about three-quarters of a million dollars under last year. I think I said that the last time. It comes to a point where we're not sure whether we'll go on with the greeting cards.

Q: Because the income is so small?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes. Out of each dollar - when you add in what UNICEF proper pays for producing the cards and what we have to pay for distributing them, I think that less than twenty cents goes to UNICEF. Something like sixteen or seventeen cents. On the other hand, the result, if you get enough cards sold, is millions of dollars profit, to say nothing of the subtler - the propaganda value of it. It has a very - it's a door-opener in many ways. Again and again, indirectly, so many people have become interested in UNICEF because of the cards. So it's something that we'd very reluctantly abandon.

But we have to face the possibility that if this trend, Heaven forbid, continues, we may be faced with that, and then I don't know what would happen. We'd have to cut off our educational departments, because they're the ones which chiefly draw in the greeting cards, what we withhold makes possible all this educational work we're doing.

Q: So, then the various committees report to Mr. Bailey?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: The departments.

Q: Yes, the various departments.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes, and the committees which exist over the country. We get a feedback from them, too, from all these volunteer committees.

Q: Now, each department has a department head, who is a full-time paid person?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes, this hundred I was talking about, that includes clerical work, the general services, and the professional. I think there are about, oh, under twenty professionals. Sixteen, seventeem, something like that, of the professional category, heads of departments and assistants.

Q: I see. And then they - of course, the goal is always to increase the work of each particular department?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Sure.

Q: So they would come to him and say we have - here is our plan for the next year?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes, this is what happens.

Q: And this is our projected - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes, it's in the classical organizational pattern, I think.

Q: And then, he takes each of these reports and goes to the Board?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: He presents the over-all budget and programme.

Q: Once a year does he do that?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: He does that once a year. We just finished in February with the budget and programme. Our staff had been sticking pretty well to their budget. Most years we come under it. This year, I think we ran over it a little bit, but it's been pretty precise. In the past, our budget was a mess. I mean, our Financial Department was really sort of a mare's nest for a while. This was remarked upon by our new Treasurer, who is Gerald Levy. We had a series of treasurers. The first one was Cass Canfield, the publisher. Then we had Fred Atkinson, who is a retired General in the Army and was Vice-President in Charge of Personnel at R. H. Macy. He had a cool head and great experience.

Q: I didn't get his name.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Atkinson. General Atkinson. Then we had Christopher Phillips, who was in the State Department. He was Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Department of State, and afterwards was the Deputy Representative on the U. S. Delegation to the United Nations. He's had loads of experience. He's now president of the China trading thing in Washington.

So we've had very eminent treasurers, and the present one also was with R. H. Macy. He was the Vice-President in charge of - I think in charge of merchandising, and he had twenty years experience in that and wanted to be in something more socially significant. He agreed to come to us. He has a cool head and is a very, very firm person, and he did a lot to help us clear up this mare's nest. We've got a new comptroller, who seems very able, Al Holtz, who has the gift of simplicity. He doesn't obfuscate issues in the way we're talking about.

I think we have on the whole a very good Staff, and on the whole a very good board. On the Board of Directors, we haven't got many globally or even nationally known people. This was remarked on by Datus Smith. He told me we only had two people on the entire board who appeared in Who's Who. He said, myself and you, Helenka. And now, the search seems to be beginning, because unfortunately, if you go to a foundation for financial help, it helps to have window dressing. Not only window dressing, but I mean people of national

prominence. And we are somewhat in short supply of those, although the people who are on it are all excellent in their fields. They're technically qualified, intelligent people, and very un-self-serving.

Q: Now, does the board really say go ahead or don't go ahead? Do they have a great deal of power?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Oh, yes. You bet. They have indeed, and they ask very pertinent searching questions. They're not rubber stamp. A lot of people think that Lloyd and I run the whole organization. That's absolutely not so. They've sat on so many projects that Lloyd and I were interested in, or in reverse, they've given encouragement sometimes when we didn't think the thing justified more emphasis.

Q: Could you just sort of talk a bit about - let's say we're at the Board meeting in which the budget comes up, and Mr. Bailey might say, our Trick or Treat plans for the next two years are thus and so. What might he say about that? How is the national Trick or Treat project organized, for example?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: That's gone on so long now, there's just a regular pattern of organization under a the Director of Group Programmes. The field is organized chiefly by our Director of Field Services. We just got a new one who seems very energetic and a good person, Mary Duffy. She goes around the country and does what her predecessors have done before, which is to smoke out leadership. That's where the State Representatives come in. They're still experimenting around with the field structure, and this, of course, is the key to our whole progress. Because if you haven't got a solid field organization, nothing happens. It started out just haphazardly by a nice group of church ladies, who wanted to do something, and organized children to collect pennies. Well, this is no longer so. We try to do it in a much more businesslike fashion. We encourage everybody, of course, but then these State Representatives are supposed to stimulate and co-ordinate the activities in their state. Some believe it's too much to ask of a volunteer lady, to give all her time and tear around the state supervising. Yet, we haven't got money for professional help, you see. We're gradually decentralizing the - did I talk about the Western - I think I did, about the Western region, and Atlanta, yes.

So far, most of the country is still in volunteer hands, but it's much more co-ordinated. They all send all the profits in to us, and then our office tells them how much they can keep for expenses for the following year. We try to keep the organizational pattern as simple as possible. And of course, it is hard to keep an absolute check on them. But on the whole, I think carelessness is at a minimum. I think they're all pretty responsible people.

One of the staff officers, with whom I have worked closely on some projects, ^{was} Margaret Eberle, at one time Director of Field Services. She is endowed with leadership qualities, organizational ability, intellectual honesty and humor - making her the type of functionary which is so essential to the proper development of a committee like ours. When I was unable to attend a UNA function at which I was to be presented with some kind of an award, Margaret Eberle was selected to accept it in my name - apparently she gave a most effective address and made an excellent impression. She is a good example of what caring about a cause and an understanding of the indispensable volunteer effort on which the cause is dependent, can contribute to its furtherance.

Q: Does each community plan its own approach to the Halloween - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes. Oh, sure. It does. By letter. They write us for materials. Then our Group Services Department sends them so many arm bands and so many containers to collect in, so much promotion material.

Q: That's all done from New York?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Everything's done from headquarters. Everything, yes. And then the next year they ask for refills. They say how much they have left over, so we, of course, encourage it to be a continuing performance.

Q: Do any of the regional people or the state leaders ever - are they ever invited to New York to actually meet - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Oh, sure. Yes. And we've just had them on. They come. And also, we conduct workshops. We used to conduct a good many workshops for all these State Representatives, but that became too cumbersome and too

expensive. Now it's done more regionally. Say, Chicago will have a workshop and include Wisconsin and other states, and some in the East, some in the West, and so on. But that's, of course, managed entirely by the staff, organized by the staff. And I think they've been fairly successful. Hard to tell. All those things are hard, of course, to assay.

Q: Did you ever get suggestions from the field from a State Representative that is a very good idea to implement nationally, that you hadn't thought of? Is there a feedback?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Sure. A great feedback. We send questionnaires, too. They're fairly good about answering them. Much better, I must say, than our corporate members. We send them questionnaires, and there's a very small feedback from them. Of course, that's something we haven't been ever able to use intelligently, our corporate members. I think there are now eighty-odd, eighty-seven, something -

Q: In this country?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: In this country. Members of the Corporation. In the last analysis, they are the ones that are responsible for the U.S. Committee. They're not all on the board. The board is especially chosen for particular skills, but the Corporate Members come from all over the country. We say, will you be a member of the Corporation? They say, what are my duties? And we say, you haven't any, except maybe to come to the annual meeting once a year, and to help wherever you feel you can. But there's been very little for them to do actually.

Q: Are they counted on for contributions each year?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Well, that's a good question, because we just started dunning them, asking them. It has not been brilliantly successful. They haven't turned in an awful lot.

We made one experiment of going out for big funds, and we took on a professional team, and of course the team said, perfectly justifiably, start with the Corporation. It's going to be very hard for you to go out to ask for big contributions if the Corporate Members don't give, and I think out of that

entire Corporation of about seventy - well, we started with the Board of Directors, that was the Board, it was then about twenty-five members. I think we only got around two thousand dollars, which is not much.

Q: From your Board members?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes. Not very staggering, because that included a contribution of a thousand dollars from one. So they're not big givers. And this is the thing we're struggling with. How much can we go in for big - we've had some big chunks given us, twenty-five thousand dollars a year, like from the George Hecht Foundation, and sometimes fifty thousand dollars even. One gave up to a hundred thousand dollars, when he was liquidating his foundation. That was a family foundation that one of our Board members had.

But on the whole, I'm not sure whether this thing isn't too vast a global venture, whether it isn't better to have it more broadly based, to get small sums from a lot of people, rather than to put all your energies into trying to get big gifts from the few individuals.

Q: You might - I don't know if this would be appealing to the people that you're going to for money, but you might, since the U.S. Committee can designate its contribution to go to some particular project, you might work out some system where an individual's contribution, if it were large enough, could be earmarked for some particular -

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Your're on our wave length, Dick, because that's exactly what we're doing. UNICEF goes in for what they call noted projects. I don't know if we talked about that.

Q: No.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: In other words, it's something that the Executive Board of UNICEF approves, but hasn't got money enough to implement. And these are put aside. When a certain government takes a fancy to - say, for instance, the Netherlands wanted to help in Viet Nam, by supporting a noted project. Or if there's a flood or earthquake somewhere, some country will say, this is what I'm interested in helping. The United Kingdom was interested in something in India. That was a noted project. And we're doing the same thing here with

foundations. Norman Goerlich is our Director of Development, and he's been collecting these noted projects and sending them to foundations, or as you suggested, to individuals for their attention. We hope something will come of that.

Q: I would guess it gives a person or an organization a much clearer picture of what his individual contribution -

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Something he's particularly personally sympathetic to.

Q: Yes.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: It's such an amorphous thing, just UNICEF, you know. The giver doesn't know whether it goes into pipes for clean water or nutrition or education or what the heck. Yes, I think it's got great possibilities. Of course, you know again, you can't get away from the fact that other organizations - Save the Children Federation, for instance, and the community development programme connected with Save the Children, they do that very thing. They adopt villages and they -

Q: Well, that's maybe a good idea in some respects.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: It's a good idea, but people who give to that don't give to UNICEF. That's the trouble. That's why I wish they'd be all part of one package. I mean, it would be better for the children.

Q: Yes. Now, there's no possibility right around the corner of combining?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: No. It comes down to, let's face it, pride of authorship. There's so many. We ran into that doing Polish Relief. Did I talk about that?

Q: Well, you said some of the churches wanted to send -

Mrs. Pantaleoni: It was during the war, when Polish Relief -- there were so many reliefs, that the public grew tired of being dunned and it was decided to combine. It was Winthrop Aldrich, who afterwards was our Ambassador to London, who was asked to take this -- I forget what it was called, but it was

a co-ordinated relief. Allied Relief, I think something like that, it was called.

Of course, what happened was we didn't make as much money for Polish Relief as we would have going all out in a specific campaign, but we had to recognize the fact that this was a more stylish organizational picture. People were asked to give once, and then it was divided among all the different - Greek or Italian - not Italian, they were the enemy! But all the Allied sources, yes.

And the same thing happened - yes, we did mention the AOA UNAC, that disastrous thing. That was a combination again of all the organizations collecting partly for UNICEF and partly for their local things.

And these co-ordinated things, they get a little bit icy. They haven't got the emotional appeal that you have when you're just raising for your own organization. But it makes a better, clearer organizational picture.

Q: Well, with the U.S. Committee. I was correct in saying that the U.S. Committee can tell UNICEF that it wants its gift, annual gift, to go for a particular project? Is that - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes.

Q: How are those particular projects that you ask UNICEF to give your money towards, how are they selected?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: They're selected by the Executive Board, the Administration of UNICEF proper presents them to the Programme Committee, and then the Programme Committee says yes, we like it, but we haven't got enough funds for it. This is when it becomes a noted project, you see.

Q: Oh, but if UNICEF itself does not say, this is a project, the National Committee never comes up with a project of their own?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Oh, we can suggest, sure, but then it has to go through the whole routing, through channels, yes. Oh, sure. We might present it - that's happened. Well, Dorothy Riebe, for instance, she's a member of our corporation on the West Coast, a very devoted person. Her husband is an Admiral, who is a dentist in the Navy. Was. He's retired. But she came up

with a Turkish Project - a dental project. Some kind of a - a traveling, like a traveling health thing. And she suggested it to the Turkish government, because the government has to make the request, you see. So it had to come from the Government to the Administration. They look into it. They send their field representative in to discuss it with the Turkish Government. Then the Administration clears it with the specialized agencies. What do they think about it? The World Health, and so on. The appropriate agency. And when it's gotten all that clearance, they make a recommendation to the Programme Committee, and then if they accept it, the recommendation comes to the board, the Executive Board. Then they vote on it, and it becomes final. Then it becomes operable. It's quite a lot of steps.

Q: You told me that was sometimes two years before -

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Oh yes, sure. It takes a long time, because there's a very strict plan of operation that UNICEF signs with the recipient country. And it's very tight. Requesting governments have to make a lot of guarantees before they can be on the receiving end of it.

Q: Before UNICEF -

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Before UNICEF can allocate they money.

Q: Now, what is the proportion that the host country - is there a set - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes. We used to say it has to be supposedly matched dollar for dollar.

Q: Or service.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes. Services, housing, personnel, inland transportation. UNICEF pays the transportation to the point of entry, and then it's picked up by local transportation. The local government is responsible for that. But this all goes into the kitty. I mean, it's all matching funds. The average government that received the help overmatched the UNICEF dollar by two and a half times. That's a little bit - it's hard to be precise about that, but I know, many times over, one can say. The recipient government sometimes over

matched nine or ten times. When I was in Yugoslavia, for instance, the Yugoslavian government was getting milk conservation equipment, and they matched it nine or ten times over.

And this illustrates what we call the multiplier effect of UNICEF aid, because when the Yugoslav government set up the milk conservation plants, they could send milk along to their neighboring countries when these got into trouble, like Greece. They used to send milk to Greece and help them establish milk conservation plants. So, you see, this is how the aid gets multiplied.

Q: Does the fact that it's UNICEF aid sometimes help defuse it? Make it less? When one country's helping another, the fact that it's under the auspices - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Oh, tremendous, because it takes politics out of it.

Q: It neutralizes?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Neutralizes it. And that's why countries like it, too. They'll accept UNICEF aid when they'll never accept U.S. aid, because they say there are strings attached to U. S. aid - "you want to control us". That's the chief magic, I think, of UNICEF assistance.

Q: Well, getting back to the U.S. Committee a bit. When is the -- is the decision made sometimes after the money is collected during the course of the year exactly where it's going to go?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: You mean the money we collect?

Q: Yes. Or do you work towards a set project?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: We have to give it to UNICEF. We're in the throes of trying to work out an agreement now with UNICEF on how much we can keep for our expenses.

Q: Yes. You talked about that.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes. And there's been lack of agreement about that, because we can't commit ourselves. We don't know what our expenses are going to be ten years from now. But everything - the Board decides on the budget, in other words. Then we figure out what our expenses are going to be, and that we cull chiefly from greeting cards. Because, I think we touched on that, too - that we don't want to keep out too much of the children's pennies. It's bad public relations to hold out thirty percent of the small change they collect. So we keep fifteen percent now. It used to be ten. Now it's fifteen percent from that, and the rest we take out of greeting cards. Or in the rare instance where someone is generous and gives the U.S. Committee money for its expenses, but very little comes in that way. Bears no appeal.

Q: But when the money is - when the budget's all worked out, at what point do you -

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Turn it over?

Q: No. At what point do you select whether or not you have a pet project that you want to give the money to that year?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: You mean - ? Well, we give it to UNICEF. We don't select projects. We give it to the general resources.

Q: Oh, you don't? Oh, you cannot say - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: We can, but we don't, because we believe in the whole programme. In other words, when an individual says he won't give except under certain conditions, then we come up with projects. But we give to the general resources.

Q: Your income that you have after expenses?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes. Those seven million dollars.

Q: You never earmark it for a dental clinic in Turkey or - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: No, never. It goes to general resources. It's too big a

sum. We could, of course, if there was something we didn't like that UNICEF was doing - say, there was some cockeyed project we felt that was included in their general programme - then we'd say no, we'll give it to something else, and then we'd pick what. But so far we've approved.

Q: Just put it in the general pot?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: In the general resources, yes.

Q: I wasn't clear about that. I thought, you know, as you looked at their different things that they were involved in, and you said, gee, this really appeals to us, we'd like our money -

Mrs. Pantaleoni: No. No, individuals do that, and foundations sometimes do that. We tailor projects for Special Interest people. Say, a pharmaceutical foundation will give to some health project. But, we like the programmes in their totality. And we follow them very closely, and we feel it's a better balance that way. Also, to be truthful, we feel it's more fair to our contributors, because for all we know they might not be interested in some specific project. But they are interested in UNICEF, so we let UNICEF decide what they're going to spend it on.

Q: Now, you said that the UNICEF and the U.S. Committee were still working out exactly the relationship between the two organizations, and working out the amount of money that the U.S. Committee could keep for its operating expenses. Does the U.S. Committee ever speak up and say to UNICEF, gee, we're not totally pleased with the way you're doing this, that or the other thing? I don't mean in this one specific area about how much money is kept. I mean, do you have any - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes, we do. For instance, if we feel that they're rather extravagant about things, or the money's wasted, then we do speak up as delicately as we can. It's not too well received. Well, an illustration. For a long time, I've been - in fact, I approached Mr. Heyward some years ago. He's the Deputy Executive Director of UNICEF. That I thought it would be a healthy thing if they would second somebody from their office to follow our activities - put him on our staff for a matter of months to see how we

operate, and we would do the same. Somebody, say, from the Comptroller's office, to see how they operate. That would be very revealing. This way, you'd really get close to the heart of the operation. And they did do that. They sent two of their staff down for a matter of weeks to the U.S. Committee about a year ago. It was quite helpful. These birds came up with some pretty good suggestions, what we could do, and also I think they were quite favorably impressed and satisfied that we were doing a good job.

But it has not been done in reverse. We've never been invited to lend one of our staff to UNICEF, which makes it a little bit difficult in the sense that we can assure our contributors that UNICEF is a good operation. Of course, their books are open. We can go and look at their books any time. We have their audited statements and all that.

But it's not quite the same thing as - greeting cards is an example. We have no control over how they produce the greeting cards.

Q: Or which ones are produced?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes, we have control - not control, but we have a vote on that, on selection. But not on expenses. I know that one of our staff asked about the return envelopes, why weren't they made on cheaper paper, or something like that? And she was informed that it couldn't be done, there were no cheaper stock - well, then, she got an estimate herself, and she found that it could be done. It's that kind of little thing. It's a little bit annoying. It's hard to explain. It seems to me it needn't occur. I mean, if people are openminded about suggestions, they ought to take our suggestions. We think so anyway. But "they're always right".

Q: Where are the cards printed?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: In this country, for us, of course, and I think for Canada. But in Europe, they're printed in Europe. And in the Far East, I think probably printed out there. I'm not sure.

Q: It's too bad that some country couldn't take that on as a contribution to UNICEF -

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Oh, that would be fine.

Q: In lieu of hard cash?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Sure. Well, the trouble is if they did that, then they'd deduct it from their contribution probably, and UNICEF would be short of funds. But it's a big, it's a very big item, that production of cards. I think it's several million dollars. You see, we have to count that in when we - when we make our reports to the National Information Bureau, for instance, they insist that we include not only our expenses, but also expenses at the source. So we have to put in the brochure that we make so much, but this does not include the million dollars that UNICEF pays for production. So this is what drives the profit down so terribly.

Q: Yes. So you can - well, really, what I'm just trying to enlarge on a little bit is the relationship between the U.S. Committee and UNICEF.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Well, as the relationship between organizations go, it's extremely good and on the whole harmonious. There are rubs. It's, I suppose, quite a human - unconsciously, they're a little suspicious of us, especially their Information Department. Perhaps things that we do, things that they'd like to be doing, or that they could do better than we. I suppose they think that. On the other hand, we don't like the big uncle breathing down our necks, trying to control. We feel we ought to be autonomous and quite independent. That happens between most organizations - I remember the Drama League, what a blast there was there. The National Drama League was going great guns until the Chicago Drama League - this was years ago - the Chicago Drama League came up and became successful, and the tail of the dog began to wag the dog. And they ended up in a fight. I think the Chicago Drama League withdrew. It just resigned. There's never been anything like that with our situation, although there were moments when we felt we would have like to have broadened our concept. Call ourselves the United States Committee for Children, withough UNICEF, because we felt that we were being so controlled. This comes down to a personality thing. You get somebody who is unsympathetic or doesn't understand. Eventually, everything comes down to personalities, doesn't it? And if you've got the kind of caliber that's broad gauge, it eases the situation. The top's always fine. For instance, Mr. Labouisse, being an American especially, he's been very understanding and very tactful and very interested in our Committee, but that does not always hold true of all his people on his staff.

Q: Are there annual meetings of the various national committees?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes, sure, sure. Ours is coming next month, and they all have them. They have a Reunion -

Q: No, I mean, when all the national committees get together?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Called a reunion, you mean? Yes.

Q: No, no. Just sort of to discuss -

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes, they have a reunion once a year, the European committees.

(side two)

Q: We were talking about the annual meetings, the reunions of the national committees. You said there was one in Europe in which the -

Mrs. Pantaleoni: There's one in Europe every year, for the last fifteen or twenty years.

Q: And the U.S. Committee is invited?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: The U.S. Committee is always invited, but we found we weren't contributing enough to justify the expense. Nor were we learning enough. The problems of these different committees are so varying. Varying, completely. We meet all the time with the Canadian Committee, our counterpart in Canada, who I think I mentioned are doing really a better job financially than we are. And the relations are very good with them. They have a very good Executive Secretary. Their former Executive Secretary is now on the UNICEF staff. Paul Ignatieff, a very able young fellow, and this one's very able, too - Harry Black. He has excellent relations with Lloyd Bailey.

And the European ones, there are as many types as there are committees practically. Of course, the Socialist countries, like the U.S.S.R. and Poland and Bulgaria and Romania, all are centrally controlled, they're all government controlled naturally. Some of them, like the Yugoslav Committee, is not only the National Committee, but they're the ones who implement the aid that Yugoslavia receives, so they're a technical committee.

The Scandinavian committees are in a special category again. In the Swedish Committee, the people don't raise money in Sweden, because they're part of the Rada Börnen which is a child organization there.

Q: You mean, the Swedish -

Mrs. Pantaleoni: The Swedish National Committee, yes. But another thing that's true of most of these committees: the chairmen of them are also delegates on the Executive Board of UNICEF. I think we're the only committee where that isn't true. The Canadian Chairman usually sits on the Canadian Delegation, and all the other, the European ones, all sit on the delegation. Ours doesn't. I don't know whether it's because they're afraid we'll run with the bit, they know how strongly we support UNICEF, or what the reason is. Anyway, we don't. We're about the only committee that's completely private.

Q: Separate, yes.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Separate. But the Norwegian Committee, the Danish Committee, the West German Committee, what they mostly raise their funds is on greeting cards. They don't go after big gifts. And also they have galas. They had a gala, a television gala, in France, with famous actors and actresses taking part, like a telethon, you know, only not as long. That raised a good deal of money.

Q: Let me ask a theoretical question. If you could get some new programme started in this country to increase the public's contribution - I suppose, of course, one of the things you would undertake would be to get a greater contribution from the Federal Government?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Sure. That's part of our job.

Q: But that goes without saying. That's a constant effort. How about within the population, within the American people? Are there any things that you think would be productive in - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: This is a timely question, just because we were wondering whether the other two aren't running out of time. Both the Halloween, for

obvious reasons, and the greeting cards. And we're racking our brain to think of something that will be appealing, that will bring money, that will be supported by the American public. One of our Board members suggested Mother's Day. Did we touch on that? To have a collection on Mother's Day?

Q: Yes.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: But all the things - then there are things like Linus, the character Linus, cartoon thing, they've tried that with containers, and have a Linus Day. Well, that didn't bring enormous results. We've had all sorts of projects. Selling hamburgers on a certain day and giving a part of the profits to UNICEF. Various merchandising. But the initial - first of all, you have to put enough money into it to make it worth-while and to make it pay off. Nobody has come up with anything that really is, that you can say has national proportions.

Q: I would think that - you know, I came into this work with you probably as informed, or as ill-informed, about the U.S. Committee and UNICEF as many Americans.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Sure. How could you be?

Q: I didn't have a great deal of expertise. But in talking with you and in hearing some of the problems, I would think that one of the difficulties is, especially as an American and especially living in a metropolitan area, which most Americans do, you almost feel there's nothing that you can do. And if you give some money, it's swallowed up in a great big faceless fund somewhere.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Your're so right.

Q: So that I would think one idea might be to somehow pick from one of your regions or one of your state committees, pick a community that seems to have been very good contributors in the annual project, and then see if you couldn't maybe get them to adopt a village or a project in a village in some part of the country, and really channel their money through UNICEF directly to that -

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Well, we tried that with Philadelphia. No, somehow, it never seemed to get off the ground. No. But you're right basically. That's the whole difficulty with raising funds for something like this. It takes a good deal of imagination to turn these statistics and these ciphers into live children who are being helped. No matter, we can flood them with literature and they get inspired, but there's always that basically, that we don't know where our dollar is going. There's this great faceless organization, and the child is faceless. Everything is sort of faceless. It complicates our trying to make a movie. If you make a movie of something appealing about children, what do you take? White children? Or black children? Or yellow children? What kind of - ? You can't take a universal child. This is one of the great difficulties of humanizing, of personalizing this thing.

That's why really, even though I think it's most important to have people in on this, I think the major part of the resources has to come from governments, because they have staff which is socially conscious of conditions in the world and know what's needed.

Q: And they can give the big chunks of money.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: And then they're the ones who can give the big chunks of money.

Q: And the other way is probably not - it's more human, but it's probably not-

Mrs. Pantaleoni: No, but it's - to me, it would be a crying shame, and I'm saying over and over and over again, if the Halloween thing was discontinued, both from the point of view of what it brings in in profits, and because of our own children. And it will be, I think, a very malevolent thing to do, to have people fold it up just because, either they think it's not good for our children to ask for money or because they're afraid of violence or whatever.

Q: Well, my kids have collected money for UNICEF for I can't tell you how many years. Three years or four years?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: This is interesting. Up to what age? Up to when they're about -?

Q: Well, they still may be doing it. I mean, they're doing it now. The eldest is in sixth grade and the youngest is in kindergarten.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Do they collect it - not through the school, do they?

Q: Yes, through the school.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Through the school? Do they go to private school?

Q: Ethical Culture school.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Well, that's it, you see. Because the public schools in the cities - it's impossible.

Q: They do it through their school.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: That's been a good source. The Ethical Culture, yes.

Q: But I'm not sure that my kids have a clear picture - first of all, I know they don't have a clear picture of what life is like in some of the countries to which this is going.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Then they're not doing a proper job educationally in the school. What we try to get into the school, we have some very significant model places - one was in White Plains. There was a very sympathetic mayor, and he really sparked the whole thing. He called a meeting of the Board of Education, the - what is Superintendent of Schools; Fire Department, Postal Department, Police, everybody, and said, now, this is going to be a whole community undertaking. Starting with the schools, say, a month before Halloween, they put in international studies in all the classrooms. And this is where they learned about the condition of children, and how many children there were, and what condition they were in, how they lived, what they lacked. And then, on Halloween day, the Fire Department carted the children around. The police were there supervising so it would be safe, and the children went back to the Fire Department and had a party, so they didn't miss their fun, their apple bobbing and so on. This was the entire community participating. I think as marvelous an organization as we've ever had, in

this White Plains community. But I don't think it's on as big a scale - I don't know if that mayor is still there. I haven't heard that they're still participating as thoroughly.

But it's - it's insufficient. The schools are insufficient. We mentioned the other day about what a closed society they were, and they are. It's very hard to get in. They haven't got the imagination or the time or the will, or they lack something, to get proper studies in. This is why we're so anxious to - where we'd feel very badly if we had to do away with our Education Department, because I think we're providing a service that is badly lacking in this country, teaching about "global interdependence".

Q: So that you see things improving on the existing projects and at the same time looking for new ways?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Yes. We have to. We've been looking for years, and we've tried all sorts of things, but just nothing's caught on that isn't terribly hard to implement. Any project you do - for instance, they had walkathns and all sorts of thons. We had a whole series that we sent around suggestions how to raise funds. But other organizations do it, too, you see. The Freedom From Hunger will do a walkathon. They prefer to give to that. So it isn't very profitable to copy. Sometimes they do it for UNICEF. Not unfailingly.

Thanksgiving was suggested a a possible day, but we stayed away from it simply because of fairness to other organizations, since we have Halloween and since we have Christmas, the greeting cards, we thought we couldn't be too greedy about various holidays. But I don't know, it was sort of a fluke. This whole thing started, this thing got rolling because of this wonderful action that Clyde Allison had taken about Halloween. It will take something like that, I suppose, to get another one going. So far, there's a great lack of suggestions that are practical.

Q: And the public schools around the country - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Oh, they're tough.

Q: In New York City, you're not allowed to - ?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: Not through schools, no. Only private schools.

Q: And who made that decision? The government?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: The Board of Education, the Department of Social Welfare.

Q: The Board of Education?

Mrs. Pantaleoni: They don't allow solicitation in schools. Same thing happened in Los Angeles. They wouldn't even give our children licenses to collect, and now that's been broken through, after years and years and years. Now they do. Of course, there was this - I remember, I don't think we talked of this, in one of the early meetings of the Executive Board, the Give One Day plan? Did we touch on that?

Q: No.

Mrs. Pantaleoni: There was this Norwegian delegate who got up - Mr. Ording his name was - and he made a speech. He thought that every single day laborer, or everybody who earned a salary all over the world, would be delighted to give one day of his efforts. Say, if it came to a hundred dollars or five dollars, to give that to UNICEF. It was called the Give One Day plan. And it was enthusiastically recieved in one of the rare instances when the whole meeting broke into applause - you know, those tired blasé delegates do not applaud - but they did, and that was the end of it. It was too diffucult to implement, I suppose. The unions said, well, they didn't know. If they did it for UNICEF, they'd have to do it for other organizations. "How are you going to collect it?" There's always the "how to" angle. Of course, it was a magical plan. Then if labor did it, you could go to industry and say, give one day's profit. Imagine what General Motors - you'd be a millionaire overnight. And all those things in theory sound great. Actually ideas are a dime a dozen. We get ideas, cratesfull of them, but it's the implementation that's the stickler. How you're going to do it.

There was also a very good idea promoted by Linn Scheffey, one of our members in Philadelphia, for returning passengers from foreign countries tp put their foreign coins into a special envelope, mail it to UNICEF, whereupon UNICEF would change the currency into dollars. She figured out that you could

collect millions of dollars a year that way. It was a marvelous idea. But it never came off. We don't know what the trouble was. We think it was the stewardesses at the other end, whoever it is, the personnel of the airlines who would forget to get the information and envelopes into the planes. It's difficult to organize. You can't - when there are so many people in the act, you know, who are not paid to do it. You have to have somebody terribly responsible and who really cares a great deal before they'll do it. So each one of these things, there's always some hitch. Millions of ideas, and so far, few have worked out.

Somewhere along the line I mentioned my friend Bob Moses, who was such a broad-gauge guy that he could see the possibilities in something like "all the world's children". This interest became manifest when he became President of the 1963-1964 World's Fair Corporation. I used to be his guest at the Sunday night suppers he gave every summer at the Central Park Zoo. At one of these suppers - 1959 I think - while we were waiting in the cafeteria, I asked him "what plans" he had to include a pavilion for the children of the world? He told me he hadn't thought about it, but to "keep in touch". I called his office the next day, and he said he would try to arrange for space for UNICEF - "without charge" (there was quite a steep rental charge for exhibition space) - but that we would need to find funds to erect the exhibit.

Nothing is simple that involves an international bureaucracy. Both the Unicef Administration, and members of our own Board were skeptical about the propriety of using up energy, and funds, on a World's Fair project. We lost one after another of the "spaces" Bob would put aside for us, but the necessary resources were not forthcoming. The fact that Moses had confidence in the project became manifest when he appointed one of his senior associates, to work with us and help us finance it. There followed a turmoil of meetings, conferences, agitations for what seemed an eternity - actually a year or two. Finally, through the effective energy of Martin Stone - we made contact with Walt Disney, who expressed an interest in building an exhibit for us. I had appointed as Chairman of the UNICEF World's Fair exhibit, a friend and collaborator of mine during the Children's Theater years - Dorothy Teeger. Dottie had vision and impeccable taste, which she would not compromise, even for UNICEF. When the source of funds for the exhibit turned out to be the Pepsi-Cola Company, some of our members, Dottie included, questioned the propriety of a commercial tie-in for UNICEF. To lay our doubts to rest, Pepsi placed at our disposal, one of their company Lear jets, which carried us to Burbank and the Disney Studios. Once on the spot, Walt took over, guiding us

over the premises and outlining the plans for the "Small, Small World" which enchanted the ten million visitors who eventually visited the UNICEF Pavilion in 1963 and 1964. It so happened that my son, Michael had just returned from a three-year stint in Frankfurt, Germany, with the U. S. Army Intelligence - he charmed Walt Disney and also the Pepsi-Cola lawyer, "Pidge" Martin, who was the stem-winder for Pepsi in this whole deal. "Pidge" offered Mike a job for a year to be "co-ordinator" and Mike accepted, co-ordinating Pepsi (which had invested over five million dollars in the project) - Walt Disney Studios, Bob Moses and UNICEF - a motley crew, described by the New Yorker as a "most unlikely company".

The UNICEF "Small World" became the second most popular exhibit in the entire Fair. It netted us several hundred thousand dollars but more important, gave us the possibility of reaching out into a wider audience, for we distributed many millions of leaflets on the Children's Funds's programmes and operations.

(end of interview)