

For Immediate Release  
Tuesday, December 16, 1975

THE WHITE HOUSE  
Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford

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Mrs. Ford will host a party for children of members of the Diplomatic Corps based in Washington today at 4:30 PM at the White House.

Mrs. Ford has invited Kukla, Fran and Ollie to entertain for the party. They will perform a specially created show for the party. Santa Claus and eleven clowns will be on hand to help Mrs. Ford greet her guests.

Approximately 500 children representing 84 countries will attend. The guest list was coordinated through THIS, The Hospitality and Information Service, a volunteer organization to help Diplomatic families in Washington, D. C.

Santa Claus is being played by Bill Nicholson, Director of Presidential Scheduling at the White House.

The clowns are from the Baltimore Social Security Administration and have organized themselves as the Social Security Clown Club which has been officially recognized by the Administration as an employee group since 1970. The Social Security Clown Club has performed at the White House the past three years at the Easter Egg Roll.

The children will be given candy and an autographed picture of the President and Mrs. Ford.

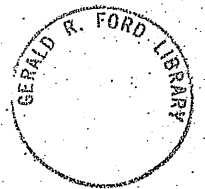
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BACKGROUND:

Kukla, Fran and Ollie have been hosts for the CBS Children's Film Festival (seen each Saturday) since 1966. The show's creator, Burr Tillstrom, has won two Peabody Awards and three Emmy Awards for his television work.

Tillstrom was born in Chicago. His first public appearance as a puppeteer was with the Works Progress Administration (WPA) in the Chicago Park District Theater. From there, he went on to become the manager and star performer of the Marshall Field Marionette Theater.

In 1941, Burr Tillstrom and his original puppets, Kukla and Ollie, launched their television career on station WBKB in Chicago. In 1947, Fran Allison joined them. They first appeared on television in 1949 and became one of NBC's most popular shows. They left NBC in 1955 and performed on ABC for two years.



Press Pick-up in West Press Lobby at 4:15 PM