

50 000 posters, and said UNESCO would distribute 40 000 of them to libraries all 'round the world.

"We got other artists the same way. In Japan, there was Mitsumasa Anno, whom the librarians approached for me. Adults buy the books he illustrates for children. He did a fascinating poster with animals hidden among the leaves of trees. The Japanese government paid for the printing, and it led to a campaign in which Japanese children planted two million trees.

"Mexico did a very modern poster, and the Swiss illustrator Jörg Müller produced one of an arid landscape with goats and hills [that] he had researched with great care. And the Swiss government agreed to print it—after I told them that otherwise the Russians could print it.

"An enchanting one came from the Oodi Weavers of Botswana, a tapestry of a rural family under a big tree. It was wrapped in straw to protect it, and their letter said: 'The tree is our village. Under it we pound the maize, the men sit and talk, the children play hoping the fruit will drop down for them to eat, and the roots hold the water that protects our crops.' We got a Norwegian designer to prepare the poster, and the librarians in Holland said they would pay for it. I was so pleased, because I had been determined that not all the artists should be from northern countries.

"And then Heidi Lange, a Swedish artist who lives in Kenya, gave us a piece of art that went 'round the world. It was on the cover of a booklet, a guide for teachers, explaining the dangers of deforestation and urging children to plant a tree. She took the same design—of children with an elephant and giraffe under a glorious tree—and made it into a batik which was presented as a VIP gift. Many other people in different countries helped, and several governments offered seedlings....

"The posters and booklets were ready by February, and UNESCO shipped them to libraries all over the world. (And they were really used: I saw one still up on a library wall a year later in Nebraska.) So then you had a theme for governments and a plan of action that was practicable in many different countries. And on June 5, the NGOs marched out and planted trees, so that television and newspaper reporters and heads of government had to go with them.

"It wasn't a one-shot thing. For a long time, scientists had been reporting a shortfall of trees, but no one paid them much attention. From 1982, you had a far more serious look at what the scientists were saying. The Aga Khan had been talking about a different, more efficient kind of cooking stove. All these things were coming together. What was needed was a catalyst, and 'For Every Child a Tree' proved to be a global catalyst.

"Lots of things happened. We got an official letter from China saying that every child over 10 will plant three trees 'and the army will help.' In India, our campaign helped reinforce the Chipko movement of women, who had been hugging trees to prevent the industrial forces from cutting them down. We told these stories, and we highlighted the tree planting programs in countries like Kenya and Zimbabwe; for it was important that people know that the Third World is capable of taking tree planting seriously.