

"The basic idea was to get parents to plant a tree as a birthday gift for their child: the child would feel a sense of the land and of being part of nature, and the parents would do something to replenish the earth. In Israel, for example, when couples are married or old people die or children are born, they plant a tree. So our team in UNEP said, 'Why can't this be done all over the world?' There would be billions of trees planted.

"But you cannot reach everyone. So I thought we should narrow the field and try to get a tree planted for every child born on June 5, 1972—the opening day of the Stockholm Conference. We worked out a program to approach every member state of the United Nations with the questions: Approximately how many children in your country were born around that time in 1972, and would you be willing to make available the same number of seedlings for these children to plant?

"Denmark came back with the first positive answer: about 2 500 children, and they certainly had a good tree planting program—but if I could identify 2 500 children some place else who needed trees, Denmark would donate that number of seedlings in the name of Danish children. So we named Kenya and Botswana, and told this story to other countries with trees to spare. Some responded well, others not at all. But what made the job at the UN exciting was that there were always NGOs [Non-Governmental Organizations] who took up these challenges. In Senegal, there was a mixture of government and NGOs; in the Sudan it was the academic community; in the United States the Spirit of Stockholm Foundation linked up with about seven other groups.

"We also had to promote the campaign, and I thought it would be nice to do posters. But there was no budget in UNEP for this unorthodox way of working—we didn't have a penny! Our idea was to get 10 posters, so we got in touch with 20 countries and asked if they would have their leading artists, whose works were known to children, to design a poster for us. Eventually we had to write directly to the artists ourselves. But meanwhile the library people—*Joie par les livres* in Paris, and the International Federation of Library Associations in The Hague—said our campaign should work through the libraries. They said, 'We can encourage libraries to put up displays of books and see that you get that kind of audience of children who are thinkers.' And, what was exciting, UNESCO [United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization] was doing a very active development of libraries in the Third World.

"Anyway, I picked up my pen and wrote to Bjørn Wiinblad in Denmark to tell him what the project was. People said, 'You're crazy, that man doesn't lift a pencil [for] under \$25 000.' I knew his work was unbelievable: posters for the Tivoli, sets for the Royal Danish Ballet and pottery sold internationally. We went to see him in Copenhagen: he's a bunny rabbit, gentle and round and merry, and his work is like that, too. He said, 'Of course,' when I asked him if he would do a poster for the children of the world. He did it and his government looked at it and, to give them their due, they said, 'If he will give you that poster, we will print it, taking good care the colours and everything are up to the standards of this leading artist.' So I asked them to print