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# CHANGE THIS WORLD!

50 YEARS OF POSTERS  
FOR AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL  
1961-2011

50  
YEARS

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



**AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL IS**

**50**

Fifty years ago, one man, outraged by injustices he saw, made an appeal to others to unite with him in common action.

He found a way to inspire human beings to act together and change the world. He saw that the potential for using our rights – our freedom to act – made it possible to achieve extraordinary things.

Over the past 50 years, a global network of supporters found many ways to express their outrage at the injustice they saw.

They committed themselves to supporting, celebrating and standing up for those who are willing to speak the truth.

They changed laws and changed lives. From London to Santiago, from Sydney to Kampala, one person joined with another to insist that the rights of each and every human being are respected and protected.

Fifty years on, severe problems in our world persist but we know we can inspire others to act together to find solutions.

# AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL'S STORY

## A VISION OF HOPE

Amnesty International's 3 million members believe that human rights abuses anywhere are the concern of people everywhere. We work with and for each other to defend human rights.

Until every person can enjoy all of their rights, our candle of hope will continue to burn. It will burn until all human beings can live in dignity; until every person's voice can be heard; until no one is tortured or executed.

This is the vision of Amnesty International.

The story of two students being sent to prison for toasting freedom in 1961 led to the birth of Amnesty International. We have since grown into a global movement, mobilizing millions of supporters in more than 150 countries.

At the heart of Amnesty International is this idea: that we are at our most powerful when we stand together for human rights.

## CHANGING MINDS, CHANGING LIVES

Amnesty International is a movement of people committed to freedom and justice. We work together in many different ways, so that all our members can be involved, wherever they live and whatever their age, background or skills. These include:

- email petitions, web actions and sms campaigns;
- letter-writing campaigns;
- public demonstrations;
- human rights education concerts to raise awareness;
- direct lobbying of officials;
- partnerships with local campaigning groups;
- community and student activities.

## WHAT WE DO

Activists take up human rights issues through online and offline campaigning, demonstrations, vigils and direct lobbying of those with power and influence.

Locally, nationally and globally, we join together to mobilize public pressure and international solidarity.

And together, we make a difference.

## OUR MOVEMENT

We are a movement – a movement of activists speaking out and working with and for others; a movement of volunteers, supporters and donors fuelling our growth and sustainability.

We are democratic and self-governing – every member has a say in deciding what we do and how we do it.

Amnesty International is:

- Independent of any government, political ideology, economic interest or religion;
- Financially self-sufficient, thanks to the generous support of donations from individual members and supporters.

We do not support or oppose any government or political system and neither do we necessarily support or oppose the views of those whose rights we seek to protect.

50  
YEARS



**BUY THIS SOAP! SEE THIS SHOW!  
DRINK THIS BOOZE! ADMIRE THIS WOMAN!  
JOIN THIS PARTY! VISIT THIS RESORT!  
USE THIS RAILWAY! VOTE FOR X!  
JOIN THIS ARMY! AVOID CARELESS TALK!  
SHOP THIS CRIMINAL! SEE THIS FILM!  
SAVE THESE TREES! COLLECT THIS ARTIST!  
RECOGNIZE THESE FISH! KILL THIS ENEMY!  
STOP THIS SLAUGHTER! DIG THIS BAND!**

Posters pose imperatives in graphical form.

Describing them in text almost demands the use of **CAPITALS** and exclamation marks!

Posters address you with what current media-speak calls an Ask.

Posters really, really want you to do something. Any cerebral, visceral or emotional experience you may get from looking at them is incidental, or secondary, to the Ask.

The Ask is threaded throughout the history of posters, at least in Western European culture. From 16th century broadsheets, through the lithographic poster age of the late 1800s, the political and revolutionary posters of the 1900s, propaganda and recruitment posters for both world wars, the social protest, politics, pop and psychedelia of the 1960s, to the interior design repros and art-trade, “limited edition” posters of today.

**Q1** Can the limitations of this most utilitarian and pushy of visual media be transcended?

**A** This exhibition is a selection of 50 posters produced by or for Amnesty International since its founding in 1961.

Amnesty International is an international membership organization which campaigns against human rights violations, and for human rights.

In these posters you are seeing what results when a skilled artist tries to imagine, and then depict, what is most social or anti-social in all of us.

50 images showing the best, or the worst, of what it is to be a human being.

**Q2** What is the Ask behind these posters for Amnesty International?

**A** Dare to imagine a different future!

**CHANGE THIS WORLD!**

## EVENTS IN HISTORY

Several of the posters in this exhibition were produced in response to current events which provided campaigning opportunities.

One of these was the World Cup football competition held in Argentina in 1978. Amnesty International used the international attention focused on the event to inform people about the gravity of the human rights violations that were occurring in Argentina following the March 1976 military coup. Among the aims of the campaign was to counter the Argentinian government's efforts to use the occasion to improve its image abroad, and to reach new sectors such as sports fans and sports writers.

The campaign against human rights violations in Ethiopia in 1978 produced the second poster in this section, drawing particular attention to abuses committed by the military during the "Red Terror" campaign of 1977-1978. It was estimated that thousands of people died, including many children.

The 1983 poster on Syria was produced to coincide with Amnesty International's Special Action on Syria which focused on the arbitrary arrests and detention without trial carried out under the 1963 State of Emergency law.

One of the most famous Amnesty International posters showed a lone protester in front of the tanks during the military crackdown in Tiananmen Square, Beijing, on 4 June 1989. Photographer Stuart Franklin said in an interview in 2009: "It became an Amnesty International poster, up on every student's wall. I was proud that it became so important to people."

1978

Poster created by Amnesty International Germany for the Argentina Football World Cup 1978. It reads: "Fussball Ja – Folter Nein (Football Yes – Torture No)".

FUSSBALL JA – FOLTER NEIN  
**ARGENTINIEN**  
**'78**



1980s

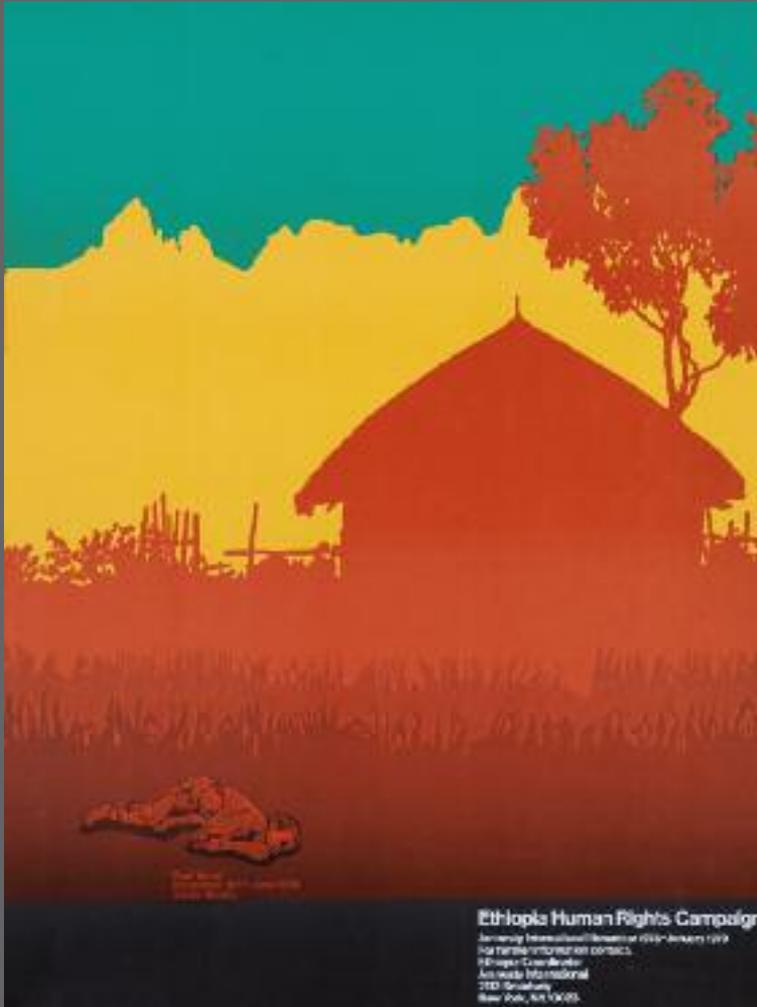
*Opposite page:* Detail of poster created by Amnesty International Netherlands. Since 1963 Syria has remained under a continuous state of emergency, which has been used to suppress and punish even peaceful dissent.

**ai**

**amnesty international**

Verluisbergweg 48 53000 Bonn





**1978**

Poster created by Amnesty International USA for the Ethiopia campaign (November 1978 - January 1979). This poster shows one of the thousands of victims killed in the capital, Addis Ababa, during the “Red Terror” campaign of 1977-1978.

**1989**

Poster created by Amnesty International France for the campaign on China, which uses photographer Stuart Franklin’s iconic 1989 Tiananmen Square photo.  
 Photo: © Stuart Franklin. Magnum Photos et Nouvelles Images Editeurs.



P O U R

**PLA**

© 1989 Stu



A M N E S T Y I N T E R N A T I O N A L

# FACE TIAN AN MEN 5 JUIN 1989

art Franklin, Magnum photos et Nouvelles Images Editeurs

## ARTISTS WHO HAVE PRODUCED WORK FOR AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

Amnesty International marked 1977 by naming it Prisoner of Conscience Year, to increase public awareness and concern about ongoing human rights violations against those imprisoned solely for the non-violent expression of their conscientiously held beliefs and to increase support for them throughout the world. The many activities by sections and supporters that year included concerts, campaigns, an international design competition, petitions and conferences.

Amnesty International worked with well-known artists to produce posters for a number of campaigns. One of these was the 1977 Prisoner of Conscience Year – others included the 1985 campaign on Haiti and an initiative from Amnesty International Japan called Freedom in the 80s.

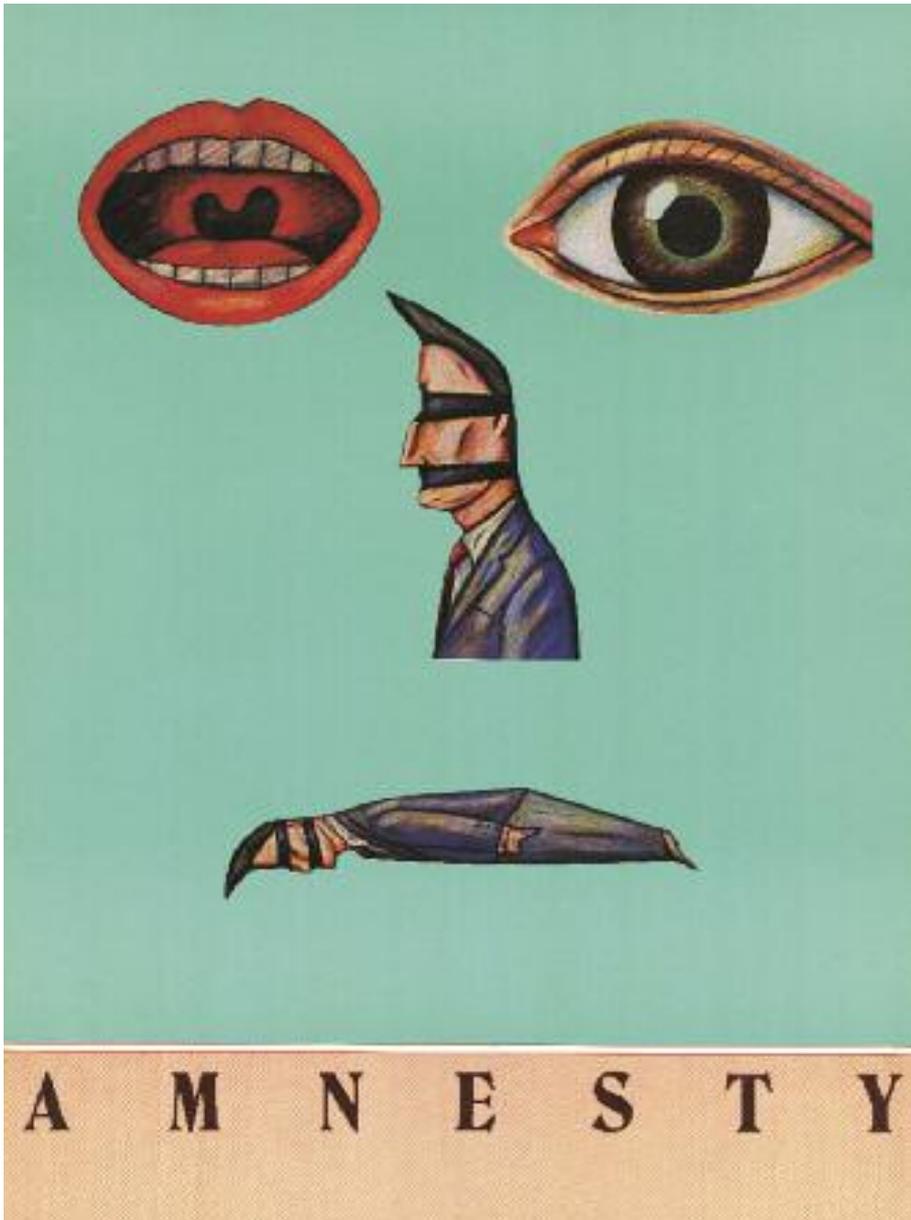
The four posters selected for this catalogue are: 1) a lithograph by Alexander Calder, US sculptor and artist, showing two figures on horseback escaping from a whip-wielding tyrant; 2) a lithograph by Pablo Picasso, who donated the design for use by Amnesty International; 3) a drawing by a Japanese artist showing a man gagged, blindfolded and powerless; and 4) a poster drawing attention to human rights violations in Haiti and including a poem by Haitian artist Rene Depestre.

Part of the project for Prisoner of Conscience Year was a series of art posters created by 15 world-renowned artists: Arman, Max Bill, Fernando Botero, Alexander Calder, Roman Cieslewicz, Jan Dibbets, Piero Dorazio, David Hockney, Alexander Liberman, Joan Miró, Michelangelo Pistoletto, Francisco Toledo, Roland Topor, Tadanori Yokoo and Jack Youngerman. Each donated to Amnesty International their original artist's studies, the signed limited editions and the right to reproduce the work as posters.

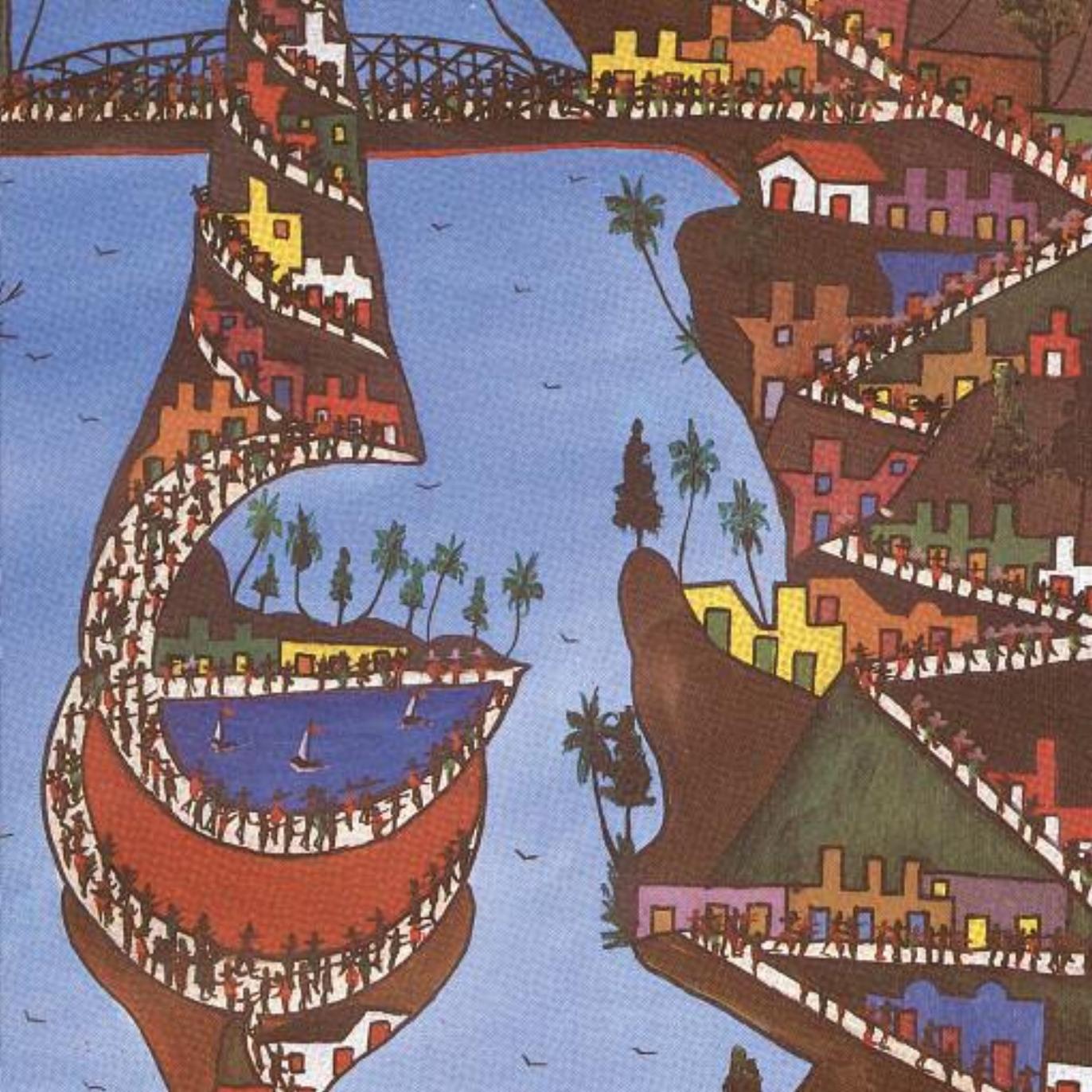
1980

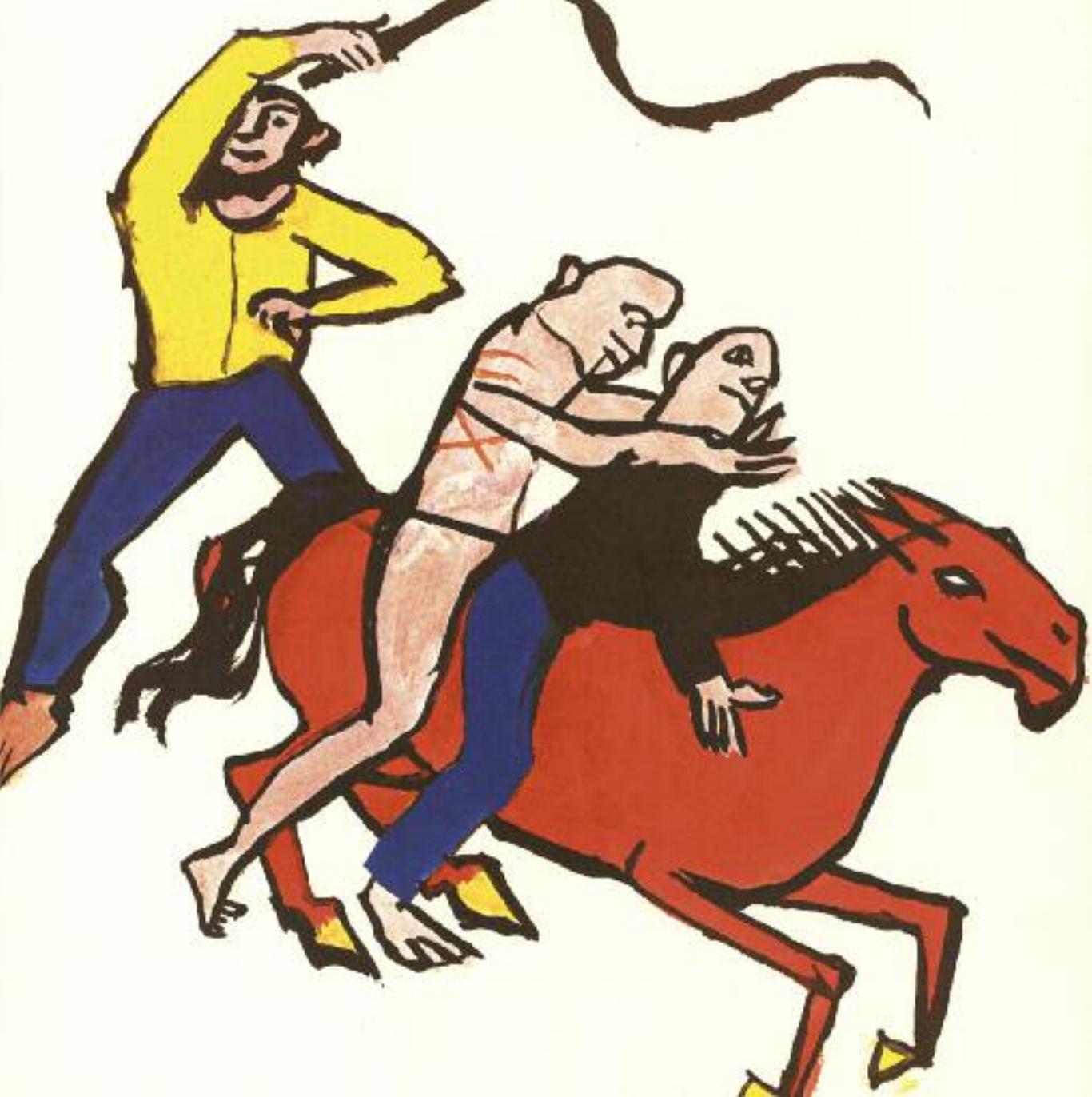
Poster created by Amnesty International Japan for the campaign Freedom in the 80s.

Drawing by Yosuke Kawamura, Japanese artist.









# AMNESTY

AMNESTY  
INTERNATIONAL



## 2000

General poster created by Amnesty International USA in 2000 with a lithograph by Pablo Picasso (1881–1973). A keen supporter of human rights, Pablo Picasso donated this design for use by Amnesty International.

Design: Woody Pirtle's team, Pentagonam New York

## 1977

*Opposite page:* This poster (detail) by Amnesty International USA for Prisoner of Conscience Year (1977) shows two figures on horseback escaping from a whip-wielding tyrant.

Lithograph by Alexander Calder (1898–1976), American sculptor and artist.

## HOW AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL HAS CHANGED ITS FOCUS OVER THE YEARS

Amnesty International's early years focused on prisoners of conscience – those imprisoned solely for the non-violent expression of their conscientiously held beliefs. Included here is a poster marking Prisoner of Conscience Year (1977), showing a lithograph by Roman Cieslewicz, Polish graphic artist and photographer.

Numerous posters in the exhibition highlight Amnesty International's work against torture. The one included here was created for the 1986 campaign Stop Torture in Afghanistan and was produced to coincide with the publication of the report: *Afghanistan: torture of political prisoners.*

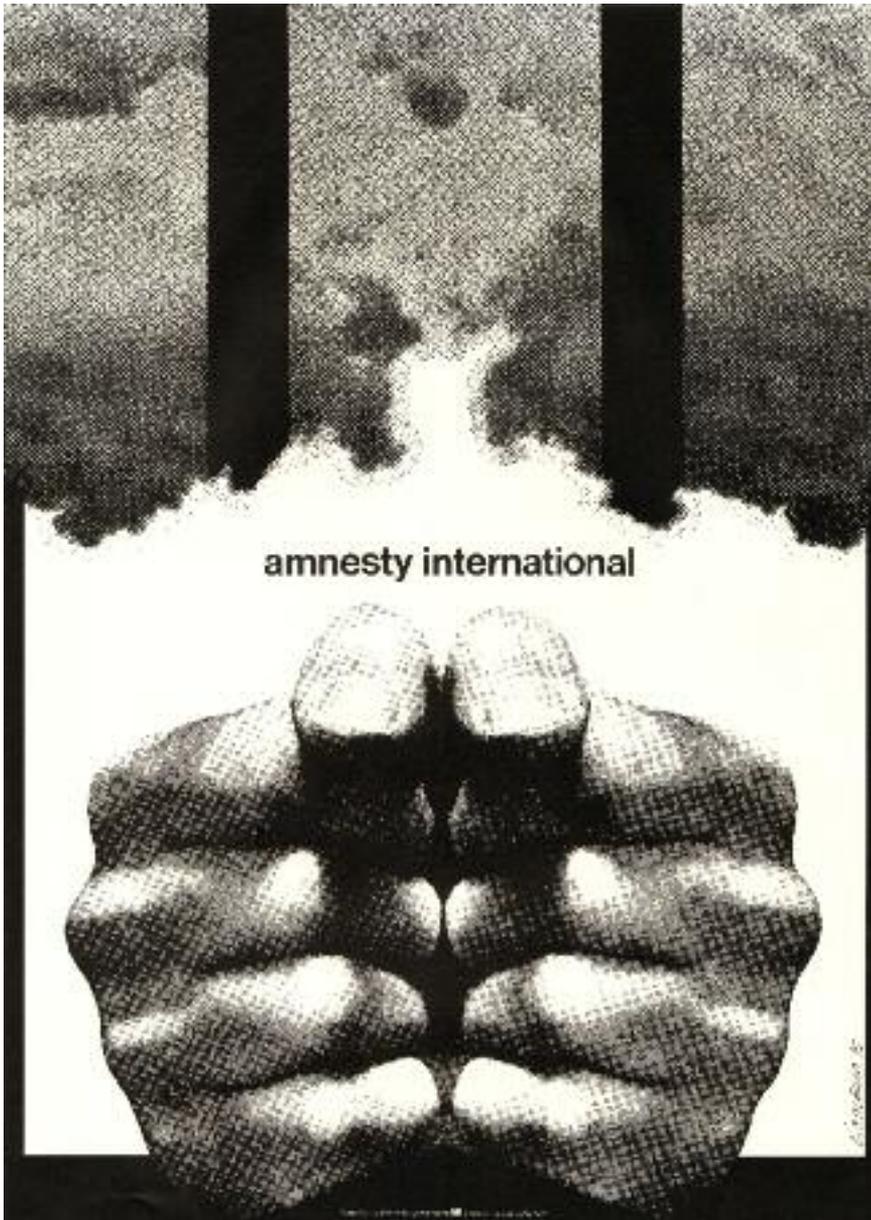
Soon after its foundation in 1961, Amnesty International began appealing to prevent the execution of prisoners of conscience. Over the years, its opposition to the death penalty has broadened to include all prisoners, regardless of the crimes of which they were convicted. The poster included here for the campaign in 1989 shows six former world leaders whose governments used the death penalty.

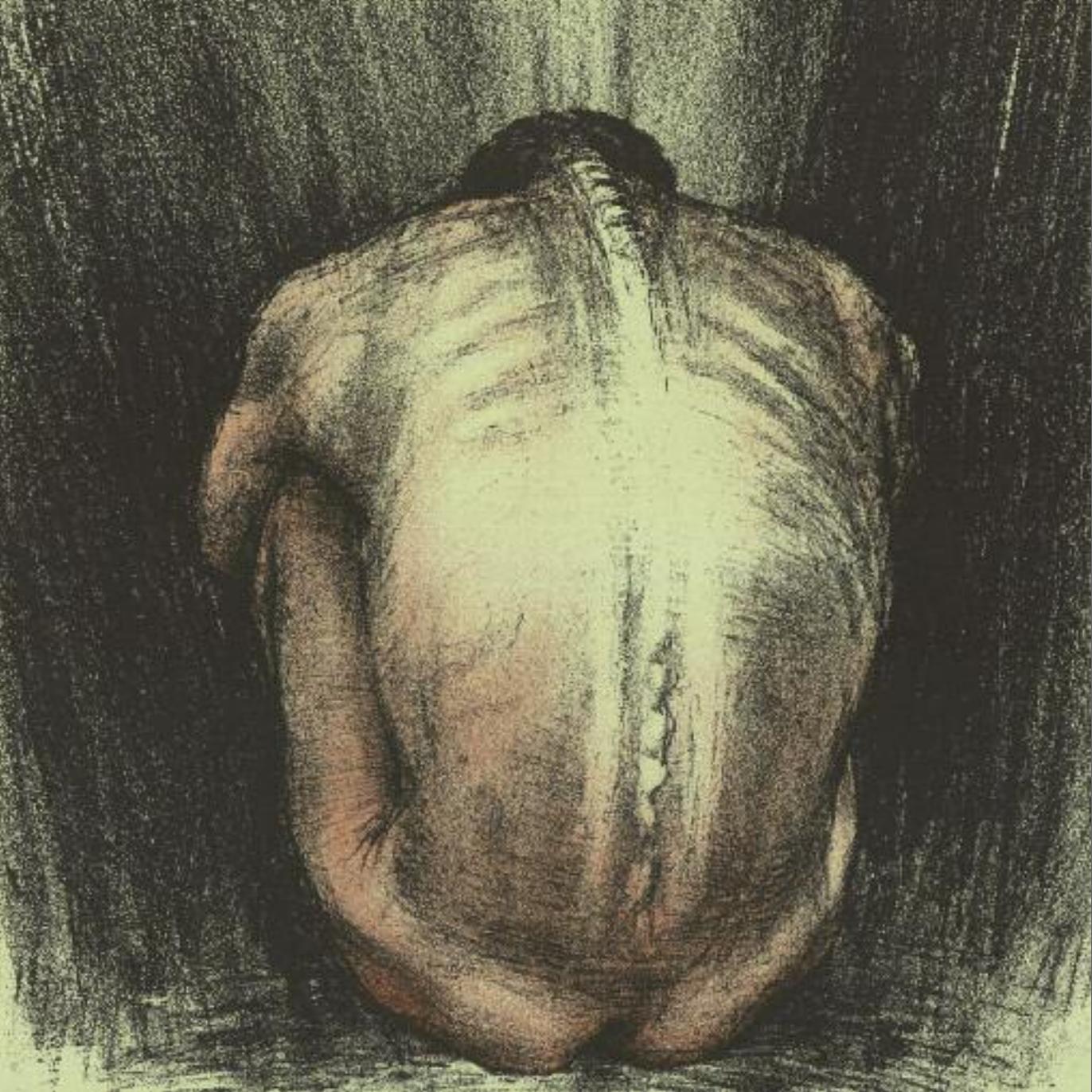
The final poster in this section was produced for the Demand Dignity campaign in 2010 and shows a young Afghan refugee living in Pakistan who has never seen her homeland. Amnesty International's campaign, which began in 2009, aims to end the human rights violations that drive and deepen global poverty. It is mobilizing people all over the world to demand that governments, corporations and others who have power listen to the voices of those living in poverty, and recognize and protect their rights.

1977

Poster by Amnesty International  
USA for Prisoner of Conscience Year  
(1977).

Lithograph by Roman Cieślewicz  
(1930-1996), Polish (naturalized  
French) graphic artist and  
photographer.







# ALL THOSE IN FAVOR OF THE DEATH PENALTY, RAISE YOUR HAND.

As we see it, the United States is in with some pretty unseemly company. But it's time we took a firm stand against the death penalty. To find out what you can do for us, **AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL U.S. 1-800-358-AMNESTY**

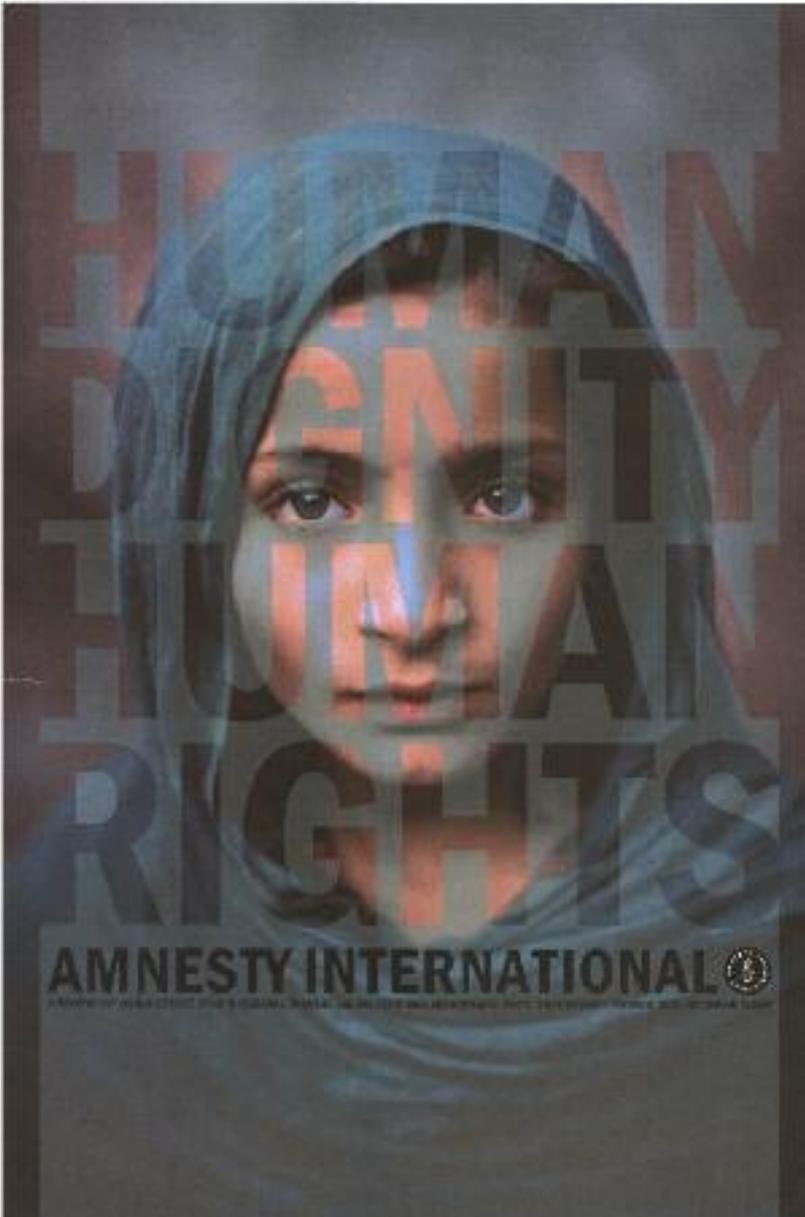
## 1986

*Left:* Poster created by Amnesty International Norway for the 1986 campaign Stop Torture in Afghanistan.

Lithograph by Øyvind Rauset.

## 1989

Poster by Amnesty International USA for the 1989 Campaign against the Death Penalty depicting a number of former world leaders whose governments used the death penalty: Chairman Mao (China), Adolf Hitler (Germany), Saddam Hussein (Iraq), Joseph Stalin (Russia), Ayatollah Khomeini (Iran), and US President, George Bush Sr.



2010

Poster by Amnesty International USA for the 2010 Demand Dignity campaign.

Photograph by US photojournalist Steve McCurry.

Design: Woody Pirtle's team, Pentagram New York.

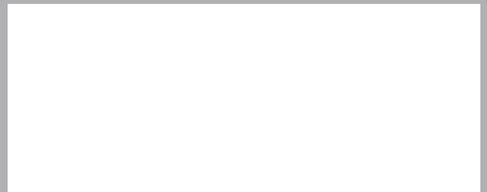
WHETHER IN A HIGH-PROFILE CONFLICT  
OR A FORGOTTEN CORNER OF THE  
GLOBE, **AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL**  
CAMPAIGNS FOR JUSTICE, FREEDOM AND  
DIGNITY FOR ALL AND SEEKS TO  
GALVANIZE PUBLIC SUPPORT TO BUILD  
A BETTER WORLD

**WHAT CAN YOU DO?**

Activists around the world have shown that it is possible to resist the dangerous forces that are undermining human rights. Be part of this movement. Combat those who peddle fear and hate.

Join Amnesty International and become part of a worldwide movement campaigning for an end to human rights violations. Help us make a difference.

**Together we can make our voices heard.**



“  
WITHOUT THESE  
POSTERS THE  
VOICE OF FREEDOM  
COULD EASILY BE  
DROWNED OUT”

Steven Heller,  
Co-chair of the Master of Fine Arts in Design  
Program at the School of Visual Arts, New York

*Cover poster image:* Poster created by Amnesty International Japan for the campaign Freedom in the 80s.  
Drawing by Teruhiko Yumura, Japanese artist.  
Published by Amnesty International Japan

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