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Left: Bob Geldof, U2's Bono, Bryan Adams and Sting (from left) join in the finale at the Los Angeles Forum stop of the Amnesty tour. Clockwise from bottom right: Eurythmics' Dave Stewart and Bob Geldof pair up to perform a version of Bob Marley's "Get Up, Stand Up" in L.A.; Sting gets intense during his set at the tour's opening night at San Francisco's Cow Palace; Bono during U2's explosive set in San Francisco.



Amnesty's rock & roll roadshow

All-star lineup gives America the message **BY MICHAEL GOLDBERG**

BEFORE IT GOT UNDER WAY, THE MAIN question about Amnesty International's Conspiracy of Hope benefit tour was one that's become increasingly common these days: Would the music be equal, or even relevant, to the cause? At the end of the tour's opening show at San Francisco's Cow Palace, the answer was a rousing, defiant yes.

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Two nights later at the Los Angeles

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U2 hit the stage with an inspired version of Eddie Cochran's "C'mon Everybody," turning the rock standard into both an invitation and a challenge to the audience. The crowd responded with equal urgency, and promoter Bill Graham had to personally send dozens of kids who rushed the stage back to their seats. In the midst of a rousing "Pride (In the Name of Love)," Bono — looking a bit like Jim Morrison with his long, shaggy hair and Wild Bill Hickok cowboy jacket — quieted the band: "Sing it for every prisoner in every jail," he told the audience. "Every



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Two nights later at the Los Angeles Forum, that same passion was in evidence as the show's lineup was expanded to include sets by Bob Dylan with Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers, and Live Aid organizer Bob Geldof with Eurythmics' Dave Stewart (doing Bob Marley's "Get Up, Stand Up"), as well as cameo finale appearances by Bonnie Raitt, Don Henley, Joni Mitchell and Lone Justice's Maria McKee.

No time was wasted establishing the tone of the tour: at just ten minutes past seven on the first night in San Francisco, a huge, crystal-clear video screen played the Special AKA's antiapartheid anthem "(Free) Nelson Mandela" for the 13,000-plus crowd on hand. The concert itself consisted of seven sets varying in length from twenty to forty minutes.

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But it was Sting and U2 who turned a great concert into a freedom party, bringing the crowd to their feet with two sets of stunning, emotion-packed music. At the end of a set that included "If You Love Somebody Set Them Free," "When the World is Running Down, You Make the Best of What's Still Around" and "Russians," Sting performed a haunting solo version of "Message in a Bottle," bringing to mind his inspired 1981 performance at Amnesty International's Secret Policeman's Other Ball.

U2's explosive set in San Francisco.



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"Sunday Bloody Sunday," "New Year's Day" and "Bad" were offered up in typically explosive U2 style, but it was a rugged version of Bob Dylan's "Maggie's Farm," played into a medley of the Beatles' "Help" and John Lennon's "Cold Turkey" that gave the band's performance a special poignance. U2 wrapped things up with a blistering "Sun City" (with Lou Reed jumping in to rap a verse) before the all-star chorus joined them onstage for the moving finale.

"I think it worked," shouted a deservedly happy Bono shortly after midnight. "It's a good thing we came here." ■



Top: A very nattily dressed Sting fields a question during an L.A. news conference to discuss plans for Amnesty's Conspiracy of Hope benefit tour. With him are Joan Baez and prominent West Coast concert promoter Bill Graham. Above: An all-star pack of Amnesty's tour mates gathers backstage for an MTV interview held at the Cow Palace concert — U2's lead guitarist the Edge, Joan Baez, Jackson Browne, Bryan Adams, Lou Reed and Peter Gabriel (from left).