



TO THE READER

In Shangaan, one of our national languages, RIXAKA means nation.

We launch RIXAKA, the Cultural Journal of the African National Congress, with the express view of establishing a platform which will allow the full expression of the cultural voice of our movement for national liberation.

We believe that this challenge falls most directly on all South African cultural workers, in graphics, writing, theatre, music, dance, crafts (modern and traditional). We appeal to all creative workers to send us their contributions for publication in RIXAKA! We know that in the Americas, Caribbean, Southeast Asia, Europe, the Middle East, Africa, Australia, great works of art have been distilled from the collective political experience of the struggles of the people. We intend to publish these writings, thereby strengthening links with our progressive compatriots all over the world. In this issue we carry poems from Cuba and the United States.

We will on a regular basis in RIXAKA feature progressive writings, photographs and graphics from democratic, anti-imperialist artists worldwide.

The task of articulating the aspirations and experience, of laying the foundations of our democratic future, presupposes a certain audacity on the part of the editorial collective. But we

realise that it also entails a delicate responsibility; particularly, it is an imperative in terms of accuracy of interpreting and depicting human experience. We therefore view our Letters to the Editor columns as of inestimable importance. We hope it will serve to ensure that our choices do not become mere pontification. We hope that readers will subject us to as meticulous a scrutiny as possible, so that the column can become an indicator to our future RIXAKA issues.

We vehemently hold the view that Culture in its broadest sense embraces all aspects of the experience of all levels of all people in a geographical region. It is not restricted to the so-called artistic effort only. We can and must give exposure to all our people, for their lives are the buds that will bloom into the flowering of our nation. The interview of our President in this premiere issues of RIXAKA signals what we intend to be a regular feature that will attempt to cover as broad a spectrum as possible of South African people and thought.

From these nudgings of the best in the performing arts, in criticism of tradition and custom, we are confident that "The doors of learning and culture shall be opened".

—Barbara Masekela—