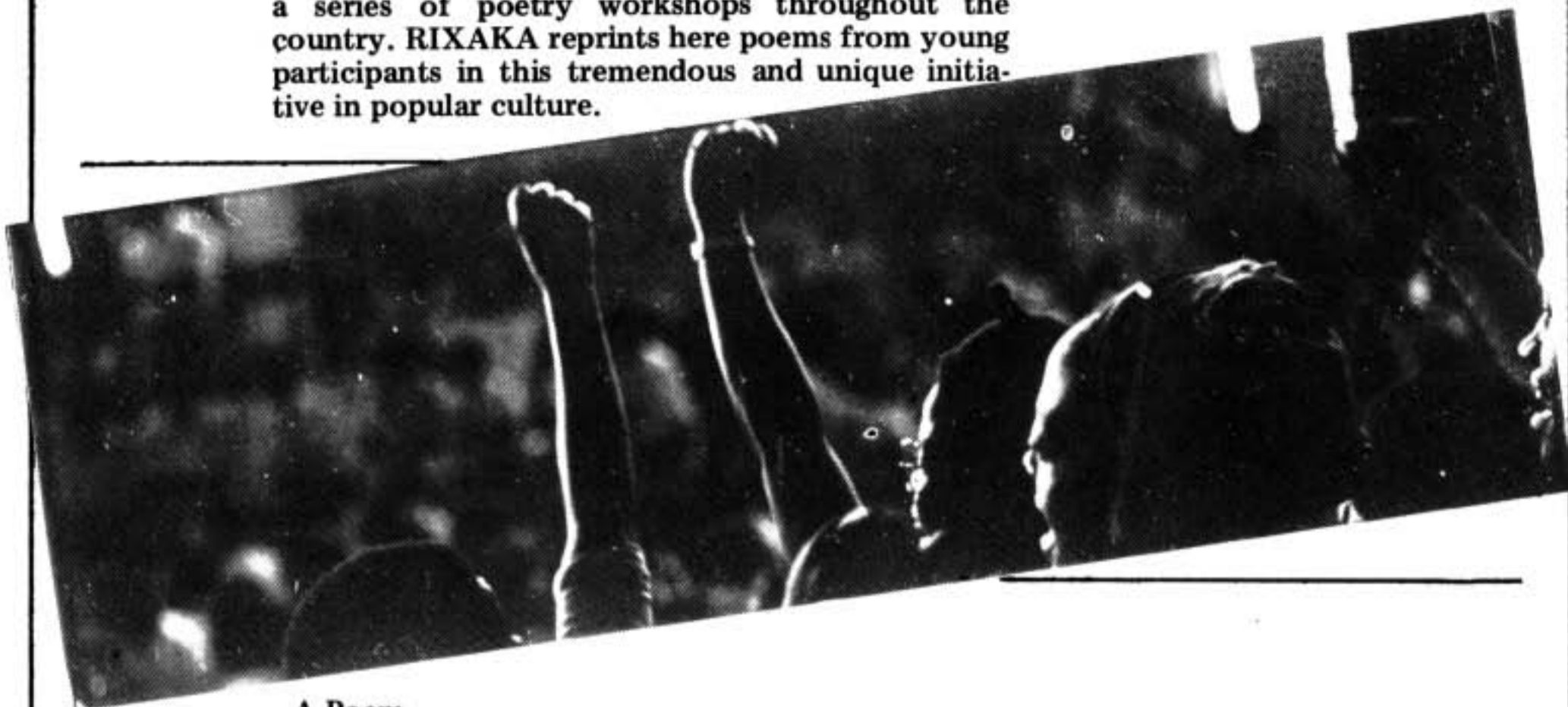


# NICARAGUA LIBRE!

Immediately after the triumph of the popular insurrection against the Somoza dictatorship in Nicaragua on 19 July, 1979, the Ministry of Culture under the poet Ernesto Cardenal established a series of poetry workshops throughout the country. RIXAKA reprints here poems from young participants in this tremendous and unique initiative in popular culture.



## A Poem

I like to write about life in the Revolution,  
about love,  
about the death of literacy workers and those in charge of the  
militias,  
about the peasants organised  
in the National Union of Farmworkers and Cattlemen,  
about the dawn in the mountains with birds and butterflies  
about the sun over the sentry post where the sentry  
guards the Sandinista Air Force base,  
about Mombacho in the Lake,  
about my grandfather sowing the land  
or when I go to the runway and see the T-33 arriving,  
when I watch the happiness of the children in Berta Diaz *barrio*  
playing at guerrillas  
arguing over who will be Sandino, Carlos Fonseca or Rigoberto  
Lopez Perez,  
about the linesman on guard in his dug-out  
by the bank of the river Coco on the frontier,  
about the Security Company changing guard  
and when the soldiers march with gleaming rifles  
under the full moon  
or when listening to the speeches of Tomas Borge  
in July 19th Square  
remembering the heroes and announcing  
that the land belongs to the peasant who works it  
as though they were poems.

— Ana Sofia Martinez —

**It doesn't matter**

(For my companions maimed in the war)

**It doesn't matter**

that Mario Peralta's fingers were twisted into a claw  
by a bullet fired at him by the Guardia Nacional.

**Mario**

who was left disabled after the fighting  
is now in a wheelchair.

It doesn't matter that my left leg is withered  
from a fracture in the spine.

We made the Revolution  
and so we are going to defend it.

— Alberto Garcia —



**You told me how they killed your brother**

You told me how they killed Antonio  
your brother

and your eyes filled with tears.

— It was the Guardia who are in Honduras — you said —  
they caught hold of him  
beat him until they grew bored  
and one of them said it was better to dig spurs into him  
as though he were an animal.

When your mother arrived to claim him  
from a hospital in Tegucigalpa  
she gazed at his mangled body  
and a sign on his chest which said "Sandino-communist".

— Rosario Garcia —