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Obituary

Remberto Arias Bernal, Bolivian Trotskyist

- News from around the world -

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A leader of the Revolutionary Workers' Party (POR-Combate), Bolivian section of the Fourth International, Remberto Arias Bernal, known as "Toto" and "Andrès", joined the Fourth International in 1972, while he was in exile in the Chilean port of Arica. After General Pinochet's coup, he fought in the resistance in Santiago, in the neighbourhoods of Macul, Nueva La Habana and La Hermida, alongside Bolivian and Chilean activists, before taking refuge in the Casa de Pedro Hurtado, then went into exile in Switzerland.

In Switzerland, he lived in Neuchâtel and Basel, where he found work in the watch industry, and was active in the Swiss section of the Fourth International. In early 1977, after a hunger strike by five miners' wives had forced the dictator Hugo Banzer to announce elections, Remberto returned clandestinely to Bolivia to join the resistance. He performed tasks inside the COB trade union federation and in the popular sectors in Achacachi, the popular neighbourhoods of La Paz and the Huanuni and Siglo XX mines.

During the GarcÃ-a Meza coup in July 1980, Remberto led the rÃsistance in the regions of Ville Victoria and Munaypata. He was active underground until the defeat of this dictatorship. From 1983 onwards Remberto was a member of the central committee of POR-Combate and led struggles in the popular neighbourhoods while being a member of the COB departmental leaderships, a delegate to the COB congress, president of the neighbourhood association in San Sebastian and finally vice-president of one of the branches of the FEJUVE, the federation of neighbourhood associations in La Paz.

He represented the Bolivian section at the World Congress of the Fourth International in 2001 and 2010 and was a member of the International Committee. Respected by all for his devotion to the proletarian cause, Remberto Arias Bernal died suddenly on September 18, 2011.