

**17Jul89 CUBA: RENOWNED CUBAN POET NICOLAS GUILLEN DEAD AT 87.**

**By Lionel Martin**

HAVANA, July 16, Reuter - Nicolas Guillen, the national poet of Cuba and one of the finest poets of the Spanish language, died here on Sunday at the age of 87 after a long illness, the Cuban news agency AIN reported.

Guillen, whose poetry spoke of the blacks and poor workers of the Caribbean and of "yankee imperialism", was a member of the Central Committee of the Cuban Communist Party.

His work as Cuba's national poet reflected his deep commitment to Fidel Castro's revolution.

"It is necessary to have a clear-cut attitude. My poetry is a dynamic process...It constantly supports and encourages the struggles of peoples against inequality and imperialism," he once said.

A lifelong communist, Guillen read his poetry to the troops of the loyalist army during the Spanish Civil War and was arrested in Cuba

during the regime of Dictator Fulgencio Batista.

Guillen was born on July 9, 1902, into a lower middle-class family in the Camaguey in central Cuba. A mulatto, he had a deep sensibility for the plight and culture of Caribbean blacks.

He abandoned his law studies at Havana University to concentrate on writing poetry.

Guillen was a prolific writer. On his 70th birthday, when asked which of his poems he personally preferred, he replied, "Those I still haven't written."

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