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FROM: EMBASSY HABANA  
DATED: June 12, 1945  
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RESTRICTED

DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC SECURITY CONTROL  
JUN 25 1945  
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DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Secretary of State,  
Washington, D.C.

A-1190, June 12, 1945.

This morning's press reports that yesterday Minister of Justice Carlos E. de la Cruz submitted his resignation to President Grau as a "matter of delicacy". Background as follows:

Several months ago Grau visited Isle of Pines. Seeing a group of prisoners repairing hurricane damage on a finca on which "Apostle" Marti had once been detained, he ordered a commutation for them out of the bigness of his heart. The June 4 issue of the Official Gazette carried the commutation decree affecting one José R. Cardenas, a rapist. This same decree, apparently in accordance with law, carried the original text of the charges on which the rapist had been convicted. The text left nothing to the imagination. A few days ago the opposition organ, Acción, dug this matter up and gave it wide, sensational publicity, charging the administration with laxness and unfairness in pardoning the criminal and with extreme bad taste in incorporating the text of the charges in the decree published in the Official Gazette. The Minister of Justice has now accepted the blame and has submitted his resignation, which it is not expected will be accepted. Just what is behind this somewhat ludicrous affair is not yet apparent. If nothing more, it is another example of the occasional almost incredible clumsiness of the administration in handling relatively simple matters.

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