

FOREIGN SERVICE OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Security: UNCLASSIFIED

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To: Department of State

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From: HABANA 882 April 18, 1950

Ref:

Subject: TRAGIC AIRPLANE ACCIDENT IN CUBA; TWO CONGRESSMEN
AMONG VICTIMS

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National Congressmen, Dr. Carlos ALVAREZ Recio and Enrique COLLOT Perez, representatives of the PRC (A) Party from the Province of Camagüey, were two of the eight victims of a tragic airplane crash which occurred near the town of Moron, Cuba, at 1:30 A.M., April 16. In addition to the pilot and co-pilot, the other victims were Mario FERNANDEZ Martinez, candidate for mayor of Santa Cruz del Sur on the PRC and Partido Democratico tickets, Rufo HERNANDEZ Lopez, journalist and Autentico leader in Santa Cruz del Sur, Felipe MARDONES Vivanco, and Pablo Heriberto ANGARICA, friends of the two Congressmen.

The plane belonged to the Compañía Aerovias del Sur de Cuba, S. A., and was flying the group from a ceremony in Moron at which President Prio and his wife were honored by the municipal council as adopted son and daughter of the City. The plane was completely destroyed and almost all of the victims burned beyond recognition. According to a newspaper account, the plane had encountered considerable motor trouble on the way from Camagüey to Moron, and an official of the airplane company had advised the group against making the return trip until the plane was completely repaired. One member of the party, Dr. Homero QUEVEDO (who reportedly originally contracted the plane) refused to take off from Moron, and was thus saved.

The press has announced that José A. CARBALLO, former Minister of Interior and labor leader, will replace Dr. Alvarez in the House of Representatives. Collot will be replaced by Manuel RAMIREZ Sibello, at present mayor of Moron. Carballo's term will run until September of the present year. Ramirez' will extend until the third Monday of September 1952.

Comment:

As a result of this crash, understood to be the worst in Cuban history, many PRC political events have been cancelled.

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A state of mourning has been decreed in the Province of Camagüey and President Prío personally flew to Camagüey to attend the funeral of the victims.

For the Chargé d'Affaires ad interim:

Henry A. Hoyt

Henry A. Hoyt,
Second Secretary of Embassy.