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Secretary of State

Washington.

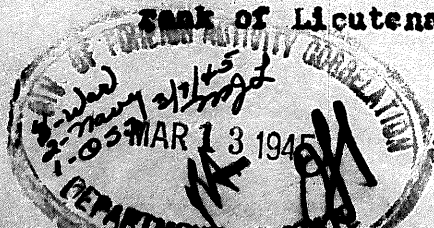
A-437, March 2, 11:30 a.m.

Reference Embassy's telegram no. 139, February 28,

1 p.m.

President GRAU has appointed his Chief Aide de Camp, Colonel Genovevo PEREZ Damara, as Chief of Staff of the Cuban Army to succeed General LOPEZ MIGOYA. The latter issued a statement after his conference with Grau yesterday that he was retiring for reasons of health and because he could not agree to President's plan for rotating high officers in Chief of Staff position. He reaffirmed his loyalty to the Government and stated he planned to remain in Cuba. Perez took over command of Army at 10 o'clock this morning, with the rank of Major General.

New Chief of Staff is 35 years old and a native of Matanzas, where he completed a high school and business school education. While a veterinary student at University of Habana in 1928 he joined Army as buck private and rose to rank of Lieutenant in 1933 after non-violent revolution led



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FROM HABANA

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by BATISTA. He became associated with Grau as an aide de camp during latter's provisional Presidency in 1934 but returned to regular army work, as professor in Officers School, shortly after Grau's deposition.

Perez earned his promotions to Captain and Major by competitive examinations, but received Lieutenant Colonelcy and full Colonelcy within three short months after Grau's inauguration on October 10 last, at which time he was named Chief Aide de Camp and Chief of the Palace Guard. Although of undistinguished background and not popular in Army circles, he has written several official artillery textbooks for Army and is held by a reliable observer, ex-President Carlos HEVIA, to have considerable military ability. His present appointment, however, is due to his political and personal loyalty to Grau and it may be anticipated that he will use his own talents for intrigue to counter any anti-Grau intrigues within the Army.

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