

# INCOMING AIRGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS TELEGRAPH BRANCH

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CONFIDENTIAL

FROM: American Embassy,  
Habana, Cuba

Date of Mailing: 2/7/49

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ACTION: ARA  
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Secretary of State,  
Washington.

A-194, February 7, 1949

## Cabinet Changes: Grau Alsina Out

On February 5 Prime Minister Varona announced that Sr. Virgilio PÉREZ López, Minister of Communications, had been appointed Minister of Agriculture to succeed Ing. Francisco GRAU Alsina, resigned, and that the Undersecretary of Communications, Dr. Carlos MARISTANY Sánchez, had been appointed Minister of Communications.

The removal from the Cabinet of Grau Alsina, ex-President Grau's nephew, has been expected for some time in view of the deepening rift between the ex-President and President Prío. Young Grau's presence in the Cabinet has been an almost constant source of irritation to the other Ministers who, siding with the President, have felt quite correctly that they have had one of Grau's spies in their very midst. As pointed out in the Embassy's A-184 of February 4, the Prime Minister on February 3 had twice asked young Grau to resign and in both instances had been told by the Minister that the matter would have to be taken up with his uncle. Despite the Prime Minister's statement that Grau Alsina had submitted his resignation, it is widely rumored that he did not do so and that the President broke the impasse by having the Prime Minister announce Pérez' appointment. Under these circumstances, young Grau's removal from the Cabinet marks a high point in the current feud between ex-President Grau and Prío. (See Embassy's despatch No. 86, February 4, 1949.)

Virgilio Pérez, the new Minister of Communications, was one of the founders of the Auténtico Party; he served as Director General of the Coffee Stabilization Institute from 1944 to 1946 when he was elected to the House of Representatives. It is understood he has long coveted the position to which he has just been appointed. (For further information see Confidential Biographic Data report, November 10, 1948.)

Carlos

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PERMANENT RECORDS COPY.—This copy must be returned to DC/R central files with notation of action taken.

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A-194, February 4, 1949  
Embassy at Habana, Cuba

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Carlos Maristany Sánchez served as Undersecretary of Communications during both of Grau's administrations (1933-1934 and 1944-1947). He has represented Cuba at a number of radio conferences. He has been described as ambitious, difficult, not too friendly toward the United States and extremely nationalistic. (For additional information see Confidential Biographic Data report, November 12, 1948.)

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