

AIRGRAM

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FROM: American Embassy,
Habana, Cuba

Date of Mailing: March 16, 1949

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CONFIDENTIAL

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Secretary of State,
Washington.

A-349, March 16, 1949

Nodal Resigns as Minister of Defense

It was announced yesterday afternoon that President Prío accepted the resignation as Minister of Defense of Sr. Roman NODAL Jiménez, Republican Representative from Matanzas who had served in Prío's Cabinet since the inauguration on October 10, 1948. Nodal revealed to the press the text of his letter of resignation dated March 9 in which he pointed out that his action had been caused by the reiterated requests of the President of the Republican Party, Dr. Guillermo ALONSO Pujol (Vice President of Cuba) and that inasmuch as his remaining in the Cabinet would imply a crisis in the Alliance between the Auténtico and Republican Parties, he was submitting his irrevocable resignation. It was announced that the Prime Minister, Dr. Antonio A. de VARELA, would act as Minister of Defense for the time being and would take charge today.

It now appears, contrary to the impression prevailing until very recently, that Nodal has been sacrificed as a result of Alonso Pujol's pressure on the President. It will be interesting to observe whether the vacancy in the Cabinet, now temporarily filled by the Prime Minister, will go to one of Alonso Pujol's trusted henchmen. It has been rumored for some time that Pujol wanted Nodal's position for Senator José A. CASABUENA, in whom the Vice President apparently has full confidence.

Although Nodal has withdrawn from the Cabinet, he has made known his intention to remain in the Republican Party and to seek reelection as Representative from Matanzas in 1950. As indicated in the Embassy's A-332 of March 12, 1949, it was apparently this prospective vacancy in Matanzas which Alonso Pujol coveted for his own son - and which Nodal was unwilling to relinquish - that was the

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...of Rosales falling out with the Vice President.
Al Rosales who apparently has the very strong backing of
...in Matanzas, is reelected in 1950 despite
the nominations of the Chief of his Party, this would
be a slap at Alonso Fajol and a very definite victory
for the Minister who lost his position yesterday.

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