

INCOMING AIRGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS TELEGRAPH BRANCH

AIRGRAM

5596

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Habana, Cuba.

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Secretary of State,
Washington.

A-702, May 26, 1949

New Minister of Communications

Following the announcement yesterday that Autentico Minister of Communications Carlos MARISTANY would be replaced by a Republican (Embassy's A-696, May 25), it was learned last night that the new Minister would be Señor Arturo ILLAS Cuza, Republican Representative from Oriente and a faithful henchman of Vice President ALONSO Fajol. Señor Maristany, who has been recently criticized because of his repressive measures against certain radio stations (Embassy's A-687, May 19), will resume his former position as Under-Secretary of Communications.

Although only 32 years of age, Señor Illas has been prominent in politics for the past ten years. In 1940, when only twenty-three, he was elected Republican Representative from Oriente and became the youngest member of the House. In 1942, while still a Representative, he was appointed Collector of Customs in Santiago and in 1948 was reelected to the House. A founder of the Republican Party, Señor Illas was that party's first leader in the House. He is now deputy leader of the House Republican Parliamentary Committee. The new Minister has taken a keen interest in sports as an oarsman, marksman and fencer. He owns an extensive cattle ranch in Oriente.

Although it is to be expected that Illas will take orders from the Vice President, it will be interesting to observe whether he will over-shadow Maristany in the actual running of the Ministry of Communications.

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