

INCOMING AIRGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS TELEGRAPH BRANCH

AIRGRAM

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RESTRICTED

FROM: American Embassy,
Habana, Cuba.

Date of Mailing: Sept. 23, 1949

Rec'd. Sept. 25, 1949 12:07 p.m.

Secretary of State,
Washington.

A-1203, September 22, 1949.

In special edition of Gaceta Oficial GOVT on night 21 Sept issued decree removing 20 police officers and men for "complacency and indifference" in connection with continued gangster murders. GOVT also issued orders to police and the GRAS organization to arrest all members illegal associations (UIR, MSR and other gangs) accused of participation in recent killings. Numerous arrests in last 24 hours with others expected.

Action followed unsuccessful attack 15 Sept against Representative Rolando FASFERRER (MSR head) as he left Capitolio and murder 20 Sept of student leader Gustavo Adolfo MEJIA.

Comment:

A thorough purge of gangsters from the ranks of the police would have considerable effect in controlling gangster activity and improving police morale. However, basic unhealthy condition cannot be eradicated as long as certain known gunmen continue to receive the protection of powerful interests in the GOVT.

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

837.105/9-2249

SEP 30 1949

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NR 837.108

INCOMING AIRGRAM

DEPARTMENT OF STATE DIVISION OF COMMUNICATIONS AND RECORDS TELEGRAPH BRANCH

AIRGRAM

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CONFIDENTIAL

FROM: American Embassy,
Habana, Cuba.

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DEPARTMENT OF STATE
ACQUISITION AND DISTRIBUTION
DIVISION
DISTRIBUTION BRANCH

Date of Mailing: Sept. 23, 1949
Rec'd. Sept. 26, 1949 3:11 p.m.

SEP 27 1949

Secretary of State,
Washington.

A-1209, September 23, 1949.

GOVT today announced removal of Col. José Manuel CARMES as Acting Police Chief (and his leave of absence for six months as Inspector General of Police) and his replacement by Br. Gen. Quirino URÍA Lopez. In this connection reference is made to Embtel No. 323 of 23 Sept and Embgram A-1072 of 19 Aug reporting lowered prestige of Police Chief Col. José Manuel CARMES as result of continued gang murders and violence.

During past two days debate in House of Representatives devoted in large measure to heated criticism of police and Police Chief CARMES for failure to stop gang killings. Letter already subject to extensive press ridicule and congressional ire for having engaged in fisticuffs last week with radio announcer José PARDÓ Llada (who had insinuated in a broadcast that CARMES was now constructing a large building - presumably with grafted funds). Criticism reached point where opposition parties in House presented motion to request presence of Defense AID to explain why CARMES had not been removed. In letter of resignation to PRES PRIO CARMES cited above congressional action as reason for his resignation. (House reportedly agreed in secret session to demand CARMES' removal. PRES AID on learning this reportedly decided to beat house to the punch.)

Action Assigned OL/KS

Action Taken none

Date of Action —

Action Office Symbol OL/KS

Name of Officer MB

Directorate File

URÍA (recently promoted from Colonel on occasion of removal of Genovevo PEREZ as Army Chief of Staff - Emb. despatch 660, Aug 26, 1949) is considered an able honest officer and enjoys President's confidence. In press interview he said his tour as Police Chief would be characterized by deeds and not words.

837.105/9-2349

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A-1209, September 23, 1949,
Ambassy, Habana, Cuba.

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Twenty police officers whose removal announced yesterday (Embgram A-1203 Sent 22) were suspected of belonging to secret gangs involved in numerous killings. It is believed numerous other removals will be announced in GOVT effort to purge police of gangster elements and to reduce gang killings.

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