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NEW YORK, APRIL 3 (AP)--A PACKAGE THAT ARRIVED THROUGH THE MAIL EXPLODED TODAY

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IN THE HANDS OF AN OFFICIAL OF THE CASTRO CUBAN MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS, HE SUFFERED MINOR INJURIES TO THE FACE, ARMS AND CHEST.

POLICE SAID NICHOLAS RODRIGUEZ, 30, A COUNSELOR OF THE MISSION, WAS OPENING THE BOOK-SIZED PACKAGE WHEN IT BLEW UP AND APPARENTLY SPRAYED HIM WITH METAL PELLETS.

DETECTIVES WERE NOT ALLOWED TO ENTER THE CUBAN MISSION ON EAST 67TH STREET AND OFFICIALS THERE DECLINED ANY COMMENT.

RODRIGUEZ WAS TREATED BRIEFLY AT NEW YORK HOSPITAL AND RELEASED.

CHARGE D'AFFAIRES WILLIAM BUFFUM OF THE U.S. DELEGATION TO THE U.N., SAID IN A STATEMENT:

"WE DEEPLY REGRET THAT A MR. NICHOLAS RODRIGUEZ, COUNSELOR OF THE CUBAN MISSION TO THE U.N., WAS INJURED TODAY IN AN INCIDENT REPORTEDLY CAUSED BY THE EXPLOSION OF A PACKAGE RECEIVED THROUGH THE MAIL.

"NEW YORK CITY AUTHORITIES ARE INVESTIGATING THE INCIDENT AND MAKING EVERY EFFORT TO IDENTIFY THE SOURCE...THE CUBAN MISSION, LIKE EVERY OTHER MISSION TO THE U.N., IS ENTITLED TO FULL PROTECTION AND RESPECT STEMMING FROM ITS DIPLOMATIC STATUS AND U.S. LAWS. ANY VIOLATIONS FOUND WITHIN U.S. JURISDICTION WILL BE VIGOROUSLY PROSECUTED."

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