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RNR 015
PM-FIRE-CUBAN

1988

THREE DIE IN FIRE AT CUBAN CONSULATE IN MONTREAL

MONTREAL, MARCH 30, REUTER - THREE PEOPLE DIED IN A FIRE THAT HEAVILY DAMAGED THE CUBAN CONSULATE HERE ON TUESDAY NIGHT.

MONTREAL FIRE DIRECTOR RAYMOND THERRIEN SAID THE BODIES OF TWO MEN AND ONE WOMAN WERE FOUND IN DIFFERENT ROOMS OF THE TOP FLOOR OF THE FOUR-STORY BUILDING ON THE SLOPES OF MOUNT ROYAL.

THERRIEN SAID HE PRESUMED THE THREE, WHO WERE NOT IDENTIFIED, WERE ALL CONSULAR EMPLOYEES.

"THEY APPARENTLY DIED OF SMOKE INHALATION," HE TOLD REPORTERS.

HE ADDED THAT WHEN FIREMEN ARRIVED ON THE TOP FLOOR, WHERE THE FIRE WAS BELIEVED TO HAVE STARTED, THEY FOUND UNROLLED HOSES, A SIGN THAT THE PEOPLE INSIDE THE CONSULATE HAD BEEN TRYING TO FIGHT THE BLAZE.

THE FIRE BEGAN AT ABOUT 7:30 P.M. EST BUT CONSULTATE OFFICIALS REFUSED TO LET THE FIREMEN ENTER THE BUILDING FOR ABOUT 15 MINUTES UNTIL THEY HAD CHECKED WITH THEIR SUPERIORS.

REUTER 0154
