

Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy

Newsletter-Summer 1999

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ShawPitman

Maria C. Werlau
Orbis International

TO: ASCE Members

FROM: Sergio Díaz-Briquets

Since Lorenzo Pérez last communicated with you in February, his talent and many years of dedication were rewarded once again when the International Monetary Fund appointed him as its representative in Brazil. Lorenzo eagerly embraced the challenge and moved to Brasilia a month ago. Due to his new commitments and change of residence, Lorenzo felt he could not fulfill his obligations as ASCE President and tendered his resignation effective April 17, 1999. A copy of the text of Lorenzo's letter of resignation is attached below. ASCE's Board of Directors, in compliance with the organization's By-Laws, also reproduced below, appointed me ASCE's new President for the remainder of Lorenzo's term. I was honored by the confidence placed in me by my colleagues at the Board and hope to serve ASCE as ably as have my predecessors. The Board of Directors, in turn, appointed Jorge Pérez-López, one of the most loyal and dedicated ASCE members, to complete my term as Board member. I am pleased to announce that Jorge once again responded to ASCE's call of duty. On behalf of the Board of Directors and ASCE's membership, I commend Lorenzo for the first rate leadership he provided ASCE during his short tenure as President.

As ASCE's first non-economist President, I am delighted to lead an organization that has earned much respect from the policy and academic communities for its contributions to Cuba's eventual political and economic transition and that increasingly draws to its membership professionals from many academic disciplines. We all understand the value of a broad multi-disciplinary perspective to understand Cuba's reality today and prepare for its future.

The tentative program for our Ninth Annual Meeting, scheduled for August 12-14, at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables, is set forth in this newsletter. The program reflects the interdisciplinary

MEMORANDUM

richness of an organization whereas, lawyers, sociologists, political scientists, engineers, educators, natural scientists and representatives of other disciplines rub shoulders with economists. Please register early and make plans to join the rest of the membership in South Florida this August.

ASCE will update its membership directory this year. The directory is an excellent communication venue that must be kept current for it to be effective. We are asking that you update your profile as per the instructions in the form provided in the newsletter. You have a choice as to whether or not to make your personal contact information accessible to others, but we encourage you to do so to facilitate communications among the membership and promote the exchange of views and information.

It is also time to issue a call for papers for the session on Cuba ASCE sponsors every year in connection with the annual meeting of the American Economic Association under the auspices of the Allied Social Science Associations. The next meeting is scheduled during the new year in Boston, Massachusetts, from January 7-9, 2000. Please send paper proposals to Professor Luis Locay, the session's organizer, at the University of Miami no later than July 15, 1999.

Thanks to the efforts of José F. Alonso, Matias Travieso-Díaz, and Jorge Pérez-López, ASCE's web site located at the University of Texas Latin American Information Service, <http://www.lanic.utexas.edu/la/cb/cuba/asce/> is being updated and redesigned to include additional information. The current web site is reaching a wider audience than ever before, and on average receives 10,000 hits per month, including many from Cuba and countries in Europe. Aside from providing many of the papers presented at our annual meetings and membership application information, the revised web site will include a description of the goals and activities of the organization (a summary is reproduced below) skillfully written by María C. Werlau. María plans to put the overview to good use as Chair of ASCE's Fund Raising Committee and welcomes your suggestions regarding potential funding sources.

We are also including in this newsletter a reminder form for membership dues payments. Members are requested to renew in time for ASCE's new fiscal year, which begins July 1, 1999. In addition, all ASCE volumes are still available and can be acquired through our publications coordinator, José F. Alonso, whose contact information is set forth below.

Please feel free to contact the Board of Directors regarding any issue of relevance to the organization. Your continued and active involvement will be the best way to ensure ASCE's vitality.

ASSOCIATION FOR THE STUDY OF THE CUBAN ECONOMY

Mr. Steven Escobar
ASCE Secretary

April 17, 1999

Dear Steven:

As you and the other ASCE Directors know, I have been considering whether to accept the position of resident representative of the International Monetary Fund in Brazil and I felt that I could not continue to be ASCE's President if I were to move to Brazil for a period of about 2 years. In the April 5 meeting of ASCE's Board of Directors, I told the other Board members that I would let them know this week what would be my final decision regarding the position in Brazil.

My appointment as the Fund resident representative to Brazil has been endorsed by the Brazilian authorities and I have decided to accept the position. This is a very challenging appointment due to the importance of Brazil to the world economy, the large financial support that the international community is providing Brazil, and the interesting policy questions that I will be facing during my stay in that country. Unfortunately, I will need to take over the position before the end of the month and, in these circumstances, I feel that I should resign from the ASCE presidency effectively immediately. The decision to do this after only eight months of my election has not been easy. I am extremely proud of the work that ASCE has been doing over the years in promoting scholarly research and analysis of the Cuban economy, and I feel that the Association has filled an important void that existed in the area of Cuban studies. At the same time, I am sure that under the continued leadership of the current Board of Directors this important work will continue.

I am happy that, as envisaged by the By-Laws of the Association, the Board of Directors already elected another ASCE member as President during the Board's meeting last week to fill the vacancy that would be created if I were to resign. The election of Sergio Diaz-Briquets, who has been working hard as a member of the Board, as the new President to finish the remaining time of my presidential period is an excellent choice, as well as that of Jorge Perez-Lopez who also will be joining the Board of Directors to occupy the vacancy created in the Board by my departure.

Steven, I would like that this letter be included in the next mailing of ASCE to its members. I want all ASCE members to know how grateful I am for all the help that they provided me while I was discharging the duties of the ASCE presidency. Through this means I want to encourage all members to continue to participate actively in ASCE's activities. In my case, I will have to absent myself for some time from its day-to-day activities, but I plan to stay close to all of you and hope to become actively involved again in ASCE's activities upon my return from Brazil.

Sincerely yours,

Lorenzo L. Perez

BY-LAWS

The provisions of ASCE's By-Laws set forth below govern issues relating to the resignation of ASCE's Officers and Directors, and are the basis for the Board of Directors' selection of Sergio Diaz-Briquets to replace Lorenzo Perez as President upon Lorenzo's resignation, and Jorge Perez-Lopez to replace Sergio's position on the Board.

ARTICLE V: BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

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(h) **Resignations.** Resignations from the Board of Directors shall be considered and accepted by the Board of Directors. . . .

....

ARTICLE VII: THE OFFICERS.

....

(g) **Vacancies.** Any vacancy, however occurring, in any office may be filled by the Board of Directors. . . .

CURRENT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Board of Directors (1998-2000)

Sergio Díaz-Briquets, *Casals & Associates*, **President**,
Steven Escobar, *U.S. Department of Commerce*, **Secretary**
Enrique Pumar, *Catholic University*, **Treasurer**
José F. Alonso, *SD LLC*
Ernesto Betancourt, *Dev Tech. Systems*
Maida Donate-Armada, *Consultant*
Juan Carlos Espinosa, *University of Miami*
Antonio Gayoso, *World Council of Credit Unions*
Jorge F. Pérez-López *U.S. Department of Labor*
Michelle Pujol, *Citibank*
Matías Travieso-Díaz, *Shaw Pittman Potts & Trowbridge*
Maria C. Werlau, *Orbis International - Consultant*

TREASURY NOTES

ASCE recently obtained a Post Office Box to facilitate the orderly conduct of the Association's fiscal affairs. This P.O. Box will assist in the maintenance of the members data base and other matters related to membership dues, payments to the organization for events and services (such as book purchases), and other similar communications. The address for the Box is as follows: **Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE), P.O. Box 7372, Silver Spring, MD 20907-7379.** However, individual treasury inquiries (e.g., membership status, dues) should continue to be directed to our Treasurer, Enrique Pumar, who can be reached at his home address, 10144 Colebrook Avenue, Potomac, MD 20854, or through his e-mail, Pumar@erols.com. As ASCE grows, we intend to continue to improve our record keeping to support the administration of the organization. Thanks in this regard are due to Enrique Pumar and José F. Alonso, who together share the responsibility of conducting the fiscal affairs of the organization.

FUND RAISING SUMMARY

Below is a summary of ASCE's history and activities prepared by Maria Werlau in consultation with the Board. The summary is intended to be used for future ASCE fund raising efforts.

The Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE) is a non-profit, non-political organization incorporated in the state of Maryland in 1990. At the time of its founding, its salient goals were to study the elements and processes involved in the expected transition of Cuba to a free-market democracy as well as to promote scholarship, research, and publications on economic studies by Cuban-Americans. Over time and with the continued delay of Cuba's transition from the current socio-economic and political model, ASCE's membership has been enriched with an increasing number of individuals of different nationalities who uphold ASCE's objectives. It has continued to pursue the study of the Cuban economy in a broad sense, with particular emphasis on the financial, economic, social, legal and environmental aspects of Cuba's process of transition.

Affiliated with the American Economic Association and the Allied Social Sciences Association of the United States, ASCE maintains professional contacts with economists inside Cuba -- whether independent or associated with the Cuban government -- who are interested in engaging in scholarly discussion and research.

A Board of Directors, elected by the membership for a two-year period, meets regularly in Washington, D.C. Its officers, who reside in different cities of the United States, serve in a pro-bono, voluntary, capacity. Since ASCE's inception, Board positions have been occupied by individuals from academia, government service, law firms, multilateral organizations and business enterprises.

ASCE's activities have been historically financed through annual membership fees, the sale of publications and donations from universities and private corporations.

During its first eight years of existence, the Association's principal activity has been its Annual Meeting, held in Miami, Florida, each August. There, during a three-day period, scholars and professionals present papers and participate in roundtable discussions. Papers and their formal discussions, as well as roundtable summaries, are included in a book of papers and proceedings. Eight such volumes have been published, and they are widely used inside and outside of Cuba by universities, research centers, government entities and others. Selected papers from these volumes are also available on the Internet at a site hosted by the University of Texas at Austin, Latin American Information Service (UT-LANIC). ASCE's site receives approximately 10,000 hits per month.

Among the wide diversity of topics covered in past annual meetings and volumes are: current analyses of the socio-economic and political situation in Cuba; lessons from transition economies; stabilization proposals; legal aspects of transition, such as property rights and privatization; agricultural issues, with particular emphasis on the sugar sector; labor issues; foreign investment; tourism; governance; social security and social safety net; the environment; balance of payments and trade policy; external debt problems; foreign assistance requirements; and a wide spectrum of issues related to monetary, fiscal and financial systems.

ASCE sponsors sessions on Cuba at the annual meetings of the American Economic Association.

In addition, bi-annually, it hosts the Carlos Díaz-Alejandro lecture at a luncheon held during those meetings. This lecture was established in honor of the most distinguished Cuban-American economist of his generation, the late Carlos Diaz-Alejandro, professor at Yale and Columbia universities. The first Carlos Diaz-Alejandro lecture was delivered in December 1990 by Dr. Felipe Pazos. Named ASCE's ex-officio President at its founding, Dr. Pazos -- an internationally known economist influential in the study of inflation -- had been first President of Cuba's National Bank. Subsequently, distinguished economists and professors Guillermo Calvo, Ronald Findlay, Anne Krueger and Jagdish Bhagwati have delivered this address.

For a number of years, ASCE has sponsored a prize, consisting of a small stipend, for the best undergraduate or graduate paper on Cuban economic issues. Presently, it is also broadening efforts to improve the quality and scope of analysis of the economic problems facing the island. Among its upcoming projects, with the purpose of encouraging independent economic research inside Cuba, an annual contest is being launched for the best paper by a scholar residing on the island. A modest monetary prize will be awarded to the winner and the selected paper will be published by the Association in Spanish and English.

ASCE is presently seeking to broaden its contacts with economic associations outside the United States and to encourage economists and other professionals outside the United States to participate in its annual meetings.

CALL FOR PAPERS - ASSA/AEA ANNUAL MEETING

The Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE) will be organizing a panel at the Annual Meeting of the Allied Social Sciences Association/American Economic Association (ASSA/AEA) in Boston, MA, January 7-9, 2000.

For its panel at the ASSA/AEA Annual Meeting, ASCE invites papers on a variety of subjects related to the Cuban economy and society, including: macroeconomics, banking and finance, monetary and fiscal policies, foreign economic relations, agriculture and the sugar industry, social and political aspects of economic development, education, health, environmental policy, law and legal institutions, and international relations.

ASCE members in good standing wishing to organize the panel and serve as its chair, or wishing to present a paper, should communicate their interest in writing to the Chair of the ASSA/AEA Committee. Members wishing to present a paper must submit a brief abstract of their proposed papers by July 15, 1999 to Luis Locay, ASCE ASSA/AEA Committee Chair, 20550 S.W. 256 Street, Homestead, FL 33031.

ASCE members wishing to serve as discussants on the panel should also communicate their interest in writing to the Chair of the ASSA/AEA. Proposed papers and panels will be evaluated by the Chair of the ASSA/AEA Committee in coordination with the ASCE Board of Directors. Final decisions on acceptance of papers, panels and round table discussions will be made by the ASCE Board of Directors. Contributions must be prepared in English.

Authors whose papers have been selected for presentation at the ASSA/AEA Annual Meeting will be notified of a decision by around August 1, 1999. At that time they will be provided with specific guidelines for preparation of their papers.

ASCE PUBLICATIONS

If you are interested in purchasing ASCE publications, please contact Mr. José F. Alonso at 2000 Osborn Drive, Silver Spring, MD 20910, or via e-mail at jalonso@erols.com. Complete sets of all volumes of "Cuba in Transition" can be purchased by ASCE members at a special discount. Copies of volume 8 are now available for \$50.00 plus shipping and handling.

Ninth Annual Meeting--August 12-14, 1999
Tentative Program as of June 7, 1999--Subject to Change

Thursday, August 12	Friday, August 13	Saturday, August 14
9:00 -10:45 a.m. 1. Current Situation	8:30-10:15 a.m. 8. Agricultural Transition: Role of the Private Sector 9. Politics 10. Transition Issues I	9:00-10:45 a.m. 19. Tourism 20. Legal Issues
11:00 a.m.-12:45 p.m. 2. Monetary/ Fiscal Issues 3. Perspectives on Civil Society and Transition	10:30 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. 11. Macroeconomics 12. Public Opinion in Cuba: Survey Result 13. Relationship between Diaspora Cubans and Other Groups	11:00 a.m.- 12:15 p.m. 21. Sectoral Economic Issues 22. Transition Issues II
Lunch Break	ASCE Luncheon	End of Conference
2:15 - 4:00 p.m. 4. Impact of Post-Embargo Trade with Cuba 5. Intellectual Property and Information	2:45 - 4:15 p.m 14. Economic Reforms 15. Roundtable on Cuba's International Economic Relations 16. Topics	Optional: Guided Tour--"Cuba in Old Maps, 1528-1900," Historical Museum of Southern Florida
4: 15 - 6:00 p.m. 6. Roundtable on Foreign Investment 7. Women and the Transition	4:30 - 6:00 p.m. 17. Roundtable on Sugar and Agriculture 18. Military	
6:30 p.m. ASCE Reception	6:30 p.m. ASCE Business Meeting	

ASCE NINTH ANNUAL MEETING

Biltmore Hotel, Coral Gables, Florida

August 12-14, 1999

REGISTRATION FORM

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

	ASCE Member Non-Member	
Conference cost -- Pre-Registration (Postmarked by July 20, 1999)	\$ 45	\$ 75
Conference cost -- On-Site Registration	\$ 65	\$ 100
Luncheon (August 13, 1999)	\$ 35	\$ 35
Total	\$ _____	\$ _____

To obtain the Pre-Registration discount, please make payment to ASCE and return it **postmarked by July 20, 1999** with your completed registration form to:

ASCE
P.O. Box 7372
Silver Spring, MD. 20907-7373 USA

If you are planning to stay at the Biltmore Hotel, please consider the following:

The Biltmore has reserved a block of room at a special discount group rate for ASCE members for the ~~duration of our conference. The costs of the rooms are: Run of House \$115.00, Deluxe Kings \$139.00, Executive Suite \$199.00.~~

The hotel will hold these rooms until **July 11, 1999** **After this date, the hotel will release the unsold portion of the block of rooms for general sale.** To arrange your reservations with the hotel, please call (305) 445-1926, 1-800-727-1926 or fax (305) 913-3158.

Please contact Mr. Enrique S. Pumar with any questions about the conference registration by e-mail at pumar@erols.com or by phone at (301) 838-5955.

UPDATE OF ASCE DIRECTORY OF MEMBERS

We are in the process of updating the ASCE Directory of Members. Please fill out this Membership Information Form and return to ASCE **no later than July 20, 1999**. If you wish, you may return the completed Form in the same envelope with your registration for the Ninth Annual Meeting. Otherwise, please return the completed Form to **Steven Escobar, Secretary, ASCE, 11929 Oden Court, Rockville, Maryland 20852.**

A few important items to note:

1. If you are a member in good standing but do not submit a Membership Information Form by July 20, 1999, **your name will appear** in the ASCE Directory of Members, but no other information regarding you will be published in the Directory. If you do not wish your name to be published in the Directory, you must return a Membership Information Form by July 20, 1999 indicating as such.
2. The Board of Directors approved a policy last year to communicate with members via electronic mail, insofar as is practical. **Please remember to list your e-mail address** on the Membership Information Form. If you do not have an e-mail address, or do not provide one, ASCE will continue communicating with you via regular postal mail.
3. If you have any questions regarding filling out the Membership Information Form, please contact Steven Escobar, Secretary, at escobars@aol.com, or by phone at 301-770-2962.

MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION FORM

Name: Mr./Ms.

Position:

Home Address:

Work Address:

Home Phone:

Work Phone:

Home Fax:

Work Fax:

Home E-Mail:

Work E-Mail:

Where should ASCE communications be sent to you? Home Work (Circle One)

If you would like, please attach a brief description – **NOT TO EXCEED 200 WORDS** -- of your professional experience, expertise, interests, etc., to be published in the Directory. (If at all possible, please e-mail your description to the Secretary at escobars@aol.com.)

If you **do not** wish your name to be listed in the Directory, please check here:

DUES – SECOND NOTICE

Dear ASCE Member:

Membership renewals are now due for ASCE’s next fiscal year, which begins July 1, 1999.

Please indicate on the stub below the type of membership you desire and return it with your payment in the enclosed envelope. You may also include in the envelope your Registration Form and payment for the Ninth Annual Meeting, as well as your Membership Information Form for the ASCE Directory, both of which are included in this mailing. Please ensure that your envelope is addressed as follows:

Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy
P.O. Box 7372
Silver Spring, MD 20907-7372

We thank you in advance for your prompt attention to these matters.

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REMITTANCE STUB

Please **RETURN** the stub with your payment

Name:

Address:

City:

State:

Zip code:

E-mail:

- Student \$ 20.00
- Regular member \$ 45.00
(add \$10 if outside USA)
- Institutional members and sponsors \$100.00
please indicate.

If an overseas member, please remit in U.S. funds.