

# Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy

## Newsletter Spring - Summer 2000

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### MEMORANDUM

TO: ASCE Members

FROM: Sergio Díaz-Briquets, ASCE President

As summer approaches, ASCE's Board of Directors is busily engaged in the details of the celebration of our Tenth Annual Meeting, which will be held at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables, Florida, from Thursday, August 3 to Saturday, August 5, 2000. The Program Committee, under the able leadership of Jorge Pérez-López, has tentatively identified 21 sessions, including the Opening Plenary and a Special Plenary that will be convened to assess the achievements of the organization and future directions, as well as our customary sessions dealing with economic topics as well as social and political issues. A further call for papers is included in the newsletter. Members planning to participate in the Annual Meeting may want to take advantage of the room discounts offered by the Biltmore Hotel and should not delay in making reservations. Final programs for the Annual Meeting will be mailed separately.

By the time this newsletter reaches its readership, those members exercising their electoral rights will have returned to our Secretary their votes regarding the new leadership that is to take ASCE's reins for the next two years. The Board is most appreciative of the effort of the Nominating Committee chaired by Carlos Montoulieu who, in response to the proposals of the membership, effectively managed to complete the process according to our anticipated timetable. In light of several years of experience with the nominating process, the Board decided to amend ASCE's by-laws to simplify the nominations procedures in the future. In his note, Steve Escobar, ASCE's Secretary, sets forth the modifications and briefly describes why they were approved.

As many of you may have noted, ASCE's webpage is up and running and currently includes most of the papers published in our annual volumes of proceedings. In this newsletter, Jose F. Alonso recounts what our website has to offer and provides a new e-mail

address for the Association. Our Treasurer, Enrique Pumar, also reviews our financial situation, which can be characterized as healthy for an institution of our size.

To augment the Association's reach and impact, ASCE's Board decided to establish this year two new research prizes. The first one, to be awarded this year only, will honor the best paper presented at our Annual Meetings during ASCE's first decade. A Selection Committee will be established before the Tenth Annual Meeting and introduced at the Business Meeting in Miami. The other prize, to be awarded annually, will honor the best paper submitted to ASCE by an independent Cuban economist residing on the island. The terms and conditions for this prize are announced in this newsletter.

The newsletter also includes a salute to the Association of Independent Cuban Economists "Manuel Sánchez Herrero," which, like ASCE, was founded a decade ago. Marta Beatriz Roque, its former President, former participant (via telephone) in our Annual Meetings, and Honorary ASCE member, and one of the authors of "La Patria es de todos," was recently released from prison.

The newsletter, finally, provides a fundraising update, drafted by Maria Werlau, that includes a review of ongoing and planned initiatives to obtain support from institutions. In addition to seeking funds required by our Annual Meetings, an important goal of this initiative is to expand our dissemination efforts, particularly by translating more of ASCE's papers into Spanish and making them more readily accessible in Cuba. Members interested in supporting these efforts are invited to communicate directly with Maria, the Chair of our Institutional Fund Raising Subcommittee. I look forward to seeing all of you in Miami in August.

### **TENTH ANNUAL MEETING – AUGUST 3-5, 2000**

ASCE's Tenth Annual Meeting will take place August 3-5, 2000 at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables, Florida. Our preparations for the Meeting are well underway. As of May 1, our preliminary program consists of 21 sessions with very diverse topics including globalization, agriculture, politics and, of course, economics. A draft of the program topics is set forth below. For more information about the program, please contact Jorge Perez-Lopez, the Program Chair, at [perezlop@erols.com](mailto:perezlop@erols.com).

If you wish to make any hotel reservations, please note that the Biltmore has reserved 30 hotel rooms for the special group rate of \$115.00 per room per night. These rooms at these rates will be available to Annual Meeting attendees on a first come, first serve basis until **July 9, 2000**. You may make your reservation by calling the hotel's reservation desk at (305) 445-1926 or 1-800-727-1926 or via fax at (305) 913-3158. Please note our group code is # 5374. Individual reservations may be cancelled up to 48 hours prior to the beginning of the conference.

If you wish to receive more information or have additional questions about the conference, please contact Enrique S. Pumar at [pumar@erols.com](mailto:pumar@erols.com) or (301) 838-5955, or Juan Carlos Espinosa at

- Sugar Industry and Markets
- Foreign Assistance to Cuba
- Cuba's Balance of Payments
- Small and Medium Enterprises
- Spain-Cuba Relations
- The Military in the Economy
- Legal Issues
- Investment
- Tourism
- Politics
- Environment
- Transition Issues
- Agriculture

If you would like to participate on the program as a discussant or session chair, please contact Jorge Perez-Lopez, Chair, Program Committee, 5881 6th Street, Falls Church, VA 22041, or at [perezlop@erols.com](mailto:perezlop@erols.com). The Program Committee welcomes ideas from the membership on topics and possible presenters for future meetings of the Association.

**AMENDMENTS TO BYLAWS**

At an April 9, 2000 Special Meeting, the Board of Directors voted to amend ASCE’s Bylaws to improve the elections process. Set forth below are the amended provisions and a brief explanation of the changes.

**ARTICLE VI: COMMITTEES.**

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**(c) Nominating and Tellers' Committees.**

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**(i) Nominating Committee:**

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The Nominating Committee shall be charged with the following functions: To:

**(A)** Receive ~~written~~ nominations of individual candidates from the voting Members via regular mail, fax or electronic mail, or, if approved by the Board of Directors in advance of the election, any other method specified by the Board of Directors.

**(B)** Verify that the nomination is submitted by no less than ~~fifteen~~ five voting Members in good standing

**(C)** Prepare a list of duly nominated candidates.

**(D)** Request the Secretary to submit by May 1 a copy of the ballot, numbered for identification purposes ~~duly countersigned by the ex-officio members~~, to each of the voting Members in good standing. . . .

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**(ii) Tellers Committee:**

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The Tellers Committee shall discharge the following duties: To:

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**(C)** Examine each voted ballot to verify if it is ~~countersigned by the President and the Secretary of the Association~~ numbered and determine the number (if any) of those voting ballots not ~~countersigned by the President and the Secretary~~ numbered and declare them as illegitimate. . . .

**Explanation of Amendments:**

The amendment to permit nominations by fax or electronic mail, as well as by the already permissible regular mail, will make the nomination of candidates less burdensome and more efficient, and is intended to foster greater participation among the members in the nominations process.

The amendment to permit the Board to specify other methods of communicating nominations is intended to grant the Board discretion under special circumstances to accept nominations from

members who may not have access to the means, or may otherwise not be able, to nominate members by regular mail, fax or electronic mail.

The amendment to reduce from 15 to 5 the number of members required to nominate a candidate is intended to make the nomination of candidates less burdensome for members.

The amendment to require that the ballots be numbered, rather than countersigned by the President and the Secretary, for identification purposes is intended to make the election process less burdensome while maintaining the integrity and secrecy of the ballots.

These amendments will soon be reflected in the Bylaws posted on our website, located at <http://lanic.utexas.edu/project/asce/bylaws.html>.

### **CALL FOR PAPERS – AEA MEETING**

The Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE) will participate in the next Annual Meeting of the American Economic Association (AEA) in New Orleans, Louisiana, on January 5-7, 2001. ASCE will be organizing one session, at which 3 to 4 papers on Cuban issues may be presented, as well as holding our biannual “Carlos Díaz-Alejandro Luncheon Lecture.”

For its session, ASCE invites papers on a variety of subjects related to the Cuban economy and society, including: macroeconomics, banking and finance, agriculture and the sugar industry, social and political aspects of economic development, education, health, environmental policy, law and legal institutions, and international economic relations.

ASCE members wishing to present a paper should submit a 100-word abstract of their proposed papers by July 1, 2000 to:

Professor Luis Locay , Chair, ASCE AEA Program  
Department of Economics, University of Miami  
P.O. Box 248126, Coral Gables, FL 33124-6550  
E-mail: [mambises@aol.com](mailto:mambises@aol.com)  
Telephone: (305) 245-5373

We will also be looking for individuals to serve as commentators to the papers presented.

**CALL FOR PAPERS – CUBAN PAPER PRIZE**

**ASCE ANNUAL PRIZE CONTEST**

**FOR THE BEST ESSAY ON THE CUBAN ECONOMY**

**BY A PERSON RESIDENT IN CUBA**

**Background:**

As one of the events related to the tenth anniversary of its foundation, ASCE has started an annual contest to encourage professional development among economists residing in the island. To that end, a thousand dollars prize (US \$1,000) has been established for the best essay on the Cuban economy presented by an economist, or professional in a related field, residing in Cuba who does not work for the Cuban Government. Besides the cash prize, ASCE will assume responsibility for publication of the essay both in English and Spanish.

**Definitions:**

**Themes.** The scope of themes to be covered by the essays extends to the field of economic in the broadest context that prevails today in relation to economic development. That is, besides macroeconomic, monetary, fiscal, banking, foreign trade or sectorial themes, papers will be accepted on themes related to environmental protection, governance, corruption and the rule of law, to the extent they impact on the economy.

**Participants.** Criteria for participation limits it to island residents not working for the government. In view of the all-encompassing presence of the state in the economic sphere, this restriction will be limited to those working for central government agencies, ministries or state banks, involved in economic policy formulation and implementation. Therefore, this restriction will not apply to those working for research centers or mixed enterprises who wish to present personal positions independent of their official duties. As is logical, this invitation is extended mostly to dissidents or participants in independent groups studying the Cuban economic reality.

**Evaluation.** Essays will be evaluated according to the following criteria:

- Relevancy:** The scope of its application to the Cuban economy.
- Originality:** The essay presents new problems, new perspectives or new solutions and has not been published.
- Quality:** The methodological soundness of the analysis. When feasible and relevant, the statistical basis and/or documentation supporting the analysis.

- Contribution:** The contribution of the essay to broaden knowledge of and the study of the Cuban economy in its broadest sense.
- Presentation:** The degree to which the essay presents the material in a clear, effective and concise form and is well written.
- Specifications.** Essays should be typed and written in Spanish. They should be preferably 25 to 35 pages long, double spaced, although longer essays will be considered provided they meet other established criteria. Essays must be received no later than October 1<sup>st</sup>, 2000. Participants should provide a curriculum vitae and certify that they do not work in any government agency, as stated above. The contest winner will be announced on December 1<sup>st</sup>. 2000.
- Address:** Essays should be mailed to:
- ASCE Annual Prize for Best Cuban Paper  
P.O. Box 7372  
Silver Spring, Maryland, 20907-7372

### **ASCE WEBSITE AND NEW E-MAIL ADDRESS**

website [www.ascecuba.org](http://www.ascecuba.org) is now operational. The site operates in conjunction with the University of Texas Latin America (UTLANIC) which has provided the Internet space for our publications for a number of years. Once you are on our web page please “click” on t will take you to the pages containing the documents, publications and information concerning the association. If you would like to hyperlink our website to other places who might be interested in our Association, please let us know and feel free to proceed with your idea. Remember as you hyperlink ASCE, the Association grow in statue and membership.

ep our website as up to date as possible with information, news and events related to the Association, such as our Annual Meeting at the Biltmore Hotel in Coral Gables, Florida, and other events of interest to our members.

ase note that if you would like to communicate with ASCE electronically, you may send us mail at our new e-mail address: [asce@ascecuba.org](mailto:asce@ascecuba.org).

### **TREASURER'S REPORT**

Winter quarter (from January to April) the organization continued its sound financial course. ASCE began the quarter with \$8,332.79 and ended with \$8,355.39 in its saving account. With regard to our checking account, we opened with \$28,032.73 and closed with \$22,704.75. We deposited \$596.80 in our checking account. Our operating budget was \$1,234.48 and we paid \$4,690.00 for the publication and mailing costs of Volume 9 of *Cuba in Transition*. The Treasurer is currently identifying high yield money market accounts to invest some of our funds and obtain secure and more profitable returns.

### **FUNDRAISING EFFORT**

of Directors encourages interested members to join an institutional fundraising effort on behalf of ASCE. A small team of 3 to 4 members is needed to work with a Board member to develop a grant proposal and coordinate fundraising efforts with foundations. We need your help! If interested, please contact Maria Werlau, XORBISX@aol.com, or (973)701-0520.

### **INSTITUTO DE ECONOMISTAS INDEPENDIENTES** **MANUEL SÁNCHEZ HERRERO**

this year, Cuba's Institute of Independent Economists celebrated the 10th Anniversary of its founding by becoming the Instituto de Economistas Independientes Manuel Sánchez Herrero, in honor of one of its distinguished founders, who died on May 5, 1999. In so doing, they sought to acknowledge the value of his contribution to the Institute and to the independent study of Cuba's economy within the island.

Manuel Sánchez Herrero was born in Cuba in 1934. He received degrees from the University of Havana in economics, accounting and economic management. Sánchez Herrero was also a painter and calligrapher. Among his professional endeavors, he was Auditor for Agriculture of the Central Planning Board, a specialist in transportation, and head of the JUCEPLAN's Research Institute as well as of its Department of Foreign Investment. After spending several years studying Fidel Castro and Mussolini, he published a study in which he drew a parallel between them. As a result, in 1985, while he was at JUCEPLAN, he was detained and left without employment. He served more than a year in jail. After his release, he became actively involved in Cuba's dissident movement, serving as Vice President of the Social Democratic Party and a member of the Working Group of the Internal Dissidence Movement. He wrote a number of ground-breaking works on Cuba's economy and agriculture, many by hand for lack of other means. He died at age 65 in Havana after a terrible illness.