

CUBA IN TRANSITION

Volume 9

Papers and Proceedings of the

**Ninth Annual Meeting
of the
Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy (ASCE)**

Coral Gables, Florida
August 12-14, 1999

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Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy
P.O. Box 7372
Silver Spring, MD 20907-7372
Tel. 301/587-1664
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PREFACE

This volume of Cuba in Transition brings together most of the papers and selected commentaries presented at the Ninth Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of the Cuban Economy, which was held in Coral Gables, Florida, August 12-14, 1999. As previous volumes, the collection of papers and commentaries included here covers a wide range of topics related to Cuba's economy and society: the current economic and political situation; macroeconomics; monetary and fiscal issues; economic reforms; intellectual property and the Internet; transition issues; politics; the role of the private sector in agriculture; public opinion; sugar and agriculture; civil society and transition; tourism, legal issues; and sectoral economic studies.

On behalf of the Board of Directors of ASCE, we would like to take this opportunity to thank the sponsors of the Ninth Annual Meeting—the School of International Studies and the School of Business Administration of the University of Miami and several corporate sponsors—for their financial contribution to the meeting and to this publication.

Jorge F. Pérez-López
José F. Alonso
Editors

IN MEMORIAM

Dr. José D. Acosta was a member of the Board of Directors of ASCE at the time that he passed away in November 1998 in Miami. Dr. Acosta (Pepucho, to his friends) was born in Santiago de Cuba and attended the Universidad de la Habana, where he received a Doctorate of Law. During his university years, Pepucho joined the Agrupación Católica Universitaria (ACU). His membership in the ACU helped him live his Christian faith throughout his life and encouraged him to excel in his profession. Prior to leaving Cuba after the Communist takeover, he had a successful law practice in a very influential legal firm in La Habana and pursued graduate studies in economics at the Universidad de Villanueva, where he also taught economics. He had a distinguished career at the Organization of American States (OAS) where he was first a tax policy economist and helped run the OAS technical assistance program on tax policy in Latin American. During those years Pepucho also pursued graduate studies in economics at the George Washington University in Washington, D.C. Subsequently, he transferred to the Legal Department of the OAS and rose to be Director of the General Legal Services of the Secretariat of Legal Affairs, a position he held until his retirement from the OAS. In ASCE, Pepucho was an active participant in our Annual Meetings and in the Board of Directors sessions, where he always challenged its members to follow appropriate procedures. He also played a key role in the drafting of the current by-laws of the Association in 1997.

Dr. Roberto González Cofiño passed away suddenly shortly before the 1999 Annual Meeting of ASCE. He had a brilliant career as an economist. In Cuba, he studied Public Accounting at the Universidad de la Habana and Economics at the Universidad de Villanueva. In the United States, he did graduate work in Economics at Georgetown University. At the beginning of the revolutionary government in Cuba, González Cofiño joined the team of Dr. Rufo López Fresquet at the Ministry of Finance. Shortly thereafter, as did many others, he went into exile. He was part of the Cuban Economic Research Project at the University of Miami, led by Dr. José Alvarez Díaz, which produced a major study on the Cuban economy. He then joined the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States, successfully holding management positions in the staff that supported the work of the Panel of Experts, also known as the Wisemen, and later in the Inter-American Committee of the Alliance for Progress. He continued his very successful career at the World Bank, where he managed operations in the Caribbean region and later in Brazil, the most important client of the World Bank in Latin America. Upon retiring from the World Bank, González Cofiño established his own economic consulting firm, in which again he was very successful. He was an active participant in ASCE, and he chaired the Nominating Committee for the most recent elections of the Executive Board.

May our esteemed colleagues rest in peace.

