

GÓMEZ CARBONELL, MARÍA (1903–1988)

In the bosom of a well-known, politically active family, María was born at the beginning of the Twentieth Century. Her mother, lauded for her involvement in the Cuban Independence movement, garnered poetic praise from José Martí for her patriotism. Among the earliest women to receive a Ph.D. from the University of Havana, Gómez Carbonnell embarked on a series of stellar causes. She became an educator, founded the Alianza Nacional Femenista, dedicated to suffrage and women's rights, and once women achieved the ballot, ran for political office. The first woman elected to Cuba's House of Representatives (1940-1944) Gómez Carbonnell focused on social welfare legislation, juvenile and women's issues, and prison reform. She served in the presidential cabinet for several terms but fled Cuba for the U.S. in 1959. In the U.S. she worked with the Cuban community in exile. Among her many accomplishments, she founded the Cruzada Educativa Cubana to enlighten audiences about Cuba's history and culture.