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THE NEW ASIA-PACIFIC ORDER

The **Institute of Southeast Asian Studies** (ISEAS) was established as an autonomous organization in 1968. It is a regional research centre for scholars and other specialists concerned with modern Southeast Asia and its wider geostrategic environment.

The Institute's aim is to nurture a community of scholars interested in the region and to engage in research on the multi-faceted problems of stability and security, economic development, and political and social change.

In a world increasingly dominated by the forces of globalization and regionalization, networking has become an imperative. The Institute is now strategically placed to assist scholars in this networking process by serving as a centre that provides a congenial and stimulating intellectual environment, encouraging the fullest interaction and exchange of ideas in an unfettered ambience. ISEAS is dedicated to long-term reflective analysis and investigations in the best traditions of scholarship. The Institute also seeks to stimulate thinking on, and exploring solutions to, some of the major salient issues in the region.

To achieve these aims, the Institute conducts a range of research programmes; holds conferences, workshops, lectures and seminars, publishes research journals and books; and generally provides a range of research support facilities, including a large library collection.

Founded in 1970, the **Japan Center for International Exchange** (JCIE) is an independent, non-profit, and non-partisan organization dedicated to strengthening Japan's role in international affairs. JCIE believes that Japan faces a major challenge in augmenting its positive contributions to the international community, in keeping with its position as one of the world's largest industrial democracies. Operating in a country where policy-making has traditionally been dominated by the government bureaucracy, JCIE has played an important role in broadening debate on Japan's international responsibilities by conducting international and cross-sectional programmes of exchange, research, and discussion.

JCIE creates opportunities for informed policy discussions; it does not take policy positions. JCIE programmes are carried out with the collaboration and co-sponsorship of many organizations. The contacts developed through these working relationships are crucial to JCIE's efforts to increase the number of Japanese from the private sector engaged in meaningful policy research and dialogue with overseas counterparts.

JCIE receives no government subsidies; rather, funding comes from private foundation grants, corporate contributions, and contracts.

The **American Assembly** was established by Dwight D. Eisenhower at Columbia University in 1950. It holds non-partisan meetings and publishes authoritative books to illuminate issues of United States policy.

An affiliate of Columbia, the Assembly is a national, educational institution incorporated in the State of New York. The Assembly seeks to provide information, stimulate discussion, and evoke independent conclusions on matters of vital public interest.

At least two national programmes are initiated each year. Specialists are retained to write background papers presenting essential data and defining the main issues of each subject.

A group of men and women representing a broad range of experience, competence, and leadership meets for several days to discuss the Assembly topic and consider alternatives for national policy.

Regional, state, and local Assemblies are held following the national session at Arden House. Assemblies have also been held in England, Switzerland, Malaysia, Canada, the Caribbean, South America, Central America, the Philippines, and Japan. Over one hundred and sixty institutions have co-sponsored one or more Assemblies.

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ORDER

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ISEAS INSTITUTE OF SOUTHEAST ASIAN STUDIES

Published by
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies
Heng Mui Keng Terrace
Pasir Panjang Road
Singapore 119596

Internet e-mail: publish@iseas.ac.sg

World Wide Web: <http://www.iseas.ac.sg/pub.html>

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Cataloguing in Publication Data

The New Asia-Pacific order / edited by Chan Heng Chee.

Papers presented to the Conference on the New Asia-Pacific Order, 25–27 May 1995, Singapore, organized jointly by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Japan Centre for International Exchange and the American Assembly.

1. ASEAN--Congresses.
2. Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation--Congresses.
3. Asia--Foreign relations--Congresses.
4. Pacific Area--Foreign relations--Congresses.
5. National security--Asia--Congresses.
6. National security--Pacific Area--Congresses.
7. Asia--Economic conditions--1945--Congresses.
8. Pacific Area--Economic conditions--Congresses.

I. Chan, Heng Chee.

II. Conference on the New Asia-Pacific Order (1995 : Singapore)

III. Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

IV. Japan Center for International Exchange.

V. American Assembly.

DS33.3 C74 1997 sls95-113284

ISBN 981-3055-25-1 (soft cover)

ISBN 981-3055-75-8 (hard cover)

ISSN 0219-1920

The responsibility for facts and opinions expressed in this publication rests exclusively with the authors and their interpretations do not necessarily reflect the views or the policy of the Institute.

Typeset by International Typesetters

Printed in Singapore by Prime Packaging Industries Pte. Ltd.

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PREFACE

The conference on “The New Asia-Pacific Order” sponsored by the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (ISEAS), the Japan Center for International Exchange (JCIE), and the American Assembly, took place in Singapore on 25–27 May 1995. It focused on the emergence of a new economic, political, and security order in the post-Cold War Asia-Pacific region. The conference was the third in a series, with the first two held in the United States and Japan, respectively in 1993 and 1994, dealing with the U.S.-Japan relationship in its Asia-Pacific context.

The Singapore conference, hosted by ISEAS, brought together more than fifty intellectuals from academia, government, business, and the media. These came from the United States, Japan, Korea, China, Vietnam, Australia, and the ASEAN states. The keynote address was given by Singapore Foreign Minister, S. Jayakumar. In his speech, the Foreign Minister called for optimistic forecasts on the Asia-Pacific to be tempered with a note of caution on account of several regional uncertainties. He then sketched out the major issue in the emerging Asia-Pacific order — that revolving round the triangular relationship of the United States, Japan, and China.

With the Foreign Minister’s address having established an overarching conceptual framework, the two full days of the conference then dealt with five key issue-areas: the sustainability of economic dynamism in the Asia-Pacific; the shape of regional groupings in the next decade; the relative shifts in the balance among the major powers; establishing a new security architecture; and globalization, particularism, democratization, and human rights.

All these five issue-areas generated considerable debate from all participants. The question of the sustainability of the Asia-Pacific’s economic dynamism centred on the prospects for the two mammoth

economies, China and Japan, with differing viewpoints on whether China's economic growth rates could be sustained, and whether Japan could revitalize its economic fortunes, and the impact both economies would have on the rest of the Asia-Pacific.

As an adjunct to this initial concern, the second issue-area essentially dealt with the future of the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum and ASEAN, and the continued utility of both groupings to the already vibrant trade and investment climate in the Asia-Pacific.

Moving from economic to political issues, the conference's main concerns related to two sub-themes: the relative decline of the United States as a balancing power in the region in the face of enhanced Chinese and Japanese power, on the one hand, and the need to establish a viable regional security structure to take into account this shifting power balance, on the other. North Korea and the territorial disputes in the South China Sea were also key topics of discussion and dissension.

Finally, the conference grappled with the issue of whether the countries of the Asia-Pacific had certain political and social values in common which would facilitate community-building as the region marched towards the twenty-first century. As with all the other issue-areas, this concern with "values" succeeded in bringing participants to some consensus on "common values", but also an equal measure of sharp differences in perception and opinion.

The above-mentioned themes addressed at the conference supplemented nine background papers commissioned for the event. These nine papers are published here as a single edited volume by ISEAS.

The three sponsoring institutions wish to record their appreciation to the following organizations for their support in making the Singapore conference on "The New Asia-Pacific Order" possible:

- Japan Foundation Center for Global Partnership
- The Ford Foundation
- The Henry Luce Foundation

These organizations take no position on subjects presented here for public discussion. In addition, it should be noted that the participants took part in their personal capacity, rather than representing the organizations and institutions to which they are affiliated.

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