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The  
Case for  
the  
East-West  
Center

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The East-West Center Foundation

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*In its first quarter century, the East-West Center has built a foundation of strong achievement in education and research that is recognized throughout the Pacific. A stable financial base of public funds also has been established. We are now moving to expand on this foundation by seeking increased support from the private sector.*

*As the countries of Asia and the Pacific continue to grow, expertise of the kind developed at the Center will be needed more than ever. Especially important will be the capacity to deal with issues of technological and economic change within the diverse cultural contexts found in the Asia-Pacific region.*

*The East-West Center has been building extensive professional partnerships with institutions and individuals in over 50 Asian and Pacific countries. We are laying the groundwork for networks of full regional cooperation which will be important components of the "Pacific Age."*

*We now seek to raise the level of funding for endowment and current support. These funds will greatly increase our capacity to serve the people of the region. The East-West Center has already established itself as a major institution bridging East and West, where people from different cultures can work together freely, and where knowledge drawn from many places is applied to the solution of critical problems. With the Quarter Century Campaign, the Center will truly become the scholarly crossroads of the Pacific.*



Victor Hao Li  
President  
East-West Center



*To this Center, we shall bring the wise men of the west and invite the wise men of the east. From them we shall hope that many generations of young scholars will learn this wisdom of the two worlds united here and use that wisdom for the purposes and ends of mankind's highest aspirations for peace, justice and freedom.*

U.S. Vice President  
Lyndon B. Johnson  
East-West Center ground-  
breaking ceremonies,  
May 9, 1961

After 25 years, the East-West Center has reached a new stage of maturity. A foundation of achievements has been established. Our work in the areas of population and energy and with the island nations of the Pacific are already recognized as among the best in the world.

Newer programs dealing with forestry and water resources, minerals, trade and capital flows, and communications are attracting international attention for their scholarly quality and usefulness for policymakers. We have high expectations that our recent efforts in art, literature, and humanities will contribute to a breakthrough in cultural understanding.

A network of cooperative working relationships also is in place. Through the years, more than 34,000 participant awards have been granted—two-thirds of them to people from Asia and the Pacific—for degree work or

research. Thousands of former participants have returned to their homes and professions and are directly engaged in dealing with the problems we study at the Center.

The Center's physical plant and budget base also have attained a level of stability. Our annual budget of approximately \$25 million can support the current level of operations. The 1985 completion of the new Hawaii Imin International Conference Center at Jefferson Hall is enabling us to serve as a major international meeting place.

Having built a solid foundation in programs and people, the East-West Center now wishes to expand on this base to become the leading international scholarly and exchange institution for the Asia-Pacific region. As the Pacific grows in activity and importance, so also will grow the Center's role as the key point for linking together institutions and individuals working on the critical issues affecting the entire region.



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*We are today standing at a historic crossroads, a moment in history when the many civilizations encounter each other and come together in this Pacific region. We are witnessing the birth of a civilization fertile with the vitality that nurtures ideas and creativity, precisely because it is so rich in diversity. This is the beginning of the Pacific Age, an age that will open the doors of the 21st Century.*

Japan Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki  
"The Coming of the Pacific Age"  
speech at the East-West Center,  
June 16, 1982

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## **The Pacific Age**

The founding of the East-West Center 25 years ago coincided with the beginning of the rapid development of the Asia-Pacific region. Economic expansion has been phenomenal, not only in Japan, but throughout the region.

For much of the 1970s, Singapore, Hong Kong, South Korea, and Taiwan were growing at around 10 percent a year, and the other nations of Southeast Asia were not far behind. China, the sleeping giant, is fast reawakening. The poorer countries of South Asia also are showing marked improvement. Measured by standard performance indicators, the Newly Industrializing Countries (NICs) and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) have outperformed all other developing nations.

The nations of Asia and the Pacific face severe challenges, however, in areas such as population growth, energy needs, social change, and modernization strategies. Nearly 60 percent of the world's population now live in this region. Using fairly conservative population projections, an additional 1.4 billion people will be added to Asia by the end of another quarter century. One must ask how will this number of people be housed and fed, educated and employed, governed and inspired? By the year 2010 there will be 900 million more urban dwellers than there are now, the equivalent of nearly 100 new Los Angeleses or Tokyos. How can today's large cities accommodate so many new residents, providing basic services and infrastructure?

Like other nations, most of the countries of Asia are trying to curb their petroleum consumption. Korea, Japan, and Taiwan already rely heavily on nuclear power, and similar plans are being developed in China, Southeast Asia, and South Asia. Nuclear power has many advantages. At the same time, problems of safety, waste disposal, protection against terrorism, and prevention of military nuclear proliferation are still unsolved.

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The option to use coal is attractive because this resource is in fairly abundant supply in many parts of Asia. However, the mining, transportation, and burning of coal pose major environmental and health problems. Firewood and biomass remain principal energy sources, but extensive deforestation coupled with increased demands from growing populations are threatening these supplies as well.

Politically, the Asia-Pacific region has been relatively stable, despite continued problems in portions of Southeast Asia and on the Korean peninsula. At a more basic level, the international relationships in the entire region are changing. The post-World War II era in which the United States, and later Japan, played the dominant role in almost all matters has ended. A new era has begun in which the other nations of Asia and the Pacific are taking their places as full partners, rather than as recipients of technology or aid or ideas. New structures and modes of international cooperation must be developed.

The United States is searching for the best arrangements by which influence can be shared, in the political and especially economic arenas. Japan also is trying to define its place in this new era, where it is no longer a latecomer and follower but rather a leader and innovator.

China is beginning to establish fundamentally new political and economic relations with its neighbors. The budding ties among the United States, Japan and China hold considerable hope for the future. Some South-east Asian nations, however, view China's

emergence in the international arena with mixed feelings, glad that the period of isolation and strained relations is over, but concerned over possible future efforts by an increasingly strong China to influence events in the area.

Part of these political shifts is a generational change of leadership in Asia. Leaders whose formative years were World War II and the national independence movements are being succeeded by a younger group who are better educated, more technologically proficient, and more internationally oriented. At the same time, they also are more assertive of their cultural values and more willing to question inherited Western models and ideas.

The most subtle, yet perhaps most difficult, problem of the Pacific Age concerns the wide differences in language, religion, social structure, and culture in Asia and the Pacific. In cultural achievements the Asia-Pacific region presents the richest collection of human creativity in the world. The nations of this region face the challenge of converting these cultural differences that might divide us into a diversity that enriches all.

*The center of political power in the United States has shifted westward. Our Pacific interests and concerns have increased. We have exchanged the freedom of action of an isolationist state for the responsibilities of a global power.*

U.S. President Gerald R. Ford  
"Pacific Doctrine" speech  
at the East-West Center,  
December 7, 1975

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### **An American Perspective**

Over the past quarter century, each American president has described, with increasing intensity, the importance of Asia and the Pacific to the United States and the depth of American commitment to the region.

Our economies and our future well-being have become interdependent. The value of merchandise moving across the Pacific increased more than tenfold in the last decade. The United States has over \$30 billion invested in Asia, and Asian nations find the U.S. a rich market. The Asia and Pacific region now surpasses Europe as the major trading partner of the United States, and these trends will surely continue, despite strains in the trade relationships.

At the same time, the United States continues to have difficulty in Asia and the Pacific. The United States is a large, well-endowed continental country, with its cultural roots

primarily in Europe. To many Americans, Asia and the Pacific are distant places—distant physically, but perhaps more important, distant psychologically and culturally.

Although we appreciate the region's growing importance—politically, economically, and culturally—our capacity for dealing with the region is limited. Few Americans speak Asian languages or have studied Asian society and culture. For example, more Australians than Americans study Japanese, although Australia is a country of only 15 million people. U.S. primary and high school texts hardly refer to Asia. Newspapers and television report little Asian news.

The situation is improving, but for most Americans Asia remains a far and unknown place. Increasing understanding between the United States and the Asia-Pacific region is one of the major challenges facing the East-West Center.



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*The [East-West] Center has been in the vanguard of opinion-forming in the United States about the Asia-Pacific region.*

Australian Prime Minister  
Robert J. Hawke  
speech at the East-West Center,  
June 19, 1983

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In terms of research, our teams of scholars and practitioners attack the specific problems cited above—population growth and urbanization, energy needs, trade and international relations, and cultural change. The Center deals with many other important problems as well: How will an adequate supply of potable water be maintained for the rapidly growing industrial, agricultural and personal needs of the region? What is the economic future of the small, but strategically vital, small island countries of the Pacific? What mineral resources exist in the region?

Beyond explanations such as *Theory Z*, can we understand the qualities in Japanese culture and society that have contributed to that country's phenomenal growth over the past century, and how will these forces hold together in the future? What are the likely economic development scenarios for the ASEAN countries in the next decade? Will the People's Republic of China successfully

implement its modernization drive, and if so, what will be China's impact on the other countries of the region? The list of such issues is long. And there is a comparable set of questions about the United States asked by Asians.

Taking this research as a whole, the Center, in close consultations with colleagues from Asia and from other institutions in the United States, seeks to identify the critical issues confronting the Asia-Pacific region in the coming years. We then work in those areas where the Center's skills can be most effective, particularly areas requiring the application of cultural understanding and the social sciences to development needs and to the uses of science and technology. Bringing together international and interdisciplinary teams, we seek information and recommendations that lead to practical solutions for these problems.

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In carrying out our research, the Center has also played a major role in human resource development for the entire region. Each year, several hundred graduate students study here, many of them writing their dissertations on Center research projects. In addition, over 2,000 scholars, government officials, journalists, business executives and other professionals join our programs annually. Numbered among our alumni are heads of government, ambassadors, members of national legislatures, officials of international agencies, and many senior government officials. In higher education, Center alumni are serving as university presidents, directors of research institutes, and faculty members. These persons continue their professional ties with us, and may well be our greatest resource for the future.

More fundamentally, the Center is building a network of institutions and individuals in the region engaged in collaborative research and training. One of the most serious problems in academic work all over the world is that the structure of universities makes it difficult for scholars to work closely with colleagues outside their own institutions, and even more, outside their own countries. Most of the scholarly work is done by permanent members of the faculty, leavened only by a few visiting professors each year. With the exception of major scientific laboratories, there is no adequate mechanism for systematically working with scholars from elsewhere.

When this situation is applied to Asian studies in the United States, for example, the net result is that American scholars work *on* Asia but not *with* Asia or Asian scholars. Thus,

while there are many examples of excellent studies on one or another aspect of Asian culture or politics, there are virtually no comparable examples of truly collaborative efforts between American and Asian scholars. The same can be said of Asian scholars working on the United States or on other parts of the Asia-Pacific region.

The East-West Center is the ideal institution to serve this important role as a link among universities, research institutes, government programs, and others addressing similar problems. One of our unique strengths is our ability to provide the mechanism—through the several thousand specialists from other institutions who take part in Center programs each year—by which people from throughout the region can work closely with each other. Through this mechanism, the Center serves as catalyst, open forum, and honest broker for regional cooperation, an enterprise where the whole is far greater than the sum of its parts.



*Shall we not join in this great endeavor of the century? Let us build a record of accomplishments for our nations and the Pacific region that will live in the annals of world history.*

Japan Prime Minister Zenko Suzuki  
at the East-West Center,  
June 16, 1982

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The East West Center's business is knowledge. Our responsibility is to be a vital part of growth and change in the Pacific Basin. The knowledge we deal with is far from static, given today's fast changing economies and the world's rapidly growing information industries. A combination of new research results and computer-assisted data gathering is literally doubling scientific and technical information every five years. Advancements in communications technology have created new and faster super highways for the movement and exchange of data.

These changes directly affect the Center's role as a place of cultural and technical interchange, and also provide new opportunities for the Center. The sheer volume and importance of the information being generated by and about the Asia-Pacific region alone requires institutions such as the Center to organize and manage knowledge far better than in the past.

Over the past 25 years, the East-West Center has built a strong foundation in programs and people. Our location in a uniquely multicultural setting is a great asset to our

mission. Now, we seek to expand on this base to become the leading scholarly and exchange institution for the Asia-Pacific region for the next quarter century. Our goal is to close the gap between those in need of knowledge and those whose research and discovery produce knowledge.

The Center is largely funded by the United States Congress, and also receives a small but growing portion of its operating funds from 23 other governments and from private foundations and agencies. But in order to achieve our goal of becoming the key scholarly linking point for the region, the Center needs additional funds that will provide the flexibility and intellectual venture capital which public funding does not readily permit. Moreover, the "ratification" given by the private sector through the making of substantial contributions will ensure continued public funding.

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The East-West Center Foundation has been established to raise funds from private sources in the United States and Asia to support the Center's programs. On the Foundation's Board of Directors are distinguished leaders from business, public service, and the professions who share the vision and commitment of the East-West Center. The Foundation's ultimate goal is to raise \$25 million, to be used in three areas:

- Major New Program Initiatives
- Endowed Scholarships, Chairs, Lectures, and Other Possibilities
- Expansion of Existing Programs

With additional funds, the Center can expand the scope of its work. We now deal with a substantial number of the region's critical issues. Nevertheless, on many occasions, excellent and important proposals come across our desks which we must decline to undertake for lack of funds. And we know that the more work we do in the region, the more we develop an invaluable expertise about the region's directions and problems, the more new opportunities will come to us.

Private funding enables the Center to take risks and to adjust quickly to changing regional developments. Because the Center is smaller than most research institutions and because of our unique structure—interdisciplinary and problem oriented—we have organizational ability to respond quickly and flexibly to opportunities. We seek the funds which will enable us to fully utilize this ability.

As the Pacific grows in activity and importance, so also will grow the Center's place as the key linking mechanism, making information fully accessible and ensuring the free exchange of ideas. The Quarter Century Campaign will provide the impetus for this development.

The East-West Center is the ideal place to be the scholarly crossroads of the Pacific. Through our student participants and international research teams, we are finding ways by which all the nations and peoples of the region can better understand each other's beliefs, strengths, and needs, and can contribute to the solution of shared problems. From this understanding comes mutual appreciation and cooperation, and, ultimately, peace.

In time, people may forget the Kipling line recalled by the name of this institution:

*Oh, East is East, and West is West,  
And never the twain shall meet,*

And come to think of our name in the context of the stanza's ending:

*But there is neither East nor West,  
Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,  
When two strong men stand face to face,  
Though they come from the ends of the earth!*

*Ballad of East and West*  
by Rudyard Kipling

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