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THE WHITE HOUSE

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NATIONAL SECURITY DECISION
DIRECTIVE NUMBER 185

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BY

NARA DATE

PRIVATE SECTOR COOPERATION IN THE PACIFIC BASIN (U)

BACKGROUND

The United States recognizes the importance of other Pacific nations to its overall economic, political and security interests. As a Pacific nation itself, the United States must make a habit of close cooperation with the countries of the region. While maintaining and strengthening its key governmental relationships, the United States should also pay attention to private sector initiatives in the area. (U)

Within the region, various private groups and organizations have been established, chiefly in the commercial and professional sectors, to promote better ties among the peoples and nations of the Pacific. In addition, the six (6) ASEAN nations have initiated periodic exchanges on economic issues with the five (5) advanced economies of the region (Japan, the United States, Canada, Australia and New Zealand). Within this 6+5 framework, joint effort already has begun on human resources development activities. There is a growing potential for further multilateral cooperation among the ASEAN countries and their dialogue partners in this and other economic fields. (C)

GOALS

United States efforts at this stage should focus on encouraging those activities of the private sector and non-governmental organizations which support United States interests in the region. The United States should not seek to force the pace of developments or dominate the emerging consultative process, but should, as appropriate, encourage evolutionary steps which utilize existing mechanisms and organizations in the region and which promote overall United States interests. The United States should not seek at this stage to create formal inter-governmental structures, and, must seek to avoid the appearance of a dominant United States role. (S)

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Such a policy should strive to foster stronger and deeper regional multilateral relationships by seeking, as circumstances permit, to expand involvement by other governments as observers or participants; using the 6+5 forum (as expanded) to address regional economic issues (e.g. trade and capital investment); involving non-governmental entities, such as the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference and the Pacific Science Association, with governments drawing on these entities as resources on the range of issues. (C)

United States policy will remain to open trading markets in both directions, and to overcome domestic protectionist pressures. (C)

IMPLEMENTATION

Executive Branch officials should work to identify practical multilateral cooperative steps, especially in the areas of trade and finance, which do not undercut established United States bilateral objectives. To ensure that United States interests are represented in the Pacific Economic Cooperation Conference, Executive Branch officials should participate actively (in an individual, nonofficial capacity) in the United States National Committee for Pacific Economic Cooperation, and should work to broaden participation in private sector fora by the major economic actors in the Pacific, such as the ASEAN countries, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Taiwan and China. (C)

The Interagency Group on the Pacific, chaired by the Department of State, shall continue to coordinate government activities with regard to Pacific Basin initiatives, specifically those dealing with the ASEAN 6+5 (as its agenda evolves), and to develop and recommend programs to improve the awareness and understanding by Americans of the importance of the Pacific, including the creation or expansion of educational programs, student exchange and other programs which foster greater familiarity and understanding among the American public of the Pacific, and increase training in Pacific languages and culture. (C)

Ronald Reagan

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