

Editorial

The Asian horizon

At a conference in Washington on Sept. 15, *EIR* founder Lyndon H. LaRouche, Jr. will present a bold proposal for the United States to give the kind of world leadership and vision of the future Japan's leaders emulated when they adopted the "American System."

Following his recent tour of several Asian nations, LaRouche is calling for a package of five huge development projects in the region which would rapidly lead to the economic revival of the West by creating demand for export of the high-technology capital goods needed to build these projects. Industrial development of the Indian Ocean-Pacific Basin region can lead the way to a "renaissance in the world economy," and also to long-term stability and peace in Asia, since the great projects "would capture the imaginations" of the countries involved, the basis for cooperation to achieve the goals.

The LaRouche proposal starts from the basic conception that the larger the population of a nation, the greater its economic development potential. The number of people living in the Indian subcontinent, China, Southeast Asia, Japan, and the Korean peninsula totals over 2.5 billion.

The region is also endowed with several other elements indispensable for economic development. India has the third largest concentration of skilled scientists and technicians in the world, exceeded only by the United States and the Soviet Union, a pool of trained manpower that will enable that country to rapidly absorb the most modern of technologies. Japan produces a surplus of capital goods required for economic development larger than any other advanced sector nation—capital goods that could be exported to construct the great projects.

The development projects for the Indian Ocean-Pacific Basin region must be viewed as a "package," for both economic and political reasons. *Economically*, the region should function as a unit; the package will allow for large levels of investment in the developing countries, and high production levels in the advanced countries. *Politically*, the package of projects will enable all of the countries in the region to cooperate on a common goal.

Here are the five components which constitute the

heart of the Pacific Basin-Indian Ocean development strategy:

● **Ganges-Brahmaputra water development:** The proposal begins with a plan to construct large water control/hydroelectric projects for the Ganges-Brahmaputra river basin in India, a plan that could eventually turn that nation into one of the world's bread baskets. Simultaneously, India could become a manufacturer of nuclear energy plants for export to the rest of the region. In exchange for energy, India would obtain the means to pay for the imported products to build the water projects.

● **Mekong River Delta development:** Hydroelectric and flood control development of Southeast Asia's Mekong River is the key to enabling Vietnam, Kampuchea, Thailand and Laos to rapidly increase production of food and energy. Cooperation of these nations in such a project would also furnish the basis for settling the region's simmering political tensions, centering on Kampuchea.

● **The Kra Isthmus canal:** A canal across Thailand's Kra Isthmus would cut up to 1,000 miles off shipping distances from the Persian Gulf and Indian Ocean to Japan and the Pacific Ocean, and allow ships to avoid the difficult Malacca Straits. Engineering plans for the construction of the 103-kilometer canal have existed for the last decade.

● **A North-South irrigation canal in China:** While the northern portion of China suffers from water shortages, the southern portion gets abundant rainfall and often experiences flooding from lack of proper water control. Modernization of an old canal linking the Yangtze River in the south and the Yellow River to the north could even out the water distribution between the two great agricultural regions, greatly enhancing China's transportation, irrigation, flood control, and hydroelectric energy potential.

● **A second Panama Canal:** The Panama Canal, already a bottleneck to world trade, would be completely overloaded by the expansion of trade between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans under the Pacific Basin development package. A new sea level canal across the isthmus, long under study, is urgent.