

# THE PRICE OF PEACE

True Accounts of the Japanese Occupation

和平的代价



08

compiled & edited by Foong Choon Hon • translated by Clara Show

SINGAPORE CHINESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE & INDUSTRY

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PUSTAKA PERDANA



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ASIAPAC • SINGAPORE

## ABOUT THE EDITOR

An eyewitness of the Japanese Occupation, Foong Choon Hon has the ability to depict scenes of the war with a poignancy which evokes empathy and gratefulness for the heroes who sacrificed their lives.

Trained as a Chinese broadcaster at the British Broadcasting Corporation and later at the Syracuse T.V. and Radio Center in New York, he worked as a current affairs broadcaster and producer of T.V. and radio from 1956 to 1981. His capacity as a correspondent of the local broadcasting station had him travel across the five continents, which fine tuned his sensitivity to the international implications of every issue he handles. In 1982, he rose to become Controller of the Drama Unit in the Singapore Broadcasting Corporation and popularized Chinese T.V. serials in Singapore with the popular *Army Series* 〈〈新兵小传〉〉.

Foong Choon Hon is also known for his interview of Malayan Communist Party Plenipotentiary Fang Zhuang Bi in the border town of Betung for Shin Min Daily News, that won him the Story of the Year Award (Chinese) in 1992. In 1991, he was presented the American Express Journalism Award for his book *Dialogues with Mr S. Rajaratnam* (Former Senior Minister of the Prime Minister's Office) *on his 50 Years of Political Life*. Prior to this, in 1966, he coedited a compilation of former Prime Minister Lee Kwan Yew's speeches entitled *Singapore's Road To Nation Building* 〈〈新加坡之路〉〉.

Presently, he is the Senior Director of Cultural and Community Affairs of the Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry.

## ABOUT THE TRANSLATOR

Clara Show has been directly involved in translation work since she graduated from the National University of Singapore with majors in Political Science and Japanese Studies. Before becoming a freelance translator, she worked as a subtitler with the local television station. Her other works with Asiapac Books includes *Outlaws of The Marsh*, *Uptown Singles*, *Mr Petty*, *In Search of Deities*, *Return of The Hermit*, *The Headless Tribe*, *Secrets of the Chinese Palace* and *Chinese Astrology*. She is also the co-translator for the well-received English edition of *Force 136: Story of a WWII Resistance Fighter* before being commissioned to translate *The Price of Peace*.

## Foreword

The Victory Parade on 12 September 1945 at the Padang formally ended the brief but turbulent period of the Japanese Occupation but peace was bought at a very high price. To those who survived the war, the mere mention of the Japanese Occupation brought vivid memories of brutal killings and tortures, ruthless confiscation of properties, acute shortage of essential foodstuff and loss of freedom. Although this period was relatively short, lasting from February 1942 to September 1945, the scars of the brutalities meted out by the Japanese soldiers remain deeply etched in the minds of those who lived through it.

The Singapore Chinese Chamber of Commerce and Industry (SCCCI) took upon itself to document the Japanese Occupation by publishing a book entitled *The Price of Peace* in Chinese to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the end of World War II. *The Price of Peace* traced the true life experiences of those who lived through this tragic period, highlighted the indomitable spirit of the anti-Japanese resistance fighters and paid due recognition to the war heroes.

The Japanese Military Administration left no written records behind in Singapore. As a result the National Archives of Singapore had to acquire documents, artifacts and paraphernalia from individuals and institutions to make up for the absence of official records. The Oral History Centre interviewed some 175 persons to record their reminiscences of the war in Singapore and the Japanese Occupation.

The physical and psychological sufferings inflicted by the Japanese Military Administration on the people of Singapore are beyond the comprehension of our younger generation brought up in a safe and secure environment. It will be difficult for young Singaporeans to really understand the meaning of deprivation. This publication will bridge the experience gap.

I am pleased to learn that the SCCCI has now decided to publish an English edition of the book in order to reach out to a wider readership. Such an objective is indeed laudable. I am confident that this book, like its original

Chinese version, will be well received by all.

Lim Chee Onn  
Chairman  
National Heritage Board

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