

## Olympic hopeful rich in recreation

On the brighter side, things seem to be going much better in the areas of culture, sports and recreation (which is good news for the tourism industry). A huge new theater and concert hall complex was recently built in Nagano City by the prefectural government. It now offers a wide variety of musical and dramatic performances and can also be used for conferences and exhibitions. Its staff is especially proud of the fact that they have been able to form a sister-hall relationship with the Vienna Opera House. In 1984, making full use of the new hall, the city was host to the first World Chorus Music Festival ever to be held in Asia. Strong efforts are also being made to promote international youth and educational exchanges, especially with the two sister cities of Nagano, Shijiazhuang City in China and Clearwater, Florida in the United States.

Surrounded as it is by mountains, the Nagano City area has superb skiing in the winter and hiking in the summer. The city is the jumping-off point for trips to Shiga Heights, Nozawa Spa and Madarao Heights, three of the most popular ski resorts in the country, and is right at the foot of Iizuna, Togakushi and Sugadaira Heights, which offer a variety of fine slopes within an hour's drive of the city center. Skiers and hikers form the second largest group of tourists visiting Nagano each year, exceeded only by pilgrims coming to Zenkoji Temple. The prefectural governor and the city's active new mayor are now spearheading a drive to get the area chosen as the site for the 1996 Winter Olympics. The Nagano region is also popular for tennis and summer training camps for rugby and American football.

JNR trains are by far the easiest way to come to Nagano City. From Ueno Station in Tokyo, the "Asama" and "Hakusan" limited express trains of the Shinetsu Line make the trip in a little over three hours, while the "Shinano" trains run along the Chuo Line from Nagoya in about 3 hours and a half. Both lines offer frequent daily service. From Nagano Station, bus and taxi service is available to all nearby points of interest, although the fact that all bus signs and most road signs are written only in *kanji* can pose some minor problems.

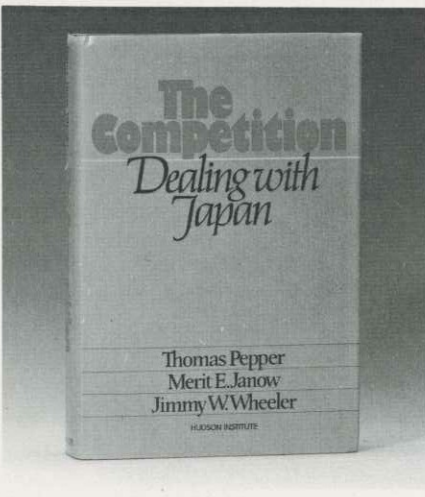
For those coming to Nagano City strictly as sightseers, the most interesting times of the year would probably be in the middle of April when the country's largest display of apricot blossoms can be seen in the nearby village of Mori; the first Saturday of August, when thousands of people dance in the streets in the Binzuru Festival; mid-autumn, when the changing fall leaves in Shiga Heights rival anything that New England in the United States has to offer; or November 20, when Ebisu, the god of good luck in business, is honored with a large fireworks display.

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# Bookshelf

## The Competition— Dealing with Japan

By Thomas Pepper, Merit E. Janow and  
Jimmy W. Wheeler  
Published by Praeger Publishers  
1985, New York  
375 pages; \$24.95



Building upon a thorough analysis of post-war Japanese development, particularly the ways in which government policy has responded to the changing industrial structure, this book by three authors affiliated with the Hudson Institute is an ambitious attempt to sort out the trade friction that currently plagues Japan-United States relations and forecast the future of this important relationship. The authors' conclusion that Japan and the United States are certain to become increasingly interdependent over the long term, despite fluctuation between cooperation and competition, may come across at times as overly optimistic given the near-hostility which now prevails, but overall Pepper, Janow and Wheeler argue very convincingly for this brighter future.

*The Competition* is organized into seven chapters and three appendices. The brief first chapter reviews the current state of Japan-U.S. relations and attempts to explain the various whys and wherefores of the situation.

The second chapter outlines the changes that have taken place in the Japanese and international economic environments since the 1970s and how these changes have affected Japanese industrial structure. A product of the high savings rate that stimulated heavy capital investment and a strong export orientation in the economy, Japan's rapid economic growth has been achieved only at considerable cost, including massive national deficits that have made it increasingly difficult to implement the necessary fiscal and monetary poli-

cies, the emergence of sunset industrial sectors such as the materials industry, their plight exacerbated by the oil crises of the 1970s, accumulation of trade friction with Europe and the United States in the export-oriented automobile, electrical equipment and electronics industries, and domestic demand constantly depressed by the high savings propensity. As the authors note, there is a crying need for Japan to push ahead with further liberalization of its capital markets and transformation of its industrial structure through ambitious industrial adjustment to encourage greater horizontal trade and more stimulation of domestic demand. The following chapters detail the progress of this transition and conclude that it not only is possible but most likely.

The authors begin in chapter three by defining the nature of Japanese government industrial policy and showing how it has become less and less protective over the postwar years. Chapter four is an unusual, highly informative and detailed analysis of the Japanese financial system and how it is changing. This is followed in chapter five by astute insights into research and development strategies in computers and other advanced technologies, and in chapter six by an explanation of the market-oriented restructuring that is taking place in the declining industries, with special reference to the materials industry.

Throughout, the authors emphasize that the Japanese industrial structure and industrial policies have undergone major changes in direct response to heightened international competition, fiscal policy constraints, and increasing political pressure from other countries. Even though the Japanese penchant for close policy cooperation between business and government is not expected to disappear overnight, they are eloquent in arguing that the Japanese economy is, albeit not entirely of Japan's own wishes, becoming increasingly open and market-competitive.

Just as Japan should draw upon its abundant savings to improve those areas in its social and industrial infrastructures where it lags behind Euro-American standards, i.e., housing, services and working conditions, so should it work to promote horizontal specialization through determined adjustment in its declining industries. By the same token, the authors argue that there is much the United States should do, including more effective restraints on inflation, a more realistic valuation of the dollar, reduction of the national debt, and more capital investment in industry-revitalizing productive resources.

In their seventh and final chapter, entitled, "The Changing Japanese Economy: Policy and Business Implications," the authors suggest that rather than criticizing Japan for the world's troubles, the United States would do well to take a more practical approach, giving Japan credit for the market-opening progress it has made since the mid-1970s and working to cement the interdependent ties between the two countries.

*The Competition* seems to have on rose-colored glasses when it argues that a more

realistic valuation of the dollar can solve the Japan-U.S. trade imbalance and that industrial restructuring will contribute to the emergence of a horizontal division of labor among nations, but the authors are to be highly commended for their careful and detailed analysis of Japanese government industrial policy. They clearly show how the government has played a declining role in Japan's economic development, and how the liberalization of the Japanese economy continues to advance at a sure, steady pace.

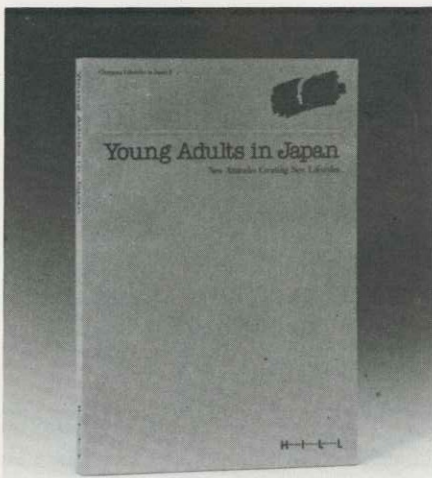
At least 70% of the trade friction between Japan and the United States is said to have its origin in the perception gap. Given this, *The Competition* has much to offer in its contention that Japan and the United States bear a shared responsibility for the preservation of world prosperity and its vision of competitive-yet-co-operative Japan-U.S. relations. This is a book which can do much to remind us of our common interests and calm the current friction between our two countries.

Seiji Kikka

Professor, Senshu University

## Young Adults in Japan —New Attitudes Creating New Lifestyles

Published by Hakuho Institute of Life and Living  
1985, Tokyo  
270 pages; ¥35,000 (US\$150)



The weekly Harajuku rites of those young exhibitionists known as *Takenoko-zoku* are by now a regular stop on the tourist trail. The sight of young Japanese dressed in black leather, hair done up with cornstarch, faces in all the colors Shiseido can imagine, dancing to golden oldies, is irresistible photo material. The scene also has been chronicled in the American and European press as a leading example of the "new breed" of Japanese.

But until now, no one has taken a more care-

ful look at this new generation, including not only the purposefully outlandish Harajuku crowd, but Japan's mainstream 18-23 year-olds. They're the ones who wear the drab colors demanded at school or work from Monday to Saturday, but then, on their own time, can be seen in European, American, or Japanese high fashion knockoffs.

This new breed often is described as the first generation of Japanese born into relative affluence, never wanting for food, clothing, or the other necessities of life. It's also a generation born into the television-electronic era, with Walkmans, DiscMans, WatchMans, and other assorted toys to amuse them, and a greater variety of leisure activities than their mothers and fathers could dream of. These differences alone give these "new" youngsters a set of expectations quite unlike any previous generation of Japanese. It is a cause for both optimism, and some concern, if a Hakuho Institute of Life and Living (HILL) study is on target.

The report *Young Adults in Japan—New Attitudes Creating New Lifestyles* is the third in HILL's series on changing lifestyles in Japan. The research, which began in the fall of 1984 and was completed in the spring of 1985, included interviews with 1,600 young people aged 18-23 and, for contrast, 300 people aged 40-45, all living in the greater Tokyo area. The survey describes young Japanese as more relaxed and fun-loving than ever before, disinterested in social or political issues but with an almost insatiable hunger for information on entertainment, fashion, and lifestyle topics, and less committed to work as the dominant activity in their lives.

"I go to the office and I think to myself, 'I hate this kind of existence,'" a young worker told an interviewer. "But I know that when Sunday comes, I can have fun again and I somehow make it through the workweek."

This might be a dramatic change in the Japanese context, but as a foreign executive in Tokyo puts it: "When young Japanese are seen as less committed," he said, "it means they're only willing to put out 100%."

Nonetheless, the fact that young Japanese are questioning the workaholic ethics of their elders and openly seeking alternate lifestyles of their own must surely benefit Japanese society as a whole. On the negative side, the strong evidence in this HILL survey of a mass superficiality, a concern with style rather than substance, could eventually erode a basic Japanese strength—the generally high quality of its average citizens.

Apart from broad sociological statements, the main reason why this report is likely to be attractive to many companies is that it provides raw data and some analysis into a generation which has created more different types of consumer markets than ever before. Trying to market products for young Japanese has become increasingly risky, because the "new breed," being more self-centered and intent on developing and enjoying a more personal lifestyle, is in the process of self-discovery. The clothes they wear may often seem remarkably similar, and hopelessly mismatched, but slowly,

they're developing more individual tastes, just as the scores of smart coffee houses and small restaurants which didn't exist a decade ago have brought to Tokyo a tasteful style of interior design and food preparation.

The problem for those trying to tap this enormous new youth market is that as these 18-23 year-olds are still in the process of developing their personal tastes, their answers to HILL questions provide only hints about the direction they're headed. "When I decide what clothes I should wear, whom I should eat with, or whether I should eat curried rice or Japanese noodles," a young person told HILL, "I usually follow my moods."

To identify those moods and tastes more precisely, the HILL interviewers collected detailed information on how Japanese youth earn and spend money, how they decorate their rooms, what possessions they prize most, which leisure activities are the most popular, and even how they dress to express their approach to life. There is also a section on "trendsetters," those young Japanese who do think they know what they want, and find their own pleasure in gathering the latest information on fashion, food, and design, and using it to impress or influence their friends.

The report emphasizes the "newness" of the values of this generation, but the only essential difference is in the intensity with which younger Japanese support values which have existed in Japanese society for generations.

Sixty-one percent of the survey's youth sample felt that life is basically to be enjoyed. "I can't imagine working all the time without doing something to break up the monotony," said a young worker. "A person who works all the time really doesn't have much of a life at all." That doesn't seem such a startling revelation, until it's compared to the attitude in the middle-aged sample, only 31% of whom felt the same way. Just over 69% of the youth group (72.9% of the women) said that feelings or impressions, not more practical or rational considerations, guide them in making purchases or pursuing activities. The figure for the middle-aged group is 35%.

Young Japanese also emphasize the importance of friends in their lives, and the fact that they're in no hurry to grow up, but even as they express their personal outlooks, old values are strongly expressed: stand out—but not too much; be a person of merit, but let others discover your good points rather than "selling" yourself too aggressively.

In the final analysis, although the new generation displays a more free-and-easy attitude, the test of their feelings will come in the next decade, when they face the inevitable realities of marriage, children and family obligations. If this new breed can institute the five-day, less-than-40-hour workweek, and take its vacations without worrying about what work colleagues think, then a real revolution will have occurred in Japan.

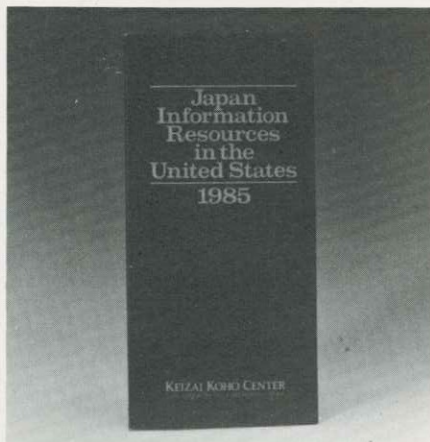
Michael Berger  
Tokyo Bureau Chief  
McGraw-Hill World News

## Japan Information Resources in the United States

Published by the Keizai Koho Center  
1985, Tokyo  
128 pages; ¥1,400 (US\$6.50)

Japan is no longer the land of *Fuji-yama* and *geisha*. It is also the land of *sushi* and *nemawashi*, of *kamban* and *zaitech*. Gradually, the imbalance in manufactures trade is sparking rectification of the imbalance in information trade.

Long a valuable source of information itself (e.g., the monthly *Speaking of Japan*, the quarterly *Economic Eye* and the annually updated *Japan: An International Comparison*), the Keizai Koho Center has published a directory of information sources in the United States



that will be welcomed by readers everywhere.

All told, there are nearly 200 sources listed. To make them easier to find and use, they are grouped into Japanese government organiza-

tions, U.S. government organizations, Japan trade centers, chambers of commerce, industry associations, Japan societies, non-profit organizations, university programs, research institutions and libraries; and then indexed alphabetically and by location. Each easy-to-find listing then includes name, address, names and titles of key personnel, and at least a paragraph summarizing the organization and program. And the whole thing is compact enough to fit into your jacket pocket or purse.

There are doubtless many organizations that this compilation has missed, but it is the best start I have seen yet. Highly recommended.

(Available only from Keizai Koho Center, 6-1, Otemachi 1-chome, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100, Japan; Tel. (03) 201-1416)

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President, Japan Research Inc.

## Taste of Tokyo

### La Casita—Genuine Mexican Food

What is genuine Mexican cuisine really like? Of course, the ideal way to find out is to go to Mexico. But for visitors to Tokyo who can't afford the time, the next best choice is beyond a doubt to go to Daikanyama, and the marvelous Mexican restaurant, La Casita.

Most people think of *tacos* when they think of Mexican food. Indian corn, the Mexican staple, is milled into flour, kneaded into dough and baked in thin sheets called *tortilla*. Wrap up beef, chicken, roast pork tripe, and other ingredients in the *tortilla*, season it with salsa sauce of chopped pepper, garlic, onion, tomato and spices, and you have *tacos*.

If *tortilla* can be likened to the Japanese staple of boiled rice, then *tacos* would be *tendon* (tempura placed on top of a bowl of rice) or *katsudon* (pork cutlet on rice). Accordingly, *tacos* is not on the menu of quality restaurants in Mexico. It is more a convenient snack food, although the fast food *tacos* which has been gaining popularity in Japan recently came from the U.S. and, as the meat inside is usually minced, is a far cry from the genuine article.

So what is Mexican cuisine if not *tacos*? Let the dinner menu at La Casita be your guide. Among the hors d'œuvres are an avocado cocktail called *Coctel de Aguacate* (¥680) and vinegar-marinated stewed ox tongue called *Lengua de Vaca en Escabeche* (¥680). Recommended main dishes are chicken with

adobo sauce (*Pollo en Adobo*, ¥1,480) and garlic-flavored prawns (*Camarones al Ajillo*, ¥1,380). The former is roasted young chicken covered with a hot sauce containing two kinds of pepper. The latter is typical of resort areas like Acapulco, and consists of fresh prawns fried in garlic oil. It has just the right sharpness and is excellent with tequila or beer. In all, the menu lists more than 40 items.

Owner Y. Watanabe majored in Spanish at the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies. Interested in cooking, he wanted to open a restaurant in Tokyo offering genuine Mexican dishes. Twelve years ago, he flew to Mexico and spent two years in training at a traditional native restaurant in Mexico City seating 3,000 customers. Today he is a fully qualified Mexican chef.

Watanabe opened La Casita seven years ago. The restaurant has many regular custom-

ers, and is also patronized by people who come from far away. In fine weather, you can dine on the open-air terrace. While there are a dozen Mexican restaurants in Tokyo, few are as true to the native taste as La Casita.

The folkcraft decorations, the cheerful Latin rhythms flowing through the restaurant, and the heady feeling that comes after a margarita, the famous tequila-based Mexican cocktail, will carry you away completely. You may even think you have gone to Mexico yourself.

Address: 28-2, Sarugaku-cho, Shibuya-ku  
(Two minutes from Daikanyama Station on Toyoko Line)

Tel: (03) 496-1850

Open: 11:00 a.m.–10:00 p.m. (Closed Wednesdays)

(Yoshimichi Hori, editor-in-chief)

