

and the method or way to do was there, the Japanese system worked effectively since it successfully emulated the forerunner. It brought with it, however, the huge inefficient government bureaucracy and the built-in vested interest groups among the government-industry complex. This system, operating under the many special rules based on Japanese culture, has excluded foreign competitors, who began to apply pressure on the Japanese government to change these rules when Japan became one of the economic superpowers. The greatest disadvantage of this system, among other things, is that over-regulations often suffocated new creative endeavors in economic activities. This discouraging effect was also enhanced by the traditional Japanese value; 'the nail that sticks up is hammered down.' Around the 1980s the new economic policy appeared, which emphasized 'privatization' and 'deregulation' (liberalization). In actuality, some government-owned industries were privatized and many old regulations were abolished. Today, people talk about the financial "Big Bung." The abolishment of strong governmental protection means more competitive markets for Japanese financial institutions where foreign businesses have equal opportunity and access under the same universal rules. Many conventional business customs are being changed.

## 2) Internationalization

Globalization is an undeniable fact, which is not a matter of choice to contemporary Japanese people. In the economic sphere in particular, Japan cannot continue to exist without the world market. Its economy heavily depends on the rest of the world when it comes to raw materials and finished goods. Today, they say that when you sit at *Sushi* counter in big cities in Japan, you find almost 80% of the sushi materials (mainly marine products) coming from abroad. Actually, Japan is the world's No.1 importer of marine products. In 1994, Japan's imports accounted for 32% of the world's total marine imports, about 2.3 times bigger than imports by the U. S., the world's No. 2 importer, even though the country is surrounded by seas with abundant marine resources. Thus, as indicated in Chart 1, Japan's food self-sufficiency rate has been decreasing gradually, and the rate (calculated by the calorie method) was lowest among the main developed countries in 1988; Japan 49%, U. S. A. 113%, U. K. 73% France 143%, West Germany 94%, and Switzerland 65%.

Domestically, thought it is still small in number in comparison with other countries, particularly such countries as America, Canada, and Australia (the so-called immigrant nations), more foreigners now live in Japan. The number of foreigners living in Japan exceeded 1,345,000 in 1994, slightly more than one percent of the total population, with Koreans 50%, Chinese 16%, Brazilians 12%, Philippines 6%, Americans 3%, and so on. Given the special historical reasons for Koreans' dominant status as 'immigrants' to this nation, it can be safely said that Japanese still do not have the experiences to 'live with' people of different culture and history.

The number of foreign students studying in Japan increased 750% between 1981 and 1995. Chinese, Korean, and Taiwanese (in that order) are the most numerous, accounting for 78% of the total. Back in their own countries, however, they are a minority as many go to study in America, Australia, and Europe. Former Prime Minister Nakasone declared in the 1980s that by 2000 Japan would host 100,000 foreign students. This target does not seem to be feasible as we see a slight declining the number of foreign students in Japan between 1994 and 1995. In addition, Japanese government financial support to these students is poor. In fact, only 14% of the 53,847 foreign students studying in Japan in 1995 are the recipients of Japanese government scholarships. Objective globalization never stops, and still the Japanese mentality cannot keep pace with this process.

## 3) The coming of the information revolution

The new information-related technology, the new ways of transferring, processing, and storing information, are beginning to have an unforeseeable impact on our social life. Already some types of job-performance such as sales make it unnecessary for employees to come to the office every day because they can meet the customers and conduct business in other settings. In addition, they can receive orders from the company and send sales reports back to the company by using portable computer. This is what Bill Gates proudly declared in his book, *The Road Ahead* (Viking, 1995, pp. 4-5). He wrote: "There will be a day, not far distant, when you will be able to conduct business, study, explore the world and its cultures, call up any great