1. VALUE OF EXPORTS AND IMPORTS BY COMMODITY

In 1973, exports from Japan totaled $30,909 million, whereas imports totaled $35,914 million. These figures are 17.2% and 18.4%, respectively, of the exports and imports of the whole world, excluding the socialist countries. Japan ranked third after the United States and Federal Republic of Germany in the value of exports and ranked fourth after the United States, Federal Republic of Germany and the United Kingdom in the value of imports.

The following are the percentages of the amount of exports by principal commodity in 1973:

- Machinery and equipment constituted 51.5% ($30,360 million) of the total value of exports. Among these items, automobiles (including motorcycles) made up 27.2%, steel 15.6%, and televisions and radios 11.1%. Metals and metal products took up 18.3% ($5,049 million) of the total value of exports. Of this item, the percentage of iron and steel was 71.4%. Textiles and related products accounted for 8.9% ($2,729 million) of the total value of exports.

The following are the percentages of the amount of imports by commodity in 1973:

- Mineral fuels comprised 21.7% ($6,088 million) of the total value of imports. Among the mineral fuels, the percentage of crude oil was 71.1%, and coal 18.5%. Foodstuffs accounted for 15.0% ($6,689 million) of the total value of imports. Of this item, the percentage of fish and shellfish was 68.3%, meat 11.9%, wheat 11.0%, and maize (for fodder) 9.5%. Other raw materials made up 12.2% ($3,095 million) of the total value of imports. Of these items, the percentage of bauxite was 38.5%, and soybeans 22.5%, nonmetallic mineral ores 9.8%. Other items constituted 48.8% ($2,729 million) of the total value of imports. Of these, the percentage of textile products was 50.5%, and agricultural products 18.2%.

The pattern of Japan's foreign trade is such that exports center on products of heavy industries and imports as raw materials.

Before World War II, exports from Japan grew with the light industry products composed mainly of textiles. Since 1890, Japan entered a high economic growth period. The percentage of heavy industry products increased in exports. In 1981, light industry products reached 29.7%, and heavy industry products 41.7%, while in 1973, heavy and chemical industry products attained 48.4%. Since the heavy and chemical industry products occupied the major part of exports, the competitiveness of Japan's commodities was remarkably strengthened and the high increase of exports continued. Among the heavy and chemical industry products, the export of iron and steel, automobiles, ships and communications equipment had an especially high rate—the total value of exports being 67.5% in 1973.

Major import commodities are foodstuffs, raw materials, and fuels. This pattern is the same throughout the period before and after World War II. Especially after the war, following the development of the heavy and chemical industry, the import rate of mineral fuels and metallic materials increased significantly. The import rate for foodstuffs dropped proportionally because of the increase of mineral fuels, through the absolute value continued to increase. The import rate of machinery was low, but electronic computers and aircraft, which are included in machinery, showed a high import rate.

As for Japan's trade by area, North America and Southeast Asia had the highest percentages. Japan's exports to North America were 21.9% of the total value of exports in 1973, while this percentage increased to approximately 30% in 1981. Exports to Southeast Asia amounted to 27.5% of the total value of exports in 1973, but this percentage decreased to 26.5% in 1981. From 1973, exports to West Asia, the socialist countries, Central and South America, Oceania, and Africa increased, while the rate of exports to North America and Southeast Asia decreased.

Recently, imports from self-governing countries have increased remarkably, resulting in increasing the percentage of imports from West Asia. The percentage of imports from the United States and Japan was 62.5% in 1959. Until 1973 the United States ranked first in imports to Japan, but in 1973, West Asia surpassed the first ranking.

2. Value of Exports and Imports by Port

There are 189 open ports in Japan and 1,000 harbors at various airports. (As of December 1973)

The five main ports for exports are Yokohama, Kobe, Nagoya, Tokyo, and Osaka. The total exports from these five ports amounted to 86.7% of the total exports. Shimon, Hiroeina, Toba, Sakai and Kawasaki are other important ports for exports.

Yokohama, Kobe, Tokyo, and Nagoya ports and Haneda Airport handled 43% of the total imports. Osaka, Toba, Kawasaki, Yokohama and Kaminoo are other important ports for imports.

Among the ports surveyed, 85 ports had an excess of imports in 1973, whereas 39 ports had an excess of exports. Industrial materials and mineral fuels, which make up the majority of imports to Japan, are stored for all the ports, while the products from these materials are exported from the main ports.

In ports that are situated in the coastal industrial areas such as Toba, Kawasaki, Kaminoo, and Yokohama, industrial materials and fuels accounted for 10% to 40% of the total imports.

The value of exports and imports handled by the large ports has changed as follows:

Tokyo continues to increase in exports and imports. The average annual rate of increase between 1973 and 1975 was 9.9% for imports and 19.7% for exports. Compared to Tokyo, Yokohama and Kobe were relatively stagnant in exports and imports. The rate of increase of exports and imports of ports located in industrial complexes was high, especially for Osaka where the average annual rate of increase between 1970 and 1973 was approximately 15%.

The percentage of air cargo in total exports and imports in 1973 was 3.7% and 5.7%, respectively. Haneda Airport handled 50.8% of the imports. Principal air cargo airports consisted of electronic computers, business machines, aircraft, works of art, diamonds and precious metals, while the principal air cargo exports were business machines, scientific and optical equipment, watches, communications equipment and parts.

Points on the Legend and Map Compilation

The value of exports and imports per port is based on the "Monthly Tables on Foreign Trade" published by the customs. These data show the value of foreign trade by commodity and are not by port defined in "Port Law" and "Airport Law". On this sheet, the value of exports and imports handled at airports, except for Haneda and Itami airports, are added to the value of cargo trade of ports within the same administrative area.

Sources