

of people, but covered with endless forests and wheatfields and endowed with inexhaustible supplies of all minerals. Apart from these coveted resources, the country is perceived as a cold and inhospitable land to which the visitor journeys at his peril, fully expecting to be stranded for weeks in a snowstorm. Foreigners understand that there are a few towns here and there in Canada but they believe that they exist almost exclusively to collect and ship abroad the rocks and the logs and the wheat which they believe Canadians are always ready to sell to the first foreign buyer. The political system of that exotic country seems so complex that many foreigners have long ago given up hope of ever understanding how it operates: there is not one but eleven governments, seeming to be always arguing with each other and never able, it seems, to agree on anything. I imagine that many Japanese believe that the United States exerts upon this mythical Canada a mysterious influence, so pervasive that it does not really matter whether or not these eleven governments agree on anything; and to maintain their own good relations with the United States, some Japanese probably think it is highly preferable that the Japanese not involve themselves too deeply with Canadians -- except when it is absolutely necessary to obtain rocks and logs and wheat at a good price. Oh yes, the Japanese know, of course, that these Canadians conveniently buy quite a lot of Japanese manufactured products, which is helpful in paying for raw materials; but they tend to believe that Canadians manufacture hardly anything which sophisticated firms and consumers in Japan might need.

An exaggeration? Of course it is. Your businessmen and your officials are too shrewd to entertain today such simplistic notions about Canada. But this caricature will help you understand, I hope, the frustrations which we Canadians feel when we are dealing with you.

It is true that Canada is about thirty times as large as Japan and that it is much better endowed with agricultural land and mineral resources; but our population, although much smaller than that of Japan, constitutes also a substantial market for industrial products because of its high average income and growth rate. In fact, Canada has the fastest growing labour force of all industrialized countries; and we often feel that the Japanese forget that there are a lot of people -- in fact entire cities and communities -- involved in our agricultural and mineral industries which simply cannot generate, at the primary stage, enough jobs to maintain full employment. Few Japanese seem to realize that only a small proportion of our Gross National Product of approximately 42,000 billion yen