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General Survey

White Paper on International Trade

The 1993 White Paper on international trade was endorsed at a May 21 Cabinet meeting. Comprised of four chapters and concluding remarks, this year's white paper makes a multi-faceted analysis of factors behind Japan's ever-widening trade surplus, such as the change in trade structure and its relation to the balance of savings and investment. In short, the paper focuses on the nation's towering trade imbalance with the world. It criticizes protectionist-oriented "managed trade" and proposes that the expanded balance of trade in the global economy be the focus of attention. Below is a summary of the white paper.

On trade and competition, the white paper refers to the nation's trade surplus with the United States. The Clinton administration set forth a policy which stresses the strengthening of competitiveness against the backdrop of the huge U.S. bilateral trade deficit with Japan. At the same time, the paper sees inadequate market access for American firms, products and investors as the reason U.S. exports to Japan have remained flat. The white Paper argues that U.S. competitiveness, however, is not weak as far as labor productivity is concerned.

Hence, the cause of the U.S. trade deficit with Japan is the lack of savings which is in large part attributable to the U.S. federal budget deficit. Thus the white paper reveals a gap in perspective between the two nations.

Regarding the imbalance, the white paper, through a multi-faceted analysis, refutes international criticism of the view that Japan's trade surplus is due to the closed nature of its market. The major factor behind Japan's recent growth in exports is the soaring price of exported goods brought on by the strong yen and high value-added goods, rather than rapidly rising exports in terms of volume. Furthermore, the white paper expresses the view that since a nation's economic balance of payments coincides with the macroeconomic balance between savings and investment, highest priority should be given to the macroeconomic structure. Thus, Japan's domestic demand promotion and U.S. budget deficit reduction are the principal policy avenues available for reducing current account as well as trade imbalances over a period of five to ten years. Indicating that it is problematic to discuss the bilateral trade imbalance only in terms of goods transactions, the white paper proposes that discussions should be made from the perspective of trade in both goods and services, including services trade such as finance and travel.

Finally, the paper touches upon international trade and the economy. One feature of this year's white paper is the constraints on movements toward regional unification. The White

Paper compares the economic effects of regional unification such as the establishment of the European Community (EC) and NAFTA and the Uruguay Round of multilateral trade liberalization talks.

The White Paper highly evaluates the latter option, that of the new Uruguay Round, since it is aimed at liberalization of goods and services as well as establishing of rules for such new fields as intellectual property rights.

The White Paper indicates that this will produce greater economic benefits than will any form of regional unification.

1992 Family Income & Expenditure Survey

Consumption expenditures by all households showed a 0.5 percent drop in real terms to a monthly average of 333,661yen, according to the 1992 Family Income and Expenditure Survey announced on May 25 by the Management and Coordination Agency (MCA). Real growth was negative for the first time in 12 years since the 1980s following the second oil-supply crunch.

The Japanese economy was in an adjustment phase in fiscal 1992. Real gross national product grew 1.3 percent in the January-to-June period, compared with the previous six-month period, and then dropped 0.5 percent in the July-to-December period. Personal spending also showed dismal growth. Consumption expenditures in 1992 can be characterized as follows.

A surge in rent particularly for private rented houses and higher expenditures for housing-related equipment repair and maintenance led to a marked real growth in housing expenses in real terms.

Cultural and entertainment services, such as package tours, showed a firm rebound and strong real growth due to the sharp dip in the number of those who traveled overseas due to the effects of the Gulf crisis the year before.

Although there was a marked drop in auto sales in real terms, as a consequence auto maintenance expenses increased, such as gasoline consumption.

Durable goods, such as domestic durables as well as expenditures on culture and entertainment, showed a sharp drop in real terms.

Clothing and footwear expenditures, such as those for suits, shirts and sweaters, showed a sharp decline.

By type of household, consumption expenditures of salaried workers' households, which account for 62.7 percent of the total, grew 0.1 percent in real terms. In contrast, those of households other than that of salaried workers dropped 1.9 percent, thus pushing down the overall level. Furthermore, average consumption propensity (the proportion of consumption expenditures in disposable income) for salaried workers' households was 74.3 percent, down 0.5 percent from the year before. This is due to the fact that disposable income grew 0.7 percent in real terms, surpassing the growth in consumption expenditures. This thus marks the sixth consecutive yearly decline of the average consumption propensity.

Working Conditions and the Market

Basic Survey on Female Employment and Management

The Ministry of Labour annually conducts its Basic Survey of Female Employment Management to comprehensively understand the realities of employment and management of female workers in major industries. In fiscal 1992, six years after the enactment of the Equal Employment Opportunity Law (EEOC), the Ministry conducted the survey in order to gain deeper insight into how enterprises utilize female workers. The survey was conducted in October 1992 among 7,000 private firms that employ 30 and more regular workers at head offices. Of the 7,000, 77.5 percent, or 5,429, replied to the survey.

In recruiting new school graduates (those who graduated from four-year universities, junior colleges, technical colleges and high schools in March 1992) for clerical, sales, and technical fields, many corporations offered "jobs and courses open only to men." The percentages of those offering such job courses for recruitment of high school graduates and four-year university graduates in engineering were 48.9% and 47.5%, respectively.

As for reasons behind "jobs and courses for men only," the highest, or 39.7 percent of enterprises, cited "No females with qualifications, specialized skills and techniques needed for business operations," followed by "No women apply"(25.1%), "Have much overtime work which does not necessarily extend into late night hours"(23.4%), and, "Have night work not allowed for women under the Labour Standards Law"(17.5%).

When observing assignment of workers by job, a relatively high percentage of corporations said "Men only are assigned to some workplaces." Also, 42.4 percent, 33.6

percent and 24.7 percent noted that men alone are assigned to sales, to research and development, and to production, respectively. As for reasons for assigning males only, the largest, or 41.1 percent listed "No females suited to the job concerned," followed by "Much interaction is required with outside people" (36.8 %) and "No females with skills and qualifications" (26.2%). Regarding promotion, 54.7 percent of firms had women workers who hold the post of chief clerk or above. By position, 7.2 percent had female department managers, 19.1 percent had women section managers and 38.2 percent had female chief clerks. Female workers comprised 1.2 percent of all department managers, 2.3 percent of section managers and 6.4 percent of chief clerks.

In issues regarding the active utilization of women, the highest, or 46.4 percent said "Women on average have a short career expectancy," followed by "We have to take women's families into consideration" (39.5%), and "Women generally have a low work consciousness"(33.1%).

Public Policy

Guidelines for the Employment of Foreigners and a Reporting System

The number of foreign workers engaged in professional and technological jobs has been growing yearly. Meanwhile, employment of foreign workers is spreading across the corporate environment-from large companies who have a wealth of experience in employment of foreigners to medium-size firms with little experience. Under these circumstances, a variety of obstacles confront foreign workers in finding jobs. Since they have not yet settled down, they neither have a foothold in Japan, nor are they well versed in the Japanese language or Japanese labor practices. To curb difficulties and promote improvements in employment administration and assurance of appropriate working conditions and safety and health, the Ministry of Labour formulated "Guidelines Pertaining to Employment of Foreign Workers and Working Conditions." The Ministry will actively utilize these guidelines in the years ahead through such administrative guidance.

The Guidelines incorporate the following six pillars. First, when recruiting people abroad for work in Japan, employers should report to their local Public Employment Security Office (PESO) the number of such hires. Also, they should accept foreign workers through the mediation of those who have obtained government approval for job-placement services overseas. Furthermore, in employing foreign workers, employers should check to make sure beforehand if the workers' qualification for stay in Japan allows them to work here through passports or foreign registration certificates. Secondly, employers should endeavor to issue an employment notice which clearly states the major working conditions in a manner

understandable to foreign workers. Thirdly, employers should offer safety and health education programs, the contents of which are understandable to foreign workers. Moreover, they should strive to offer the language education necessary to prevent industrial injuries. In addition, employers should make efforts to explain the purpose of physical checkups to foreign workers so that it can be understood. Furthermore, employers are to give health guidance and counseling to foreign workers through the active utilization of industrial doctors.

Fourth, employers must seek to make foreign workers aware of the Workers' Accident Compensation Program. Fifth, employers should strive to assure that foreign workers have appropriate accommodations and also strive to provide them with guidance in language education and Japanese living practices. Lastly, employers should report their employment of foreign workers to their local PESO on June 1 of each year, in accordance with the Foreign Worker Employment Reporting System.

Bill Revising Labour Standards Law Becomes Law; 40-Hour Workweek to be Launched in April 1994

On June 2, a bill revising the Labour Standards Law (LSL) was passed by the Diet. The revision will cut the statutory workweek to 40 hours from the current 44 beginning in April 1994. However, employers in smaller-scale enterprises will be allowed to delay application of the 40-hour workweek until March 1997. Furthermore, the rate of premium for overtime work, including night work and work on holidays, is to be set within the range of 25 to 50 percent according to order. From this fall, the Central Labour Standards Council, an advisory panel to the Minister of Labour, plans to deliberate on the level of the overtime premium rate and the scope of industries or enterprises which will enjoy the privilege of postponing the 40-hour workweek.

The bill revising the LSL was submitted to the Diet on February 19 for deliberations. The Social Democratic Party of Japan (SDPJ), Komeito, the Democratic Socialist Party (DSP) and Minshukaikakurengo jointly presented their revision bill, and the Japan Communist Party (JCP), meanwhile, submitted its amendment to the bill. However, lawmakers of both Houses of the Diet adopted a supplementary decision. Three years after enforcement of the revised law they will examine its effects and the future of working hours law, and will take necessary action based on the results thereof. Opposition parties, excluding the JCP, agreed upon the subsidiary decision and the Diet approved of the bill in its original form.

Although the bill was approved by the Diet, several issues remain unsolved. First is determination of those industries where application of the 40-hour workweek will be postponed. Smaller enterprises with a weak financial basis and those in the specified

industries, which account for 45.4 percent of the labor force will be allowed to continue the 46-hour workweek until March 1994. Also, after enforcement of the revised Law they will be allowed to enjoy application of what is called the "40-44 hour" limit. The Diet's supplementary decision incorporates the following: first, to limit postponement as much as possible; and second, to endeavor to switch to the 40-hour limit as soon as possible even during the period of postponement until March 1997. The Council in which representatives from labor and management will take part will examine these two points.

Under the present Law, employers must pay premiums at a rate of 25 percent over nominal wages for overtime work and for work on holidays. Opposition parties had demanded that the rate be raised to 35 percent for overtime and to 50 percent for work on holidays. The revised Law allows some margin of flexibility in the rate. The specific level of the premium rate will be determined by the Council. This will likely be the greatest point at issue for both labor and management.

The revised Law incorporates two more pillars: first, establishing the variable work hours system with a maximum variable period of one year; and second, shortening the period of continued work needed to take paid annual leave "from one year to six months" (10 days given).

Special Topic

Employment Measures for Persons With Disabilities in Japan: Recent Developments

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1. An Overview of Post-War Developments

Following the chaotic period after World War II, the Japanese economy shifted during the mid-50s into the period of high economic growth, which resulted in the gradual improvement of the country's general employment situation. However, it did not necessarily favorably affect the situation of disabled people, the majority of whom remained unemployed or underemployed due to a lack of job opportunities made unavailable due to their disabilities. It became widely recognized by both governmental and nongovernmental organizations concerned that drastic measures had to be taken to improve the employment situation for

persons with disabilities in Japan.

Meanwhile, at its General Conference in 1955, the International Labor Organization attempted to adopt the 'Vocational Rehabilitation Recommendation' for persons with disabilities, which eventually became an internationally recognized guideline for vocational rehabilitation and employment programs and services for disabled people. Based on the Recommendation, many groups of disabled people as well as various support groups and organizations strongly demanded that the government take concrete action to promote such vocational rehabilitation and employment.

As a result, the 'Physically Handicapped Persons Employment Promotion Law' was enacted in 1960. This was the first major employment law for persons with disabilities in Japan, which significantly changed the nature of governmental assistance from one of providing social welfare to that of insuring employment opportunities.

This law aimed at promoting the employment of persons with physical disabilities mainly through the establishment of an employment quota system, an on-the-job adjustment training scheme, and an assistance grant system, in addition to offering vocational guidance and placement services at the Public Employment Security Offices (PESOs).

The initial employment quota was set as follows:

-Private enterprises

- a. Clerical operations: 1.3%
- b. Non-clerical operations: 1.1%

-Local and national government organizations

- a. Clerical operations: 1.7%
- b. Non-clerical operations: 1.6%

In 1968 the employment quota at private enterprises was revised to 1.3% across the board.

The employment quota under the original law was merely a moral obligation imposed on employers without much enforcement power. Even though this law was not strongly enforced, the actual employment rate of persons with physical disabilities in private enterprises increased from 0.78% in 1961 to 1.10% in 1965, and then to 1.25% in 1970. In 1976, it exceeded the employment quota (1.3%) by 0.06 points.

Such an improvement in the employment situation of physically disabled people could be

attributed to the high economic growth of Japan in the 1960s and early 70s, rather than to the various vocational and employment measures that have been taken since the enactment of the law. After the war Japan suffered a shortage of manpower for the first time, due to the demand for labor during this high economic growth period. This demand led to increased job opportunities for persons with slight or moderate disabilities, especially in small or medium-size enterprises, who found it difficult to recruit non-disabled workers from the labor market.

However, maintenance of this established quota of disabled persons in the workforce was threatened by the decrease in economic growth after the oil shock in 1973, and by the increasing number of elderly people due to the aging of the general population, as well as advancements in medical science. The number of people with severe physical disabilities also increased and it was feared that their employment situation might deteriorate rapidly as a result.

As a countermeasure to support the employment of disabled persons, the 'Physically Handicapped Persons Employment Promotion Law' was drastically revised in 1976 to make the previous employment quota a legal requirement. The quota of private enterprises was raised to 1.5%, while those of local and national government organizations were raised to 1.9% and 1.8% for clerical and non-clerical operations respectively.

Employers are requested to report to their local PESO annually the number of physically disabled workers they employ. The PESO may request employers who are failing to employ a sufficient number of physically disabled workers to draw up a plan for such employment, and urge them to follow it. In such cases where employers are apparently not willing to fulfill their obligation, their names may be disclosed to the public, in order that adverse publicity will create changes in their attitudes towards the employment of disabled people.

Employing people with physical disabilities may require employers to take measures to adapt existing facilities, build new facilities, and provide extra supervision or training. This creates a greater financial burden for those employers seeking to comply with the law. Hence, the levy and grant system collects a levy from employers who fail to meet their employment quota. The collected levies are then redistributed in the form of various grants among those employers who meet their quotas, in order to balance the financial differences and to cover their extra costs.

The operation of the levy and grant system is entrusted to the National Association for Employment of the Handicapped, which was established in 1977 based on the revised law (renamed the Japan Association for Employment of the Disabled in 1988). Besides collecting

levies and awarding various grants, the association organizes educational programs to raise public awareness of the employment of disabled people.

Making the greatest possible use of the grant, two projects were launched in 1982 and 1983: the "Ability Development Project for the Severely Disabled, a Private Enterprise and Sheltered Workshop Co-operative" and the "Project for Development of Third-Sector Enterprises for the Employment of Severely Disabled Persons," respectively. The former aims at encouraging the establishment of ability development projects run jointly by sheltered workshops for the disabled and private enterprises to promote the employment of workshop clients in the open labor market through their joint efforts. The latter aims at encouraging the establishment of a joint venture between local public bodies and private enterprises to create employment opportunities for severely disabled workers within their community.

These projects target promoting the integration of persons with severe disabilities into the open labor market by making use of 'vitality' and know-how of business and industry.

The 'Physically Handicapped Persons Employment Promotion Law' was changed again in 1987, and renamed the 'Law for the Employment Promotion, etc. of the Disabled' in response to several events. The U.N. declared 1981 as the International Year of Disabled Persons and 1983-1992 the Decade of Disabled Persons, both of whose main theme was "Full Participation and Equality" for disabled people. Also, the ILO adopted the Convention and Recommendation concerning the 'Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons)' in 1983, both of which intended not only to expand employment opportunities for all categories of disabled persons in the open labor market, but also to further improve the quality of their working life.

Under the law, the following new provisions were made:

(1) The quota and levy system can also be applied towards assisting persons with mental retardation without making their employment a legal obligation of employers;

(2) The law is now responsible for the employment security of disabled persons in addition to their employment promotion;

(3) The vocational rehabilitation measures for persons with all categories of disabilities must make further advancements, including the establishment of the National Institute of Vocational Rehabilitation as a central institution for the nationwide vocational rehabilitation network. The Institute carries out surveys and conducts research, collects, analyses and distributes information concerning the vocational rehabilitation and employment of disabled people, gives advice and technical assistance to employers, and engages in training of relevant professional staff, and other endeavors.

Following the review of the employment quota in 1988, the quota for private enterprises was raised to 1.6% while those for local and national government organizations were raised to 2.0% for clerical operations, and 1.9% for non-clerical operations.

To strengthen the measures for persons with mental disorders and persons with mental retardation, the latest revision of the law was made in 1992 in accordance with Japan's ratification of the ILO Convention concerning 'Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons)' in the same year.

The effects of these developments are expected to be observed in the coming years.

2. The Disabled Population and Their Employments Situation

According to the Ministry of Health and Welfare, the total number of disabled people over 18 years of age in Japan is estimated at around 4.2 million, which is about 4.3% of the total population in that age bracket. Of these 4.2 million adults with disabilities, the number of persons with physical disabilities totals about 2.85 million (2.72 million living at home, and 0.13 million in institutions in 1991), the number of persons with mental retardation totals about 0.26 million (0.17 million living at home, and 0.09 million in institutions in 1990), and that of persons with mental disorders totals about 1.08 million, around 0.35 million of whom are in-patients.

The survey conducted in 1980, when compared to the 1991 survey, show the following results for people with physical disabilities living at home; (1) their number increased by 0.75 million (37.7%); (2) the percentage of all physically disabled persons over 65 years of age increased 7.0 points from 41.8% to 48.8%, while that of those between 18 and 64 years of age, who could benefit from the vocational rehabilitation and employment services, declined 9.3 points from 58.2% in 1980 to 48.9% in 1991; and (3) the percentage of persons with severe disabilities increased 7.4 points from 32.7% to 40.1%. This data indicates that physically disabled people in Japan are rapidly aging and becoming more severely disabled.

Under these circumstances it has become increasingly difficult for disabled persons to find jobs; the rate of employment of physically disabled persons decreased 3.3 points from 32.3% in 1980 to 29.0% in 1987, which is less than half the rate of employment of non-disabled workers (59.0% in 1987). Employed physically disabled persons in 1987 consisted of those who were self-employed (24.4%), those who were family-employed (10.8%), those who were employees (45.3%), and others (19.5%). In comparison with non-disabled workers where the rate of employees was 75.0% in 1986, the percentage of employees for all employed physically disabled persons is much lower.

As for persons with mental retardation, only 22.1% of those who were working (around 100,000 in 1990) were regular employees while 43.2% of them served at sheltered or community workshops. The percentage of persons with mental retardation in regular employment was less than half of that for persons with physical disabilities, implying that the employment of persons with mental retardation is much more difficult in Japan.

There is a lack of reliable statistics on the employment situation of persons with mental disorders. In a recent survey conducted by the Ministry of Health and Welfare, out of 14,048 outpatients, 37.1% responded that they were "mainly engaged in work."

The number of people with disabilities employed by targeted private enterprises (that is, those with over 67 full-time employees until March 1988, and those with over 63 full-time employees since April 1988) increased from 128,429 employees in 1977 by 101,298 people to 229,627 employees in 1992. The actual employment rate increased 0.27 points from 1.09% to 1.36% during this period.

While the actual employment rate of disabled persons in private enterprises has increased gradually, the tempo of the progress has been rather slow, and still falls short of the legal quota of 1.6% by 0.27 points as of June 1992.

The employment situation of disabled people in private enterprises categorized by size of full-time employees, as of June 1992, is as follows:

- 2.04% in enterprises with 63-99 full-time employees
- 1.51% in enterprises with 100-299 full-time employees
- 1.29% in enterprises with 300-499 full-time employees
- 1.22% in enterprises with 500-999 full-time employees
- 1.23% in enterprises with over 1,000 full-time employees

As illustrated above, the employment quota is exceeded only by those enterprises with 63-99 full-time employees, and the actual employment rate becomes lower as the size of enterprises becomes larger. In particular, the rate of employment at large-scale enterprises remains low.

However, the largest increase in the actual employment rate has been observed at enterprises with over 1,000 full-time employees, where the rate increased 0.41 points from 0.82% in 1977 to 1.23% in 1992.

The greatest effect of the inclusion of persons with mental retardation into the quota since 1988 is evident in smaller size enterprises. The actual employment rate increased 0.24

points at enterprises with 63 - 99 full-time employees while it increased only 0.02 points at those with over 1,000 full-time employees. This indicates that people with mental retardation are mainly employed by smaller-size enterprises in Japan.

As for the employment situation of disabled people in private enterprises categorized by type of industry, the employment quota rate is exceeded only by those enterprises in mining and manufacturing. The actual employment rate at enterprises in other industries, especially those in tertiary industries (1.16% as of June 1992) remains lower than the legal quota.

However, the largest increase in the actual employment rate can be served at finance and insurance enterprises. The rate here increased 0.68 points from 0.48% in 1977 to 1.12% in 1992.

Manufacturing enterprises have been most affected by the inclusion of persons with mental retardation into the quota since 1988. Their actual employment rate increased 0.12 points during this period.

According to the surveys conducted by the Ministry of Labor in 1978, '83 and '88, the percentage of disabled workers in the manufacturing industry has been gradually decreasing while that in tertiary industries, including the services industry, has been increasing as a result of the on-going structural changes of industry in Japan.

Nonetheless, as of 1988, the manufacturing industry still employed 47.0% of physically disabled workers and 66.0% of mentally retarded workers. Compared with non-disabled workers in the manufacturing industry, these rates are still higher for disabled people by around 10 points in the case of physically disabled workers, and by nearly 30 points in the case of mentally retarded workers.

3. Further Tasks

As mentioned above, regardless of the various employment measures having been taken in the past to promote the employment of disabled people in Japan, employment opportunities for the majority of disabled people are still rather limited. Even after the radical revision of the 'Physically Handicapped Persons Employment Promotion Law' in 1976, employment opportunities, especially for those with severe disabilities, have been limited mainly to smaller-size enterprises in the manufacturing industry. Furthermore, the employment situation for persons with mental retardation or mental disorders falls far behind that of persons with physical disabilities, whose employment rate has been declining yearly due to the rapid increase of those over 65 years of age and those with severe disabilities.

Therefore, in order to further improve the employment situation for disabled people in Japan, it is necessary to take the following measures:

Firstly, it is expected that the number of workers employed in the manufacturing industry will continue to decrease as a result of the trend towards transferring production bases from Japan to other countries as a means of coping with domestic rising manpower costs, as well as the strengthening of the yen against the U.S. dollar, and so forth. Therefore, employment opportunities for persons with disabilities, especially those with mental retardation, should be expanded in tertiary industries by providing them with relevant training in close collaboration with educational institutions, vocational training institutions, and enterprises so as to facilitate their employment in such industries. Their training opportunities can be significantly expanded through promoting the integration of disabled people into regular programs, rather than training them mainly at specialized vocational training institutions.

Secondly, the number of sheltered/community workshops for disabled people have been rapidly increasing due to the lack of employment opportunities for persons with severe disabilities, especially those with mental retardation or mental disorders. There are currently over 4,000 such workshops in Japan where 50,000 with mental retardation and 10,000 with mental disorders are engaged in some kind of work activities. Though these workshops aim to assist their clients in obtaining employment in the open labor market, their annual placement rate in business and industry remains at a low 2%.

The Ministry of Labor is now planning to promote the employment of workshop clients in close collaboration with local governments through providing them with relevant community-based vocational rehabilitation services as well as personal support, such as attendant services, as needed at their workplace. The Ministry is also looking into the possibility of establishing a special fund to assist local governments and employers in adapting work environments in their communities, including public transportation systems that are accessible to people with disabilities.

However, concerted efforts must be made by all parties concerned, including those in both public and private sectors, to make the physical and social environments in Japan more accessible and amiable for persons with disabilities so that they may fully utilize their right to full participation and equality in society.

Lastly, technological innovations centered around micro-electronics have led to an increase in industrial robots and specialized office machinery in both clerical and non-clerical areas of employment. These innovations have begun to influence the employment situation in

many ways. Such specialized machinery is less accessible and available to persons with disabilities. Thus, disabled persons could be more susceptible to the negative effects of technological innovations.

On the other hand, automation by micro-electronics has brought about some positive advances for disabled people. One is a general decrease in the number of heavy-labor type jobs and their consequential dangers along with an increase in less harmful work such as monitoring of electronic machinery. Advanced technology has also contributed to the development of various machines and specialized devices for disabled people in their workplaces, enabling them to perform jobs in areas previously not possible or available to them.

Conceivable measures for persons with disabilities in the future could include the further development of vocational rehabilitation programs, including relevant ability development programs to cope with the changes brought about by technological advancement. Also, it is necessary to pursue further research on the positive use of such technology for people with disabilities.

Statistical Aspects

Recent Labor Economy Indices

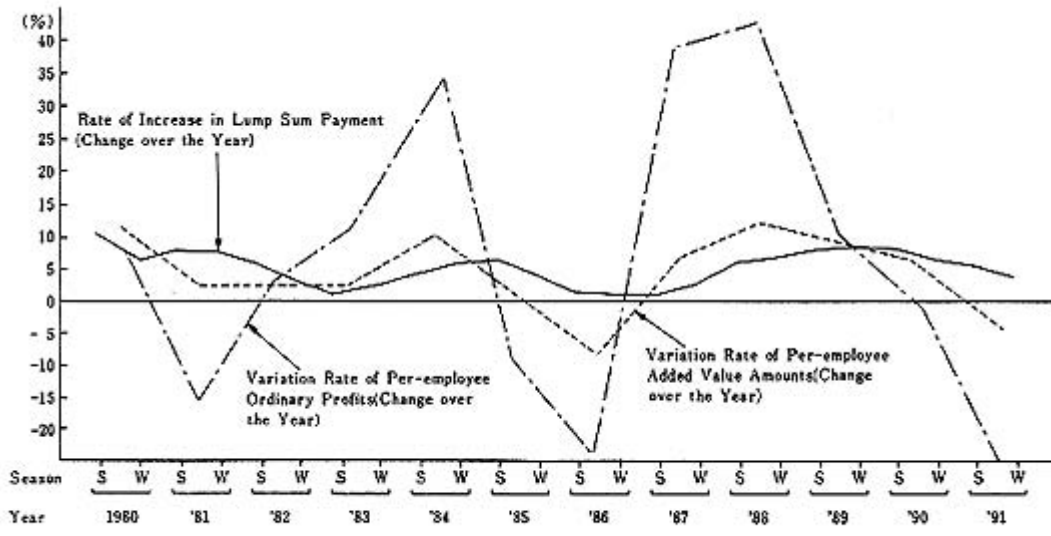
	April 1993	March 1993	Change from previous year
Labor force	6,630 (10 thousand)	6,522 (10 thousand)	47 (10 thousand)
Employed	6,472	6,355	31
Employees	5,187	5,142	110
Unemployed	149	153	16
Unemployment rate	2.3%	2.3%	0.3
Active opening rate	0.84	0.88	-0.32
Total hours worked	169.2 (hours)	162.7 (hours)	-1.9*
Total wages of regular employees	273.1 (¥thousand)	269.0 (¥thousand)	1.5*

Source: Management and Coordination Agency, Ministry of Labour.

Notes: 1. *denotes annual percent change.

2. From January 1991, date of "Total hours worked" and "Total wages of regular employees" are for firms with 5 to 30 employees.

Variations in Bonus and Corporate Performance



Source : Ministry of Labour, *Labour Statistics Survey*
 Japan Productivity Center, *Practical Labor Statistics*

(Note) S : Summer
 W : Winter