1984

JAPAN PETROLEUM INDUSTRY YEARBOOK

Japan international consultants, ltd.

JAPAN PETROLEUM INDUSTRY YEARBOOK

JAPAN INTERNATIONAL CONSULTANTS, LTD.

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TNTRODUCTION

The global surplus of crude oil supplies and the subsequent declines in crude oil prices which marked 1983 and 1984 were a major relief to the world economy, and the Japanese economy, which is so highly dependent on imported oil and exported products, benefitted particularly from these conditions. Japan's recent trends towards declining petroleum product demand and declining crude oil imports were reversed as a direct result of these factors during the latest fiscal year, and its key energy policy forecasts were modified to include a larger role for petroleum than had recently been thought to be possible.

Yet not all was changed by the falling prices; in fact, the major trends and problems of the Japanese petroleum market and petroleum industry have persisted despite these favorable changes. Overall demand for petroleum products and total crude oil imports are still projected to decline in the future, while the Japanese petroleum industry continued to experience such severe financial difficulties that it has begun a process of fundamental restructuring under a government—sponsored plan.

The 1984 Japan Petroleum Industry Yearbook covers the diverse aspects and activities of the Japanese petroleum industry and its governmental regulatory system during fiscal year 1983, which ended on March 31, 1984, through the medium of official government and industry statistics.

Introduction

This book is designed to serve as a handy yet comprehensive reference work for readers ranging from industry executives to researchers and energy economists, so some compromises in its format have been necessary. Readers will profit by keeping the following points in mind.

The List of Tables on the preceding pages is the quickest means of accessing the data in this Yearbook.

The yen/dollar conversion factor used in this edition of the Yearbook is \$240 to \$1.00.

The Japanese government and most oil companies operate on the fiscal year from April 1 to March 31 of the following calendar year. The Yearbook covers data up to the end of fiscal 1983 in March 1984, but all data not specified as fiscal year data is for calendar years.

The careful reader may notice that the totals in some tables do not tally with the sums listed. Here the Yearbook is following the statistics of the original government sources rather than its own addition. While the general level of statistical accuracy in these sources is very high, adjustments are sometimes made in subsequent years, and the Yearbook reports the latest official figures.

Finally, while the text of this Yearbook describes and analyses the events of the preceding year, the reader can find a much more detailed description and analysis of the Japanese governmental regulatory system for the petroleum industry in a special feature section of the 1983 Japan Petroleum Industry Yearbook.

John Victor Gano

THE JAPAN PETROLEUM INDUSTRY YEARBOOK 1984

Chapter 1

PETROLEUM POLICY

Introduction

It is easy to say that Japan depends on imports to supply 99.8 percent of its crude oil demand. But the massive volume of its industrial economy's demand for these crude oil imports is better illustrated by the fact that OPEC's \$5 per barrel price cut alone saved Japan an estimated \$6.25 billion in foreign exchange. Even with the world-wide declines in crude oil prices which followed the OPEC benchmark price cut, the sums which Japan had to pay for its petroleum imports in fiscal year 1983 (ending March 31, 1984) accounted for 37.59 percent of its total import costs, and three years earlier this figure was 43.37 percent.

Yet Japan has made great progress in diversifying its energy sources during the decade since the first oil crisis, and while oil supplied a peak level of 77.6 percent of Japan's total energy demand in fiscal 1973, this figure was reduced to 61.6 percent only nine years later. Japan's degree of oil dependence is still high in comparison to that of the other industrialized countries, but petroleum's share of Japan's total energy supply is forecast to

fall to about 42 percent by the year 2,000 and this level would compare quite favorably with those of the other industrial nations.

The slowing of the world economy since the second oil shock in 1979, the success of world wide energy conservation and diversification efforts, the discovery and development of new petroleum reserves around the world, and the resulting oil glut and price cuts have dramatically altered the conditions of the global petroleum industry in the past few years. These changing oil market conditions have benefitted the Japanese economy, but for the Japanese petroleum industry with its unique problems, these changes have not been kind.

The Japanese petroleum industry was in a time of crisis from 1983 to early 1984. Its traditionally weak financial base could not continue to support the massive burden of simultaneously financing the country's petroleum imports and investing in new upgrading refining capacity at a time when domestic demand for petroleum products was in a long-term downtrend and severe competition in the retail marketplace was driving prices down towards bare costs.

The industry knew that it had to reform its fundamental structure in order to rehabilitate itself. Banks, shareholders, and the government were demanding it. The steps which it is presently taking towards this goal are difficult, but they bring the hope of assuring the stability and vitality of this crucial Japanese industry in the years to come.

This chapter outlines the Japanese government's response to these new conditions as