

Traffic Jams Never End in Tokyo

One Is Hardly Ever Alone In Crowded Japan

By PETER DESBARATS

The flight to Vancouver was announced but still we dawdled in the terminal at Tokyo's Haneda Airport.

It was 8.25 p.m. when CPA's Empress of Calgary separated two Canadian journalists, Ed McNally and myself, from 96,000,000 Japanese.

"Where's everybody gone?" he said.

After three weeks in Japan, we were accustomed to crowds. Japan has five times as many people as Canada, less than four per cent of our land area.

Because of the dense population, one is rarely alone in Japan.

Everything is crowded — hotels, commuter trains, subways, restaurants, bathtubs...



SKETCHES BY McNALLY

Montrealers are fortunate in having to travel to Japan via Vancouver. It gives them some advance practice in understanding a foreign people.

In British Columbia however, there are some common points of reference. Both the west coast and Quebec have Social Crediters and separatists, although they speak languages that are as different as English and Japanese.

If they know little about Quebec, British Columbians are more aware than other Canadians of the densely populated islands across the Pacific. Whalers and fishing trawlers from Japan range far to the east.

"Every time you turn around these days, you run into a Japanese businessman," said a Vancouver journalist.

On the prairies, wheat growers know that Japan is Canada's third best export market.

Wheat is our largest single export to Japan — in the neighborhood of \$100,000,000 a year. We supply more than half of the wheat and about 40 per cent of the wheat flour used by the Japanese.

East of Manitoba, in the industrial heart of Canada, the image of Japan switches from sought-after buyer to feared competitor.

Staff Reporter Peter Desbarats and Editorial Cartoonist Ed (Edo-san) McNally recently spent three weeks on assignment in Japan.

ing to buy in a relatively underpopulated area of Canada and having to sell its manufactured goods in the rich consumer markets of central Canada which benefit only indirectly from wheat sales.

French-Canadian nationalism is beginning to attract attention in Japan. In three weeks of reading the several small but excellent English-language newspapers published in Tokyo, the only Canadian news I received was the hockey scores and a full report of the separatists' objections to the forthcoming visit of the Queen.

An official of the Japanese Foreign Ministry in Tokyo interrupted my interview with him to interview me on the economic effects of Quebec nationalism.

velopments on the Manicouagan River.

In general, the Japanese share with all other peoples of the world a deep and affectionate ignorance of Canada. Of course their first reaction to a Canadian visitor is, "American?"

Then they ask about Eskimos.

Recently one of the largest Tokyo newspapers sent a writer and photographer into northern Canada to live with a band of Eskimos. Their articles created such a sensation that they were reprinted in book form.

It takes a Japanese artist about two minutes to paint two birds sitting on a bamboo twig. After a few weeks in Japan, Edo-san McNally could draw in half that time an Eskimo woman with a baby peering from the hood of her parka, Japanese-style.

"Ah so, just like Japanese mama-san."

Japan was a civilized and highly organized nation when Jacques Cartier first sailed up the St. Lawrence to confer Christianity, glass beads and European disease on the Indians.

Now, after 20 years of hard work, Japan is again a world

power; the only highly industrialized Asian nation; the "floating factory" in the Pacific; the shippard of the world; proud, insular, sensitive to criticism and almost neurotically concerned about its image abroad.

After World War I, Japan was pacifist. Military uniforms were unpopular. By 1940, Japanese had adopted a religious master-race mission and were ready to attack the world's strongest nation.

Tomorrow?

Kyoto's Tawaraya Inn received its first guest more than 200 years ago, when Kyoto was still the Imperial capital.

tatami and enjoyed a nightcap of excellent Japanese Scotch. In a corner of the room, also sitting on the floor, was a television set. We watched "77 Sunset Strip" with Japanese dialogue and interminable Japanese commercials.

Old and New Japan? Not exactly. The liquid in my glass provided a better parallel. It looked like Scotch. It tasted something like Scotch. But it wasn't Scotch. It was Japanese whisky, as unique as Japanese democracy, Japanese free enterprise, Japanese marriage and the other institutions that I will talk about in later articles.

