

## **My footsteps and proposal for the future (Volume 2)**

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*-I heard that you have been actively exchanging ideas with overseas business partners, especially with the United States.*

*How was the secondary aluminum alloy industry in the United States back in the year of 1955?*

I had many friends in the U.S and was often invited to visit them. Looking back on those days, the U.S. aluminum alloy industry reached its peak at that time. I remember how many people gathered at the Resource Recycling Association of the United States and how vibrant the industry was. I also had the opportunity to give a speech with Daniel Inoue, a Japanese - American who served as Senator. I strongly felt the inner power of the U.S. industry.

*-What did you talk about in your lectures in the U.S.?*

At the NARI Western Annual Conference held in Maui, Hawaii, in September 1977, I gave a talk titled ***The Japanese Economy and the Aluminum Industry***. I mentioned that the Japanese secondary aluminum alloy industry was doing well even under the influence of oil crisis, and in 1976, the production of secondary aluminum alloy ingots reached a record high of 500,000 tons. At that time, 60% of the demand came from die casting and the remaining 40% from sand mold castings. As for raw materials, in 1976, the import volume was 80,000 tons of ingots and 70,000 tons of scrap.

*-What was the status of the secondary aluminum alloy industry in the United States after that?*

The secondary aluminum alloy industry in the United States had been shrinking, and the number of participants in NARI had been decreasing year by year. By the time I left the chair of the president, there was almost no interaction between the Japanese and U.S. in this field. I think the number of companies in the U.S. decreased due to increasing M&A, which made the whole industry less viable.

*-In the past, did you ever feel that there was a difference in the level of the secondary aluminum alloy industry between Japan and the U.S.?*

I do not remember that we imitated the U.S. in terms of technology, but indeed Japan has developed its own technology domestically. In fact, the Japanese and American industries have had fundamentally different ways of thinking since that time. In particular, there was a big difference in treating Zinc. In the U.S., Zinc was used as a useful metal in secondary aluminum alloys, but in Japan, it was recognized as a toxic metal for aluminum alloys, and there were some incompatibilities. Even today, the American standard for the upper limit of Zinc is as high as 2%, while the Japanese standard for ADC12 is less than 1%.

*-Why do you think the difference in thinking about Zinc between the U.S. and Japan arose.*

I do not know the details. There has always been a difference in thinking about Zinc. This is just my personal opinion, the fact that America had a major Zinc manufacturing history may have had an impact. ADC12 was completely established as a product by the Japanese, and it can be said that it has been cultivated by Japan's unique thinking and technology. This is one of the strangest things in my life of aluminum.

*-You have been the chairman of the board of directors of the cooperative chubu seishinkai for many years.*

I enjoyed being surrounded by a very pleasant group of people. I remember that I worked very hard for the benefit of the industry. We even had people from China, Taiwan, the U.S. and other countries come and talk to us. I also remember that we struggled to build international relationships. However, more and more of my colleagues were forced into bankruptcy or liquidation. Unfortunately, the association was dissolved after I retired from the chairman. I feel really sad about it.

*-You were awarded the Medal with Yellow Ribbon for your contribution to the industry. How did you feel at that time?*

I felt that the activities of the Seishinkai were evaluated, not for my personal contribution. Personally, I was not very concerned about the honor. To be honest, I was going to refuse the medal, but the person in charge happened to be a local man who persuaded me to accept the medal for the sake of future generations, so I accepted it.

*-You were also chosen to be the honorary citizen of the city of Minneapolis, USA.*

In the 1950s, when I was a member of the Junior Chamber International. The World Convention was held in Tokyo, and the next year it was held in the United States. At the banquet, I hit it off with the person in charge from the U.S. side and decided to go there. I remember that the airplane could not fly to the mainland at once, and we had to refuel once before arriving in Hawaii. It was rare for a Japanese to visit America at that time. and I was lucky to have that honor.

*-What were the memories about the employees in your own company?*

The Asuka Seminar has been continuing until now, but in the beginning, it was a place for employee education. We had study sessions several times a year to provide opportunities to convey our thoughts to the next generation. We have also traveled overseas with our employees to get to know each other. I still have fond memories of how excited everyone was and how hard it was to fall asleep at that time.

*-For the last part of the interview, would you kindly give some advice to the future generations of the industry?*

The level of Japan's aluminum is high and so is its importance .On the other hand, if other industries were to disappear, we would not be able to survive alone . We must not forget that it is a relationship of mutuality and that this is what industry is all about. I also hope that people will continue to cherish all kinds of resources, not just only aluminum. This is the starting point of our work and where we can contribute to the world in any way we can. I hope you will be proud of your work.

- Quotation from [The Japan Metal Bulletin 20,000<sup>th</sup> Special Issue] -