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PERTINENT FACTS ON OREGON CHROME

The writer of the accompanying letter has had long experience not only in mining chrome but also in selling it to the Government and private industry. He is thoroughly familiar with his subject. His letter states the facts relating to chromite occurrence and production in Oregon and northern California so clearly and concisely that the Ore.-Bin requested permission to publish it. The writer wished to remain anonymous. The reply he received from the Munitions Board is appended. It does not offer much encouragement to a miner who wants some action, and action would appear to be of the essence if international relations are as serious as we have been led to believe.

Editor

"Grants Pass, Oregon
September 20, 1950

"Mr. Hubert Howard, Director
Munitions Board
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. Howard:

"With the present international situation as it is and the apparent shortage of some strategic minerals, I would like to inquire as to the status of possible purchase of domestic chrome ore. During the last war I was an active producer of chrome and still have my properties available for production, although it will take considerable time to get them into active operation.

"The matter of time to get chrome mines into production is one item that I would like to draw to your attention. Due to reduction of the price of chrome ore and increase in costs, it became necessary for all chrome mines in this area to close down completely. Closing of a mine means, of course, that considerable work must be done before it can be put into active production again. For instance, should the government outline a suitable plan and put it into effect within the next thirty days, for the purchase of ore, it would

be three to four months before any chrome would be produced and the majority of production in this area would not start being delivered to railhead until next May or June. Most of the mines are situated so that it is not possible to transport the ore out from the mines except in the summer months, although mining can be done in the winter if the owners have sufficient time to get in supplies before the roads are closed. As it happens my property can be operated the year round and the French Hill property most of the time.

"The following mines, which were all operated during the last war, cannot be reached during the winter months: Brown, Cyclone Gap, High Divide, Low Divide, Sourdough, Snowy Ridge, Chrome Ridge, Doe Flat, Cox, and Thompson. Supplies would have to be gotten into these within the next sixty days to get any production to amount to anything for 1951.

"Another item that should be taken into consideration as far as the future of chrome mining in Southern Oregon and Northern California, is that during both World War I and World War II, much of the chrome mined was taken from surface indications and picking up of float surrounding these surface outcroppings. These have all been worked and many of them were not worked underground. When these men who worked these are gone it will not be possible to find these mines again. My experience in chrome mining tells me that wherever there are surface outcroppings and float, proper drilling and exploration will find more ore under the surface. Unless some permanent program is outlined that will make chrome mining profitable these deposits will be lost completely in a few years and never found again.

"It would seem that in order to protect our country against the possibility of being without chrome ore during emergencies, which continue to occur every few years, that some permanent program should be put into effect that would encourage the average miner to continue developing and mining these ores. The average chrome mine is not sufficiently large to make it attractive to investment by large monied interests. We must depend on the small fellow with a few hundred dollars to bring this ore out.

"I will very much appreciate your views on this matter and advice as to whether or not you believe that it is possible that the government will again go into the purchase of domestic chrome ore.

Very truly yours,"

Signed
"A Southern Oregon Chrome Miner"

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Reply

"2 October 1950

"The Munitions Board is interested in metallurgical grade chrome ores. Much of the domestic ore acquired during the recent war was sub-grade material and is not desired by the steel industry. Consequently, the ore is still in government hands.

"Under the new Defense Production Act, the Bureau of Mines is charged with the responsibility of acquiring domestic minerals. It is suggested that you keep in close contact with the nearest office of the Bureau of Mines, which we understand is at Albany, Oregon.

Sincerely yours,

/s/ E. J. Lintner
Chief, Additive Alloys Branch
Office of Materials Resources"

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Preliminary Map No. 97. Geology of the coastal area from Cape Kiwanda to Cape Foulweather, Oregon, by P. D. Snavely, Jr., and H. E. Vokes. 1949. Price 50 cents.

R.E.St.

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CHEMICAL COMPANY WANTS MANGANESE

The Continental Chemical Company, Salem, Oregon, is in the market for manganese ore. The company will pay 45 cents a unit per long ton f.o.b. shipping point for ore which runs not less than 25 percent Mn. Ore as low as 20 percent Mn will be accepted but the price would be reduced 2 cents a unit for each percent below 25 percent. A long ton weighs 2240 pounds and each percent is a unit; therefore 25 percent ore would be worth $11.25 per long ton at railhead. There are no penalties for silica or iron. Average samples of the ore should be submitted to the company for analysis and found acceptable before shipment is made.

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DRILLING RESULTS OF COAL BEDS IN SOUTHWEST WASHINGTON

"Correlation Between Test Holes in the Centralia-Chehalis Coal District, Washington" is the title of a chart and descriptive statement recently placed in open files at the offices of the U.S. Geological Survey, General Services Building, Washington, D.C.; at Room 623, Post Office Building, Portland, Oregon; and at the Division of Mines and Geology, Olympia, Washington. The chart shows in graphic form the coal beds and associated rocks of upper Eocene age that were penetrated in 22 test holes, 10 of which were recently drilled east of Centralia under the supervision of Parke D. Snavely, Jr., Survey geologist, and 12 of which are holes previously drilled by private groups. Porosity and permeability tests were made on a part of the sandstone cores obtained in the drilling and results of these tests also appear on the chart.

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SURVEY OF STATE MINE TAXATION

During the past two years A. B. Parsons, formerly Secretary of the American Institute of Mining and Metallurgical Engineers, has been conducting research on state mine taxation for the U.S. Bureau of Mines. Reportedly some $12,000 has been spent by the Bureau in gathering taxation information and making it ready for publication. There appears to be some question as to when the results of the survey will be made available to the public because of the requirements of the defense program to which the Bureau must give an increasing amount of attention. However, results of the survey are of value only as they are made available, so mining companies and state and county tax agencies should all urge upon the Bureau the need for prompt publication of this report.

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STANFORD GEOLOGIST MAPS CENTRAL OREGON GEOLOGY FOR GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

During the field season just passed, Dr. A. C. Waters of Stanford University studied and mapped the geology in quadrangles near Prineville, Crook County, Oregon, for the U.S. Geological Survey. Mapping of the Ochoco Reservoir and Eagle Rock 15-minute quadrangles has been completed and the maps will be made available by the Survey as soon as possible. When topography is available, mapping will be continued in the Post and Lookout Mountain quadrangles. Interesting results have been obtained in this field work, particularly in Dr. Waters' study of volcanic rocks of the region.

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ENGINEERING GEOLOGY STUDIES IN PORTLAND AREA

Geologic mapping of 15-minute quadrangles in the Lower Columbia River area near Portland by D. E. Trimble of the Engineering Geology Section of the U.S. Geological Survey was continued during the field season of 1950. These geological studies of the industrial area of this region are now about 50 percent completed. They will be continued during the field season of 1951.

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TOPOGRAPHIC MAPPING

According to a U.S. Geological Survey release, only about 25 percent of the United States has been adequately mapped topographically. To complete the task the present rate of progress will require about fifty years. During the past seventy years topographic maps have been made covering approximately half of the nation. However, many of these are now of limited use because they are out of date or below required standards of accuracy. Only two states, Massachusetts and Rhode Island, have been completely and adequately mapped according to modern standards.

The State of Kentucky has recently recognized the need and value to the State of adequate topographic maps, and the Kentucky legislature has appropriated $1,062,000 to be matched by the U.S. Geological Survey for the next biennium to be used in preparing topographic maps. The State will be mapped in 7½-minute quadrangles on a scale of 1 inch to 2000 feet. During the fiscal year just ended, 17 quadrangles in Kentucky were completed and 5 are being published. In 1950 technicians hope to complete 52 quadrangles and send 30 to the printers. Next year the full force of the expanded program will reach the printers and a much greater number of maps will be published. Altogether 685 separate quadrangle sheets will be required to cover the 40,395 square miles within the State.

A comparison of Kentucky's program with topographic mapping in the State of Oregon is of interest. Oregon has sponsored no topographic mapping program and as the Topographic Branch of the U.S. Geological Survey has its hands full mapping in those states which provide cooperative funds, topographic mapping in Oregon is proceeding at a snail's pace. During 1949 one new Oregon topographic quadrangle map was published. So far in 1950 only one new map has been published. U.S. Geological Survey index maps show that about 30 percent of Oregon is covered by usable topographic maps. Very few of the maps are classed as first grade.

A further comparison involving our neighbor states of California and Washington is enlightening. During 1949 California had 99 new topographic quadrangle maps and 15 reprints; Washington had 3 new maps and 1 reprint. During 1950 California had 58 new maps and 9 reprints; Washington had 10 new maps and 3 reprints. An overall comparison among the three states shows that for all classes of topographic maps, California is about 84 percent covered, Washington about 68 percent, and Oregon about 39 percent.

Topographic maps are basic in all engineering and geological areal studies. In addition, such maps are necessary for intelligent tax studies, forestry and soil conservation planning, road and dam building, surface and ground-water studies, and as tactical maps in national defense.

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