

ACTION
is assigned to



UNITED STATES POLITICAL ADVISER
FOR JAPAN

⁶¹⁷
No. 617

CONFIDENTIAL (For
Dept. Use Only)

Tokyo, September 17, 1948.

Subject: Graphite Mine Discovered in Japan

THE HONORABLE
THE SECRETARY OF STATE,
WASHINGTON.

DIVISION OF
NORTHEAST ASIAN AFFAIRS
SEP 29 1948
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Sir:

I have the honor to forward, as of possible interest, a copy of a news article which appeared in the Nippon Times of August 28, 1948, reporting the discovery of Japan's first graphite deposit, which is claimed to be the second largest in the world. There is also enclosed a copy of a Memorandum for Record prepared in the Natural Resources Section of General Headquarters, Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers, giving details regarding the preliminary inspection which was made of the mine.

Discussions of the graphite mine discovery with officials concerned in this Headquarters indicates that pending conclusion of current survey operations they are unable to verify the allegations of the Japanese Geological Survey that the mine is the second largest in the world.

Respectfully yours,

W. J. Sebald
W. J. Sebald

RECEIVED
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

1948 SEP 29 AM 9 10

DC/M
FACILITIES BRANCH

Enclosures: *att*

1. Copy of News Article from Nippon Times.
2. Memorandum of Record prepared in Natural Resources Section.

Original & hectograph to Department.

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Handwritten notes and signatures in the routing slip area.

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Enclosure No. 1 to Despatch No. 617
dated September 17, 1948 from the
Office of the Political Adviser for
Japan, Tokyo, on the subject,
"Graphite Mine Discovered in Japan".

COPY

GRAPHITE MINE LOCATED

Deposits in Hokkaido Claimed as Second Largest
in World

The existence of a graphite, or black lead, deposit next only to that in Ceylon, the greatest in the world, has been ascertained in the village of Oshirabetsu, near Hiroo Station, Tokachi Province, Hokkaido.

The nickel mine developed in that sector during the war had been known to yield some graphite but it was only in April, 1947, that a rich graphite deposit was found. Japan had up to that time not one graphite mine.

The Japan Carbon Company undertook to develop the mine and beginning April this year the Underground Resources Institute of the Commerce and Industry Ministry subjected the sector to probing by methods of physics. As a result of electrical prospecting it has been ascertained that the deposit consists of over 100,000 tons.

Mr. Sato, Chief of the Sapporo Commerce and Industry Bureau Mining Section, said that a graphite deposit usually is 10,000 tons or so, so that this must be one of the greatest deposits in the world.

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Enclosure No. 2 to Despatch No. 617
dated September 17, 1948 from the
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COPY

GENERAL HEADQUARTERS
SUPREME COMMANDER FOR THE ALLIED POWERS
Natural Resources Section

CONFIDENTIAL

2 September 1948

NR 645 (2 Sep 48)MG

MEMORANDUM FOR: Record

SUBJECT: Oshirabetsu Graphite Mine, Hokkaido

1. General

a. Reference is to a news article in Nippon Times, 28 August 1948, on discovery of a graphite deposit claimed as second largest in the world, in the village of Oshirabetsu, near Hiroo station, Tokachi Province, Hokkaido. The news article was submitted by the Sapporo branch of Ministry of Commerce and Industry. Because prospecting is still being carried on, a complete report on the mine could not be obtained. However, some general information was submitted by Mr. S. Usui, of Japan Carbon Company, Mr. T. Anzai, Japanese Geological Survey, and Mr. M. Sato, geophysical prospecting section of Japanese Geological Survey. Mr. Anzai who made preliminary inspection of the mine states that the ore is crystalline graphite which averages 26 percent fixed carbon.

2. Location

a. The Oshirabetsu graphite mine is located in Hiroo-gun, Hiroo-machi, Aza Oshirabetsu (grid coordinate 2207-1023, sheets 6773 I and IV, AMS L764, Hokkaido, 1:50,000) about 5 km. southwest of Oshirabetsu town. The Oshirabetsu town is about 10 km. south of Hiroo station, the terminal for the Hiroo line.

3. Geography

a. The mine is in country with maximum relief of about 500 meters. It is heavily vegetated with grass, bushes and undergrowth. The area is drained by tributaries of the Hiroo and Oshirabetsu rivers, which both empty into the Pacific Ocean.

4. History

a. During hostilities, the mine was developed for nickel and had been known to produce some low-grade graphite. The claim was purchased by the Japan Carbon Company in the latter part of 1946 and developed.

5. Geology

a. Paleozoic sediments have been intruded and metamorphosed by a biotite granite which in turn has been intruded by norite or hypersthene gabbro. The gabbro mass trends E-W and is 6 kilometers long and 2 kilometers wide. The eastern part of the area is made up of metamorphosed sediments, while the intrusives occupy the western part. The graphite occurs as lenticular ore bodies in the gabbro.

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b. The ore bodies are divided into two groups, No. 1 with lenses striking N-S and No. 2 with lenses striking E-W. The No. 1 group is the western part of the claim and No. 2 group is the eastern portion. The exact number of ore bodies is unknown, but No. 1 group has one ore body being worked and No. 2 group has one ore body being worked, with two other lenses known to exist. Average size of the ore bodies is 40x20x25 meters. The largest has been calculated to contain over 20,000 metric tons of ore. The ore averages 26 percent carbon. The gangue is nickel-bearing pyrrhotite occurring in a limited area.

6. Mining

a. The No. 1 deposit is mined by open pit starting at the outcrop. The No. 2 deposit is worked by three adits with crosscuts. All work is with hand tools aided by blasting. The ore is hand-picked and taken by trucks 15 km. to Hiroo station and then to a concentrating plant in Toyama Prefecture.

7. Reserves

a. Electromagnetic prospecting is being conducted on the No. 2 group from 25 July - 5 September 1948. So far, single plane outline of two lenses has been determined. The outline for the third is still undetermined. No prospecting is being done on the No. 1 group.

b. In determining the above outline of ore bodies, two methods were employed, the spontaneous polarization method and the magnetic method. The results of both were the same.

c. By electromagnetic prospecting the width and the length of an ore body can be determined, but the grade and depth are unknown. The results of the above prospecting have shown that each lens has a length of over 80 meters and a width of over 40 meters. Taking the visible dimension of a lens from No. 1 group (40x20x25 meters, with average specific gravity of 2) as an average size for all four known lenses, the total reserve would be 160,000 tons of 25-35 percent carbon ore. The grade has been determined by samples from outcrops of each lens.

8. Production

a. Production at the mine is at a minimum, because shipments to the concentrating plant in Toyama Prefecture are limited to the transportation facilities available. With only one ferry traversing between Hakodate and Aomori, little space is allotted to graphite. Until a flotation plant is built at the mine, increase of production is impossible, unless more space can be allotted on the ferry.

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MONTHLY OUTPUT, MARCH - JULY 1948
(metric tons)

	<u>Crude Ore</u>	<u>Grade (Percent)</u>	<u>Hand Picked Ore</u>	<u>Grade (percent)</u>	<u>Shipment</u>	<u>Grade (percent)</u>
March	232	25-30	233	30	177	30
April	134	25-30	172	30	92	30
May	333	25-30	141	30	72	30
June	299	25-30	232	30	319	30
July	<u>454</u>	28	<u>103</u>	30	<u>307</u>	30
	1452		881		967	

STOCKS
(metric tons)

At Mine

535 (crude ore)

394 (hand-picked)

Hiroo Station

553 (hand-picked)

Toyama Plant

1,000 (hand-picked,
running stock)

HIDESHIRO HASEGAWA
Scientific Consultant
Mining and Geology Division