

recovered at INCO's nickel refinery at Clydach, Wales. Falconbridge Nickel Mines Limited ships nickel-copper matte from its mine at Falconbridge, Ont. to Kristiansand, Norway for refining. The refinery which was damaged by fire during 1972 was completely rebuilt in 1973. In 1975, Falconbridge indefinitely deferred construction of its proposed refinery complex at Bécancour, Que. The refinery was to have produced 500,000 lb. (230 000 kg) of cobalt a year in high purity cobalt salts.

Sherritt Gordon Mines, Limited recovers cobalt metal powder from nickel refinery end-solutions at its hydrometallurgical refinery at Fort Saskatchewan, Alta. The refinery treats nickel-copper concentrates from its Lynn Lake mine operation in Manitoba and also treats, on a toll basis, concentrates from Western Mining Corporation Limited's nickel operations in Western Australia. Sherritt Gordon closed its Lynn Lake operation in 1976. Any future cobalt production from the refinery at Fort Saskatchewan will be from purchased concentrates or from toll refined concentrates.

Columbium (niobium) and tantalum. Canadian shipments of columbium as columbium pentoxide (Cb_2O_5) were 3.71 million lb. (1.68 million kg) valued at \$6.43 million in 1975 compared with 4.23 million lb. (1.92 million kg) valued at \$6.68 million in 1974.

St. Lawrence Columbium and Metals Corporation, with a mine, mill and concentrator near Oka, Que. is Canada's only producer of columbium and has one of only two mines in the world that produce columbium in pyrochlore concentrates as a primary product; the other larger operation is near Araxa, Brazil.

Niobec Inc., a joint venture of Teck Corporation, Copperfields Mining Corporation and Quebec Mining Exploration Company (SOQUEM), continued development of its St-Honoré pyrochlore deposit, some eight miles (about 13 km) north of Chicoutimi, Que. The mill has been designed for an initial capacity of 1,500 tons (1 361 t) of ore a day with provision for rapid expansion to 2,000 tons (1 814 t) a day if future demand warrants it. Niobec began production early in 1976.

Shipments of tantalum pentoxide (Ta_2O_5) in 1975 were 395,000 lb. (179 000 kg) valued at \$3.26 million compared with 438,442 lb. (199 000 kg) valued at \$3.58 million in 1974. Tantalum Mining Corporation of Canada Limited (Tanco) at Bernic Lake, Man. is Canada's only producer of tantalum. Tanco accounts for approximately 22% of world production. Ore reserves as of December 31, 1975 were sufficient for only seven years at the current level of production. Since Tanco's production is committed for five years, there is concern over the long-term availability of tantalum in Canada. Tanco planned an extensive exploration program in 1976 in an effort to extend its reserves.

Tungsten. Canadian shipments of tungsten trioxide (WO_3) were 3.0 million lb. (1.4 million kg) in 1975, a decrease of 16% from the previous year. Canada Tungsten Mining Corporation Limited at Tungsten in the Northwest Territories is Canada's only producer. Canada Tungsten began production from a new zone in 1974 where reserves are sufficient to sustain production for at least 20 years. Some separation problems have, however, been encountered with a talc-like material in the new ore and tungsten trioxide recovery rate dropped to about 64% in the first quarter of 1975 from over 80% in 1973. As a result of improvements made by the company, tungsten trioxide recovery was expected to rise to 75% in 1976. Amax Exploration, Inc. completed a preliminary feasibility study in 1975 on its MacTung deposit, the largest known deposit in the world, estimated to contain 30 million tons (27 million t) of ore averaging 0.9% WO_3 . Brunswick Tin Mines Limited continued the investigation of a complex orebody near Fredericton, NB, containing several recoverable minerals, the most important being tungsten. An adit into the orebody was completed in 1975 and samples were sent to the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources for testing. Results were better than anticipated and a production decision was expected in 1976.