

Total coal production in Canada in 1978 reached 30.5 million tonnes, up from 28.7 million in 1977. Imports dropped to 14.2 million tonnes, down from 15.4 million. On the demand side, consumption of thermal coal increased to nearly 23 million while domestic demand for coking coal reached 6.9 million and demand from the industrial-commercial sector equalled 1.9 million. Exports increased to 14 million tonnes in 1978, up from 12.4 million in 1977 (Table 13.11).

The value of Canadian production was estimated at \$776 million in 1978, up from \$674 million in 1977. Output increased in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Alberta and British Columbia, but decreased in Saskatchewan. Western Canadian production exceeded 27 500 000 t, while output from Nova Scotia and New Brunswick mines reached 2 900 000 t.

Approximately 12 600 000 t of coal were exported in 1978 from British Columbia and Alberta, while Nova Scotia exported nearly 1 000 000 t. Japan received over 80%; other exports went to other Asian, Latin American and European countries.

During 1977 and 1978 the world steel industry remained depressed. Although demand for coking coal remained weak and Japan's steel industry operated below capacity, exports to Japan increased in 1978 and 1979.

Demand for thermal coal grew to meet energy requirements. Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta consumed approximately 23 000 000 t of coal to generate electricity in 1978.

Domestic coal, mainly sub-bituminous in Alberta and lignite in Saskatchewan, supplied over 13 000 000 t to Western Canada power stations. Bituminous coal was used for thermal power generation in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Ontario. Demand for bituminous and lignite coal by general industrial and commercial users was primarily satisfied from imports.

Production areas

13.7.1

British Columbia. Coal mining is centred in the southeast where Kaiser Resources Ltd., with two mines in the Crowsnest coalfield, produced about 5 600 000 t of clean or saleable coal in 1978. Exports to Japan continued to dominate Kaiser's sales, although shipments also went to South Korea, Mexico, Pakistan and Brazil. In addition, a new contract was signed with Romania.

The Fording Coal Ltd. mine near Elkford produced about 2 700 000 t of saleable coal in 1978, virtually unchanged from 1977. In addition to major sales to Japan, spot shipments were made to Latin American countries.

Byron Creek Collieries produced approximately 516 000 t of clean coal in 1978 up from 366 000 t in 1977. Production will continue to expand to supply Ontario Hydro requirements and export markets. By the early 1980s Byron Creek expects to supply nearly 700 000 t of coal annually to Ontario Hydro.

Studies continued in 1978 on potential coking and thermal coal developments. Among them, European, Japanese and Canadian interests continued feasibility studies on several potential coal-producing properties. BC Hydro and Power Authority studied lignite coal deposits near Ashcroft as a potential source for a major electricity generating project.

Alberta. In volume, Alberta is Canada's leading coal-producing province, mining bituminous, sub-bituminous and semi-anthracite coals. Most bituminous coal is exported to Japan for coke making. In 1978 some bituminous coal was marketed to Ontario Hydro and to overseas customers. Bituminous production reached 5 100 000 t, an increase of 20%, and sub-bituminous production 8 300 000 t, an increase of 5% over 1977.

Sub-bituminous coal was used to meet increasing demand for electrical energy and to satisfy some of Saskatchewan's electricity needs. On the Prairies, thermal electric plants are generally located close to coal mines to facilitate low-cost power generation. Near Wabamun Lake, west of Edmonton, Calgary Power Ltd. operates two power plants using coal from two surface mines. Other coal-fired power plants include the Drumheller, Battle River and Grande Cache stations.