1. DISTRIBUTION OF MINES

The number of mines in operation in Japan as of December 31, 1987, was 855, of which 310 mines had 10,000 or more. The breakdown of mines according to the number of workers is as follows: 110 mines (including 2 metal mines) had 25 to 49 workers, 28 mines (including 14 limestone mines) had 50 to 109 workers, 4 mines had 110 to 249 workers, 1 mine had 250 to 499 workers, 3 mines had 500 to 999 workers, and 1 mine had 1,000 workers. Of these, 2 categories contain only coal mines. Mines with 15 workers or more are divided into 2 categories based on the minerals mined, as follows: 34 metal mines, 144 nonmetal mines (including 3 limestone mines), 32 crude oil and natural gas fields, and 14 coal mines.

The total number of mine workers as of 1987 was 26,256. These included 27,672 full-time workers (73.5% of those being engaged in production). There were 114 temporary workers and 1,396 contractors. Classified according to mining industries: 3,749 persons were engaged in the metallic mining industry (5%), the coal and lignite industry (45%), 2,079 persons in the crude oil and natural gas industry (35%), and 1,119 persons in the nonmetal mining industry (18%).

Mines and mining industry workers were greatly influenced by the two crises since 1985; the rapid increase in the value of the yen and a decline in the international market. These factors damaged the management system of the Japanese mining industry and, in turn, influenced the reduction and rationalization of production capacities.

Many mines, such as coal, deposits, and coal and lignite fields in particular, have closed one after another, their number dropping to half that in 1985, while the number of employees dropped to 25%, that of 1975.

[End of the Legend and Map Compilation]

This map shows mines with 50 or more in operation, as of December 31, 1987. The number of workers refers to workers engaged in mines (including contractors) who work under the Mining Security Law.

2. QUANTITY OF PRODUCTION IN MINING

The total quantity of production in mining in 1987 was worth ¥2,812,409 million.

Metal mining production was the lowest since 1984, at ¥329,802 million due to the closure of mines and reduction in production. Coal and lignite production has gradually decreased to ¥966,856 million since 1982 due to a reduction in the size of the production system caused by a structural depression and an increase in the demand for imported coal. Nonmetal production has also gradually decreased to ¥1,213,292 million since 1982, due to reinvestment and the closure of smaller and small-scale mines.

The crude oil and natural gas industry showed its policy to reduce production since 1984 due to a decrease in the price of crude oil, production for 1987 was ¥195,028 million.

The quantity of production and value classified by types of ore mined are as follows: Gold accounted for 40% of the total production from metal mining for 1987, which was over twice as much as in 1986. The total quantity and value for 1986 was the highest since 1981, at 5.5 tons and ¥1,812,399 million.

In the case of one and silver, the total amount of the former was 32,910 tons worth ¥1,158,314 million, while that of the latter was 255 tons worth ¥3,188,094 million. These are the lowest figures in recent years.

The amount of coal produced was 3,835,608 tons, 3% of that of the early 1960s, with a value of ¥255,648 million, the lowest since 1980.

[End of the Legend and Map Compilation]

This map shows the quantity of mine production classified by ore types. Production is indicated by mineral contents in a composite for metallic minerals and by mineral contents for nonmetallic minerals. One whose production was less than a certain level are omitted from this map.

[Sources]
4. Data from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry.