

## Cominco Ltd. reports third quarter earnings

R.E. Hallbauer, President and Chief Executive Officer announced recently that Cominco's unaudited consolidated loss for the nine months ended September 30, 1991 was \$25.0 million or \$0.35 per common share compared with an unaudited consolidated profit of \$51.9 million or \$0.62 per common share for the comparable nine months of 1990.

The loss for the third quarter was \$22.1 million or \$0.29 per common share compared with earnings of \$11.6 million or \$0.13 per common share for the same quarter last year.

Sales for the first nine months were \$966.3 million compared with \$1,018.5 million for the comparable period last year. In the third quarter sales were \$304.8 million compared with \$334.6 million in the same period last year.

The significant reduction in operating profit and sales is principally due to lower London Metal Exchange prices for zinc, lead and copper, and the continued strengthening of the Canadian dollar.

## Westmin's exploration drilling program OK'd after public input

Westmin's Resources has been given approval to drill test-holes at 16 sites on its existing lease within Strathcona Park on Vancouver Island.

Approval follows a detailed review of the company's plans at a public meeting held in Campbell River and includes stringent conditions for the six-to-eight-week program.

Westmin's mine employs more than 400 people and is located on a lease within Strathcona Park. The mine has operated for more than 30 years, and its legal right to operate on its existing lease zone has been recognized.

The permitted drilling program is aimed at finding a new orebody to extend the estimated ten years of remaining reserves.

## A peek into the past - the Bralorne Mine, 1928 - 1971

*Taken from the Lillooet News, October 30, 1991*

The gold mine at Bralorne, B.C., once operated by Bralorne Pioneer Mines Limited, is located 78 miles by road west of Lillooet, and about 110 miles in a straight line north of Vancouver. Discovered in 1928, the mine produced gold continuously until Bralorne

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ceased operations in 1971. Along with the nearby Pioneer Mine, both now closed down, the total value of gold produced exceeded \$135,000,000.

The mine was the largest gold mine in B.C. and one of the deepest mines in Canada. It was serviced by an adit, or tunnel, running into the mountain, and by three vertical underground shafts. The deepest shaft gave access to the gold veins over one mile below the surface, or 1400 feet below sea level. There were more than 50 miles of horizontal underground drifts, or tunnels.

Ventilating air was blown down from the surface by two large fans. The biggest problem was to cool the lowest workings where the rock temperature was about 122 degrees F.

There were 41 levels in the mine, which were generally 150 feet apart vertically. Ore was mined from bottom to top between any two levels in areas or rooms known as stopes. Most stopes were 110 feet long 150 feet high and the width or thickness would be equal to the thickness of the gold bearing quartz vein in the area. Width of most veins averaged 6.5 feet, and they usually lay at a steep angle averaging 72 degrees. As ore was removed from stopes, the space resulting was backfilled with waste sand from the mill on the surface. This sand was ground up ore with the gold removed. Each ton of ore contained between half to three quarters of an ounce of gold, of which 96 per cent was recovered.

The ore was hoisted up the shafts and brought out to the surface by small trains pulled by trolley locomotives. It was dumped into bins ready to be crushed and sent to the mill. Normal daily production was about 600 tons.

In the mill the ore was ground in water to the fineness of flour. Grinding was done

in ball mills, which are large rotating cylinders partly filled with steel balls. The ore was first treated with mercury, and most of the gold combines with the mercury to form an amalgam. This amalgam was heated to drive off the mercury and leave a gold

"sponge". The remaining ore solution was treated with sodium cyanide, which dissolves the balance of the fine gold.

This gold was precipitated from the solution by adding zinc dust. This precipitate and the amalgam sponge are refined into pure gold, which were poured into "Bricks".

Each month about 12 bricks were poured for a total production of some 8,000 ounces. The bricks were sent by mail to the Royal Canadian Mint in Ottawa.

But Bralorne did not die. The Whiting Brothers purchased the 1,400 acre townsite, hooked up the electricity, telephone, water and sewer, then proceeded on a two-year renovation of the residences.

They hoped to make Bralorne a year round recreational resort, and to sell the houses and commercial buildings to families and retired couples. In 1978-79, because of the ideal climatic conditions in the Mine, also to create employment in the area, people took up growing mushrooms underground. These were the mushrooms miners. There were some pretty spectacular mushrooms in terms of size and while they graced our tables they made many of our meals delicious.

Then in the '80s Bralorne Mine was reopened for a time and again created a period of excitement among residents of the Valley.

The historic town of Bralorne maintains a population of about fifty families and as the Mine lies quietly sleeping, people are also remembering, hoping and always optimistic about the future.

Perhaps that we can extend the (mining) history of the Valley.

**Mining Week 1992 will  
be observed in the week  
of March 9th to 13th**