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DEPARTMENT OF NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT
BUREAU OF MINERAL RESOURCES
GEOLOGY AND GEOPHYSICS

RECORDS:

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Further statement on Leigh Creek coalfield

- confidential

by

H.G. Raggatt

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CONFIDENTIAL:

Mineral Resources Survey,

Common Building,
A.C.T.

3rd August, 1962.

Hon. J.A. Bonaloy,
Minister for Supply & Development,
CANBERRA. A.C.T.

LEIGH CREEK COAL

The following statement is furnished in reply to
Mr. Callaghan's Mem. of 27th July.

A great deal of work has been done since my report on the field in January of this year. Thirty two bores have been completed proving a thickness of coal ranging from 30 to 50 feet at a depth of 40 to 150 feet from the surface. The provings extend for 8,000 feet each side of the Pt. Augusta - Alice Springs railway at Relford siding, 169 miles from Port Augusta. These bores are in addition to those put down many years ago.

The South Australian Government has also obtained a report from Mr. G. Hindmarsh, Assistant Superintendent of Collieries for Australian Iron & Steel, recommending a colliery layout. (I have a private copy of this report but presumably a copy could be obtained from the South Australian Government).

The reasons for delay in development are:-

- (1) The South Australian Premier desires to prove sufficient coal under the right conditions to permit development of the field by open cast working.
- (2) The necessity for determining the best way of using the coal, which has a high moisture content and which powders quickly on exposure to the air and cannot be used satisfactorily in the normal types of furnaces or firebricks. boxes

On 27th July, Mr. Highell advised the Secretary that the possibility of using Leigh Creek coal would be fully investigated.

Assuming point (2) is satisfactorily determined there will still be considerable delay before production can be expected from Leigh Creek, especially if boring is to go on until sufficient coal has been proved to justify the capital cost of an open cast mining and local power generation scheme. There seems little doubt that methods of using the coal will be devised and development should not be delayed on that account.

If it is considered that such a scheme is not warranted or practicable and normal (adit) methods of mining coal are adopted it is estimated by Mr. Hindmarsh that it will still take

eight months to reach an output of 450 tons per shift provided there is no delay in obtaining equipment.

It is thought that with the advice available to him Mr. Highell may be able to determine whether any further work designed to prove the practicability of the open cast scheme is warranted and thus enable an adit colliery to be developed without further delay.

This report is marked 'Confidential' because information from Mr. Hindmarsh's report has been used therein. I have not obtained his permission to do this and suggest that his name be omitted if this Memo. is being passed on, pending application to South Australia for a copy of his report, by yourself or the Secretary.

(H. G. Raggatt)
DIRECTOR.