

# Mini-mills' threat to U.S steel giants

United Press International  
CHARLOTTE — America's giant steelmakers, already fighting a sagging economy, foreign imports and union unrest, are being challenged on yet another front — competition from the mini-mill.

About 60 mini-mills around the nation — mostly in the South and West — are producing some steel products at costs well below the giant mills, and in many cases at prices rivaling the Japanese. And they are making a profit doing it.

F. Kenneth Iverson, president of Nucor Corps. in Charlotte, N.C. said one reason his company earned \$13.4 million the first nine months of 1982 is its commitment to state-of-the-art technology.

Nucor operates seven plants in South Carolina, Texas, Nebraska and Utah.

Typical of the mini-mill philosophy, Nucor concentrates its plants where it can operate with non-union labor and trim ship-

ping costs by serving local markets.

Mini-mills produce specialized steel products in small, new and efficient factories by melting scrap metal in electric furnaces.

Most of the major Northeastern steel factories, which were built 20 or more years ago, produce their steel from raw materials in expensive to operate blast furnaces.

Mini-mill steel is converted into rollable billets on highly automated, continuous-casting machines that crank out ready-to-use steel in a matter of minutes.

Nucor can produce a ton of steel in less than four hours. This compares to an average of five hours per ton in Japan and more than six hours per ton at some major U.S. plants.

Iverson said Nucor produced 850 tons of steel per employee in 1982 while some of the big firms averaged less than half that amount.

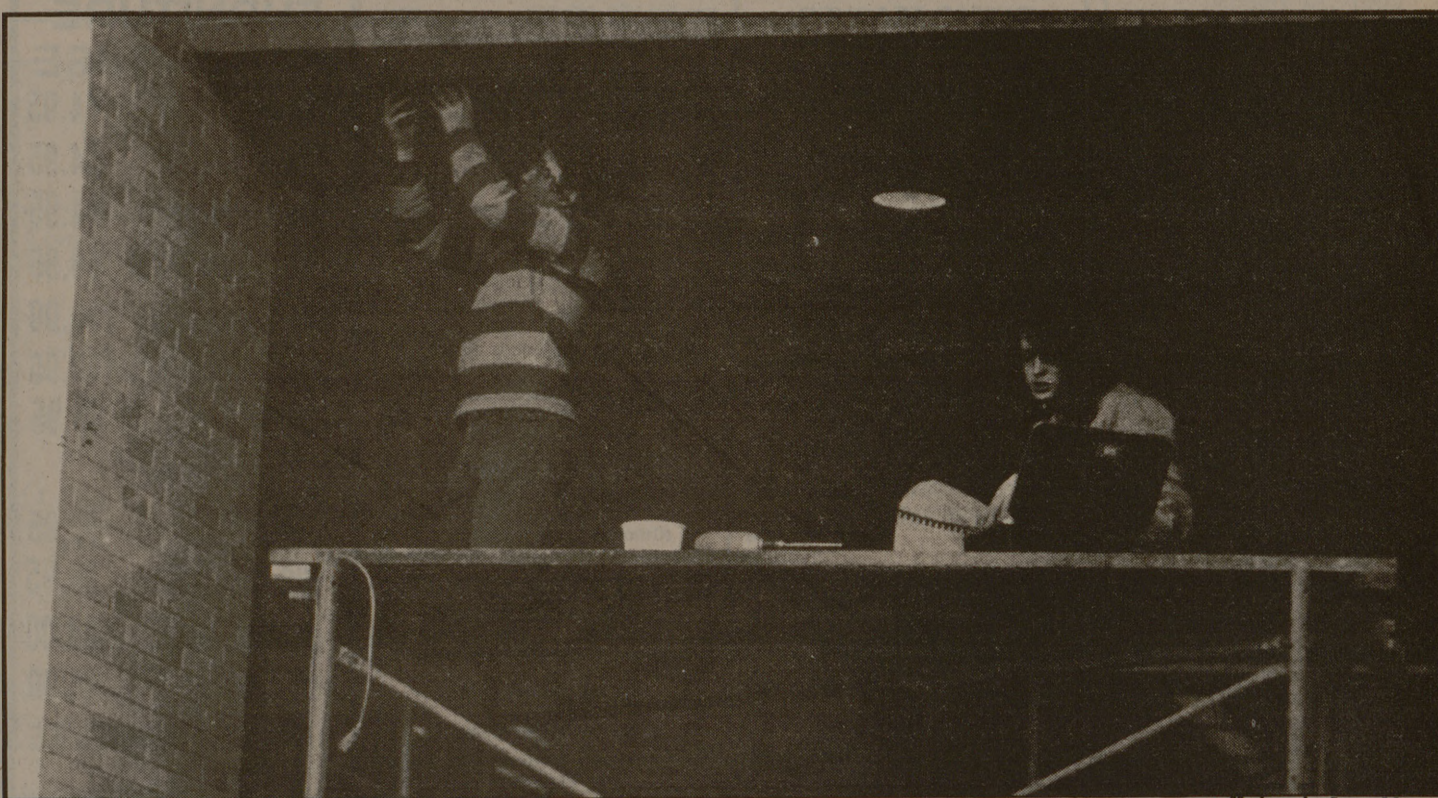
The typical mini-mill produces light steel products like construction joists, grinding balls and reinforcing rods for concrete structures. Most leave the bigger and heavier steel products to the giant mills.

The mini-mills, by competitive pricing of their specialty products, have managed to keep the Japanese from seriously penetrating their markets. Iverson, in contrast to major steel producers, favors free trade.

Chaparral Steel Co., of Midlothian, Texas, sent a 10 man steel-melting crew to Japan last year to study their steel-making methods.

"We want to beat them at their own productivity game," said Chaparral President Gordon Forward. Chaparral, which operates one 7-year-old mill, earned \$11 million last year on sales of \$379 million.

Several mini-mills offer workers an incentive plan that ties earnings to output.



staff photo by Irene Mees

## Library gets a check-up

Julie Bannantine, right, and Terry Wilt, both employed by a Houston engineering firm, test the mortar at Sterling C. Evans library for suspected

erosion. The mortar, which has been on the market for only 15 years, has a chemical which may cause possible erosion of the mortar.

## What In The World Would We Do Without Business?

Some folks would have us believe that the world's oldest and most noble profession belongs to those who till the soil. Others would lead us to think that those who perform the healing arts deserve that distinction. Still others have other ideas.

Hardly anyone would argue, however, that the world's predominant profession is practiced by those responsible for meeting mankind's basic needs and wants: business people have been in business since Day One. Buying and selling and trading and exchanging goods and services and information — the practice of business — is the one major profession that touches every person's life in the most comprehensive way.

Someone has observed that by the time a person finishes breakfast and arrives at the place of

work (or school), that person has been served by hundreds of business people. Think about that.

I, for instance, had breakfast (corn flakes) this morning sent to my table by business people in Battlecreek, Michigan. My hot spiced tea came to me by way of business interests in India, South America, and China. Toast was provided by business firms in North Dakota, butter from businesses in East Texas. The silverware at my table is the result of business activities in Idaho, the ceramic plates from businesses in other states. The trousers I wear (I pulled them on one leg at a time just like everyone else) came to me from a business firm in North Carolina, my shoes from New Mexico. I had been awakened by an electronic device from New York, music from California. I motored to the

office in a device assembled by a business in Dallas, Texas.

And so by the time I arrived at my desk I had enjoyed benefits supplied by hundreds of business people.

And to think about it further, the checks I had written to pay for each product or service has circulated through an amazing economic network in a fascinating economic system that is based primarily on trust!

One human being trusting his needs and wants to the business activities of hundreds of other people! And they in turn trusting their economic security to my handwritten note of payment.

Business, of course, is much more than that. But without those key ingredients of mutual trust and service between people, there just couldn't be many business transactions. Business is a people-oriented profession.

And the study of Business Administration, also, is much more than it appears on the surface. Maybe that is why we have started an annual "BUSINESS WEEK" at Texas A&M University. We'd like to let you experience some of the excitement of the profession. We'd like to let you in on

some of the inside skills and knowledge and information involved in business professions.

And we'd like to invite you to meet and visit with some caring and interesting business people.

The Annual Business Career Fair is an excellent opportunity for students and faculty members to become acquainted with professionals representing specific businesses and industries. The sharing of information and the establishing of continuing relationships between the university and the business community provides many benefits for all concerned.

BUSINESS WEEK '83 at Texas A&M University begins Monday, January 31 and runs through Friday, February 4. The College of Business Administration is happy to be your host to numerous events. Participate in those of interest to you, as listed in the schedules elsewhere in this special edi-

tion of the business students' newsletter, "The Business."

Lynn Zimmermann, Assistant to the Dean

The Business is published by the undergraduate Business Student Council as a monthly newsletter for students and student organizations of the College of Business Administration at Texas A&M University. It is financed by voluntary non-tax-supported projects and activities of the Business Student Council. "The Business" offices and student organization offices are located in room 101 of the A&A building, telephone 713/845-1320. The Business: Student Editor - Clyde L. Wright, III; Staff Editor - Susan DuBois; Council President - Susie Brandt; Council Staff Advisor - Lynn Zimmermann; Dean of the College - Dr. William V. Muse.

## Innovation Theme of Banquet

Mr. Roy Serpa will be the featured speaker at the 1983 Career Fair Banquet, slated for Tuesday evening at the main banquet room of the MSC. Mr. Serpa is currently the Manager of Headquarters Commercial Development for Gulf Oil Chemicals Company. He will be speaking on Innovation and Entrepreneurship.

Mr. Serpa is responsible for the direction of all commercial development activities and new business ventures at Gulf. He began his career as a chemical salesman and for the past fifteen years has held several marketing, business development, and general management positions.

During the past ten years, Mr. Serpa has been extensively involved with new business ventures, technology transfer on an international basis, and with acquisitions. He has presented several lectures and articles about marketing, business development, the free enterprise system, and on multinational firms and their impact on international affairs.

A graduate of the Southeastern Massachusetts University with a B.S. Degree in Chemistry, he also received his Master's Degree in Business Administration from the University of Pittsburgh.

Mr. Serpa is a member of the

American Management Association and the Commercial Development Association. He is active in the United Way and the Project Business Program of Junior Achievement.

<p><b>HAPPY HOUR</b> 5-7 Mon.-Thurs. 4:30-6:30 Fri. Sat. 11-5 Mon.-Sat. 10-Closing</p>	<p><b>OPEN</b> 11-11 Mon.-Thurs. 11-12 Fri.-Sat. 11-2:30 Sunday Brunch 5-10 Sunday</p>
--	--

MONDAY--Sorority Night! Bring in your greek letters and drink all night for half-price!!!

WEDNESDAY--Ladies Night! All ladies' drinks half-price from 5 till closing!!

**INTERURBAN EATING HOUSE**  
846-8741  
505 University Drive

**SPECIAL STUDENT HEALTH CLUB MEMBERSHIP**

Now is the time to get in shape with a student health club membership at Royal Oaks Racquet Club. The cost is only \$16 per month plus a one time \$50 initiation fee and you can suspend the membership and dues for three month's each summer. Racquetball courts can be rented by student members on an as available basis for a low court fee. For further information call 846-8724.

**Fourth Annual Career Fair Banquet**

**"A Dead Whale or a Stove Bolt"**

**Mr. Roy Serpa, Gulf Chemicals speaking**

**Sit With The Company Of Your Choice**

**Tickets on Sale Today and Tomorrow ONLY!!**

**\$5.00 admission**

4455 CARTER CREEK PARKWAY 846-8788

## Ill teen's custody settled

United Press International  
SAN FRANCISCO — A couple succeeded in their two-year court battle to gain custody of a teenage victim of Down's syndrome whose parents refused him medical treatment, but doctors say too much time may have lapsed for a lifesaving operation.

The state Court of Appeal Tuesday granted custody of Phillip Becker, 16, to Herbert and Patsy Heath of San Jose, Calif.

The Heaths battled with Phillip's natural parents, Warren and Patricia Becker of Los Altos, Calif., for custody of the child after the Beckers refused to allow doctors to perform an exploratory heart catheterization to see whether Phillip needed corrective surgery.

"The Heaths are ecstatic," Jay Spear, the Heaths' lawyer, said Tuesday night. "But the question over whether he can have the heart catheterization test still remains.

"The only way it will be resolved is if and when the California Supreme Court rules on the case."

Phillip was born with Down's syndrome, a genetic disease that causes mental retardation, often accompanied by physical abnormalities including heart defects.

Without the surgery, the Heaths argued, Phillip would live only into his 30s. The Beckers said they did not want to prolong his life beyond their own life expectancy because he might not have anyone to take care of him.

The exploratory surgery may now be a moot issue because doctors believe Phillip has grown too large for the operation to have any benefit, the court said.

Spear echoed that concern. "He has a progressive disorder," he said. "In 1977, when the first tests were done they showed that he was operable. Today, doctors are not sure that is still the case."

In making the Tuesday decision, the court decided that removing Phillip from the psychologically supportive atmosphere in the Heath's home would have a severe effect on the boy who earlier showed signs of stress when removed from the Heath's care.

The court said Phillip's frequent visits to the Heath's home "provided an adequate foundation to establish the crucial parent-child relationship."

The Heaths met Phillip in 1972 when they worked as volunteers for the We Care home for the mentally retarded in San Jose. They began taking him home for visits.

The Beckers, who institutionalized Phillip soon after his birth, did not visit him often and refused to pursue medical treatments for him when they became aware of his condition, the court said.

"The record contains abundant evidence (the Becker's) retention of custody would cause Phillip profound emotional harm," Justice John T. Racanelli wrote.