



1980 PRESIDENT

F.D. NELSON • IRON & STEEL SOCIETY



On February 25, 1980, Mr. Nelson will become president of ISS-AIME. The new president is manager, steel production at Inland Steel's Indiana Harbor Works. Don Nelson joined Inland in September of 1950 following his graduation from Illinois Institute of Technology with a bachelor's degree in metallurgical engineering. During his career at Inland, Don has had tours of duty in the open hearth, basic oxygen furnace and electric furnace shops. He was superintendent of Inland's first BOF shop and electric furnace shop. In 1978, Don became assistant to the vice president steel manufacturing. On September 1, 1979 Don assumed his present position.

Don Nelson's career in AIME dates back a year prior to his joining Inland. While a student at ITT, he was instrumental in forming an American Institute of Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum Engineers (AIME) student chapter at the school and was chairman in his last year at ITT. His nomination as president-elect of the Society in 1979 came in his thirtieth year of membership in AIME. The new Society president has served AIME both in the Chicago local sections and the national organizations. Don was chairman of the National Open Hearth and Basic Oxygen Steelmaking Division in 1974-75, and a member of the first board of directors of ISS-AIME in 1975. He represented the Electric

Furnace Division of ISS as a member of the Third International Iron and Steel Congress in 1978. He is also the Electric Furnace Division representative on the Society King Range Planning Committee and is current chairman of the AIME and ISS GEM Committees.

Don's contributions to numerous program committees both locally and nationally plus his long loyalty to AIME and ISS make up the core of his service and contribution to and participation in AIME.

In mid-November an I&SM staff editor visited Don Nelson in his office at Harbor Works to determine the incoming president's views and concepts on where the Society should concentrate its efforts and the services it should strive to provide for its members in the new decade.

I&SM: To borrow a phrase from our national political scene, how do you see the state of the Society?

NELSON: We've come a long way in five years. And, in my opinion, the Iron and Steel Society is something this country needed, and it finally came about through the work and concern of a lot of people.

I certainly think we have a lot of work to do out ahead in expansion of the Society in terms of membership. We've been looking at an annual ten percent growth rate. I think this should be our minimum goal. And if more people put effort into this, our growth can be greater, because, as you and I know, there are a lot of people who come to both our section and national meetings who are not members. And they come year after year.

Now that the Iron and Steel society has a separate status in AIME, I think world steel organizations recognize our Society as the organization in North America, as far as iron and steel technology is concerned – more so now than nine or ten years ago when we were a part of The Metallurgical Society. Our sponsorship of the International Congress certainly helped the Society gain recognition throughout the world.

For a country as large as ours, and a steel industry the size of ours, I would think our membership should be triple or four times as large as it is now. It is not going to happen overnight, but it should happen over the long run.

In order for us to attract people to become members we have to supply them with member services and convince them it's worth the investment on their part. And I think we can do better than we have done to date in this area.

I&SM: What do you consider the strengths of Iron and Steel Society?

NELSON: In my opinion the technical nature of our conferences over many, many years has been the key to our success. They have been excellent and should continue to be so. The trend in future conferences will be to interrelate more and more with other foreign technical societies. I think we should have more joint programs. I think the International Iron and Steel Congress was very successful. We have to continue to seek foreign authors in our conferences. Their contributions to our conferences in light of their new plants and technologies in some areas must continue, both in our annual conferences and perhaps in special programs on specific subjects. The people that plan our conferences have been all over our country, and many of them have been all over the world, so they have many contacts.

Throughout my career at Inland and my affiliation with AIME, the American Iron and steel Institute (AISI), and the International Iron and Steel Institute (IISI), I've had the opportunity of seeing the world steel industry and meeting one tremendous group of people. These contacts are very valuable. I have found that AIME is quite respected throughout the world, more so than other professional societies. I think the fact that AIME has encouraged participation from abroad is a major reason for this respect. **I&SM:** On the subject of conferences, what more can we do?



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NELSON: We must join with our AIME sister societies and hold programs similar to the Coal and Coking Conference that we jointly sponsored with the Society of Mining Engineers. There is a lot of potential interrelationship with us and the Mining, Metallurgical and Petroleum groups. The information that our members can gain from inter-AIME conferences definitely qualifies as a member service.

I&SM: What do you think about the Society's efforts in sponsoring short courses in specific technologies?

NELSON: I think these courses are excellent. I participated in the BOF course as a lecturer. I think these courses provide an excellent opportunity for people to upgrade their talents and to get into some of the specific technologies related to one basic process. It gives them the opportunity to hear people lecture who are knowledgeable on the specific process. I am a great advocate of these short courses. I think we should expand our program.

The courses are a great benefit to people in the industry who have a limited background in the technologies involved. Also the courses are beneficial to members who only recently have entered into a new field. The courses should serve as a supplement to their background.

I&SM: In March, the Society will co-sponsor a short course on Maximization of Electric Furnace Steel Production with the Penn-Ohio Iron and Steel Section. The local course will be offered in Youngstown. To date the Society has only offered short courses in conjunction with national conferences. In effect, we are taking the mountain to Mohammed. Do you think we should expand upon this concept?

NELSON: There's a cost for a company to send people to these courses. The cost is both time away and housing. I think it would be a very good move. I am certain that if the Society offered a short course in Chicago, the Chicago based

plants would send quite a few people. There would be no housing involved; it would be strictly commuting. I think the idea has a lot of merit, not only in Chicago, but all over the country. I think the Society should go in this direction. I think we should develop many courses in cokemaking, ironmaking, steelmaking, and rolling and finishing processes, so that all of our five divisions can participate and benefit.

We have to tailor make the courses for the people who will benefit most from taking the course. Many of the top managers in our industry have been to these courses or courses similar. Now we have to change our thinking some. The people who came to the national conferences came to these courses. Now we have to think in terms of the people who don't come to our national conferences. I am certain that there are courses we haven't even thought about in all areas of the industry that would be beneficial to both the people and the companies they work for. This is an area in which we certainly should expand. What we've done is good. But it's essential we continue to improve and expand upon what has been done to date.

I&SM: One of our profession's major problems is attracting bright young people from our universities. I am curious, what attracted you to the iron and steel industry?

NELSON: I worked as a metallurgical observer at South Works and also as a laborer in the summers of '47 and '48. And I think that then the interest in the steel industry was planted. I was fascinated with steelmaking. As a metallurgical observer, I got a very good look at the operations of a steel plant. During the second summer I worked in the open hearth, and really got to like the business. It was at this time that I transferred to IIT in metallurgical engineering.

The only interviews I chose were in basic steel. I interviewed at many of the

steel companies located in the Chicago area. I wanted to work in a steelmaking shop. In the spring of 1950 I committed to go to Inland Steel upon graduation.

I&SM: As a student at ITT, you founded a student chapter. What would you say are the necessary ingredients for a successful student chapter?

NELSON: You have professors and student officers who are active and want to have a good program. I was fortunate to have such professors. They also happened to be strong AIME members. Several of our courses, both ferrous and nonferrous metallurgy involved a few plant visits. This gave us the opportunity to relate what we had learned in class to what was happening in the industry. Obviously, this ties in with the geographical area in which the university is located. But the faculty advisor is the key guy. If the professor is genuinely interested, the program will fly.

I&SM: One last question. If you were promoting membership in our Society, what would you determine is the most valuable intangible benefit of membership?

NELSON: Rapport with people in the industry. At local meetings, at national meetings, over and above what you pick up at the technical sessions. There's a tremendous amount of information that you pick up in informal conversations at hospitality suites, at a friendly dinner, or just in the corridors. You can really develop rapport with people. You get to know people on a first name basis. The result is that you can ask questions about various projects going on in their plants and they'll tell you. It's a good fraternity of people trying to do their jobs better.

Also, the participation in the planning of programs, nationally or locally. It's a lot of work, but it's a lot of fun too. You get a great deal of self-satisfaction when the programs work out well. The friendships you gain with other people who worked in the program is a tremendous benefit that lasts throughout your life.