



W. M. RANKIN •

ASSOCIATION OF IRON AND STEEL ENGINEERS

the public and, occasionally, from steelmakers themselves. next year he was advanced to manager.

Fortunately, these sectors are not as large as they once were since business spokesmen have become more vocal in defense of their industry. Even the employees are getting into the act. In Armco, for example, they recently sent a petition to President Carter bearing 4500 signatures and the following message: "We earn our pay and we'll compete head to head with any steelworker anywhere in know-how, productivity and attitude. People come here from all over the world to learn how to make steel...and a lot of them come at the request of our government."

In terms of expertise per se, I agree that the industry is at least equal to any country in the work. However, in many instances we still are faced with the lack of capital formation needed to put that know-how to work. As we all know, we cannot improve the efficiency and quality of our production from a set of blueprints.

One of the reasons why plans remain on the shelf is apolitical climate that provides little inventive to invest in steel. On the one hand, Washington criticizes us for seeking realistic prices. On the other, they ignore our poor profitability and demand unrealistic standards for environmental controls that in some cases cannot be attained by current technology.

This situation alone has convinced me that 1978 promises to be a critical year for the steel industry in the political arena and beyond. Not all of our problems can be legislated away. As a society and as individuals, the AISE must adopt an even greater leadership role in perfecting steel's image as the strongest, most versatile material in the world today. Contrary to some opinion makers, the world needs a strong steel industry, not only for the jobs it

generates, but for the necessities it produces. As president of AISE, I look forward to working with you toward this common goal that is so critical to the future of our industry and the worldwide industrial economy.



W. M. Rankin

W. M. RANKIN, manager—Houston works, Armco Steel Corp., began his career with the corporation as an electrical engineer at the Kansas City works in 1948. In 1954 he was promoted to assistant electrical superintendent, and in 1956 became general superintendent. In 1958 he was made assistant works manager at the Kansas City plant. His transfer to the Houston works came in 1962 when he was made assistant works manager, and the

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

In light of what has been reported in the newspapers and on television, it would appear that, physically, the American iron and steel industry is on its last legs. A claim is that our technology has been outdistanced by that practiced in other countries. Granted, there is some substance to the argument, as evidenced by closings of antiquated plants in an effort to reduce costs. And surely there will be more casualties since we may have passed the point of salvation for other companies or plants...but that is not really new because healthy companies are constantly reevaluating their strengths and weaknesses. Nevertheless, doubts have arisen concerning the viability and vitality of our industry in some sectors of Washington,