

for human action. He then elaborates two concepts of his own: "exit" and "voice." Defined as possible options linking economic and political behavior, "exit" is the individual's ability to choose, to leave intolerable business relationships, avoid badly made products, etc. The alternative, "voice," is the act of criticizing or commenting, aimed at changing the system.

Is capitalism, as Montesquieu and others thought, a civilizing influence on mankind (the *doux-commerce* theory)? Or does it breed its own destruction by undermining the morality on which it is based? Neither, says Hirschman, in one of his more provocative essays. Economists take far too simple a view of human behavior. "The incredible complexity of human nature must be spoon-fed back into the traditional [economic] findings for the sake of greater realism."

**CRISIS IN BETHLEHEM:**

**Big Steel's  
Battle to Survive**  
by John Strohmeier  
Adler, 1986  
242 pp. \$17.95

**UP FROM THE ASHES:**

**The Rise of the  
Steel Minimill in  
the United States**  
by Donald F. Barnett  
and Robert W. Crandall  
Brookings, 1986  
135 pp. \$26.95 cloth, \$9.95  
paper

In 1958, seven of the 10 highest-paid men in America were executives of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation. Since those glorious days, Big Steel has lost 25 percent of its home market to foreign competitors, abandoned innumerable mills to rust, and shifted its own scarce capital to other industries. Some 250,000 well-paid blue-collar jobs have been lost forever.

As Strohmeier, former editor of the *Globe Times* of Bethlehem, Pa., is careful to note in his sympathetic, often moving elegy for Big Steel, no single factor accounts for the industry's decline. Its executives, lulled by the absence of foreign competition after World War II, ignored inefficiency in their unrelenting drive to expand output. (Today, the world's steel mills can turn out 90 million tons of steel, but only 60 million tons are needed.) To buy labor peace, Big Steel's leaders regularly agreed to generous wage increases. By 1982, steelworkers made over \$26 an hour, double the average U.S. manufacturing wage.

Strohmeier argues that union work rules requiring extensive featherbedding, not high wages, are the industry's costliest burden. However, in 1959, when the steelmakers weathered a 116-day strike to force the United Steelworkers of America to relax the rules, Washington intervened. The union won.

In *Up from the Ashes*, Brookings researchers

Barnett and Crandall suggest that the nation's flourishing "minimills" may be the industry's salvation. Operating with nonunion labor, aggressive management, and the newest technology, these small mills are able to turn scrap metal into finished steel. They now produce about 20 percent of the nation's steel. It is a heartening success story. But Little Steel does not make the massive structural beams used in construction and in defense industries such as shipbuilding. As Strohmeyer sees it, the continuing failure of labor and management in Big Steel to work together for their mutual long-term benefit threatens national security as well as jobs.

### *Arts & Letters*

#### **UP FROM THE CRADLE OF JAZZ: New Orleans Music Since World War II**

by Jason Berry, Jonathan Foose,  
and Tad Jones  
Univ. of Ga., 1986  
285 pp. \$35 cloth,  
\$15.95 paper



In addition to its Cajun and creole cuisines, and its festive Mardi Gras celebrations, New Orleans is known for its centuries-old tradition of fine music. Authors Berry, Foose, and Jones (a journalist, musician/producer, and researcher, respectively) look at the four decades since World War II to chronicle the development of the city's rhythm and blues (R & B) and jazz styles—related offspring that share an ancestry of gospel, Deep South blues, and Caribbean rhythms.

The result is a rich medley. The authors describe the major R & B artists: Eddie Lee "Guitar Slim" Jones, the Delta bluesman who, as a headliner at the Dew Drop Inn, befriended an obscure blind pianist named Ray Charles; Huey "Piano" Smith, whose "Rockin' Pneumonia and the Boogie Woogie Flu" (1957) is today a dance classic; and the legendary Henry Roeland Byrd, alias Professor Longhair, who "laid the foundation of a unique musical sound that the coming generation revered and built upon." Byrd's career plummeted during the 1960s; he was destitute and ill until a 1970 rediscovery. "Take out your false teeth poppa, 'cause mamma wants to mingle in your gumdrops," sang Longhair in a 1979 recording session just before his death.

The city's musical families—the Lasties, the Nevilles, the Acorns—are discussed as well. Through these dynasties, ethnic traditions, idiom, and musical styles were passed from one genera-