

Located on the St. Mary's River, which connects Lakes Superior and Huron, Algoma Steel Corporation currently ranks as the No. 3 producer in the Canadian industry, but may reclaim second place when a current expansion program lifts its steel-making capacity to 4 million short tons a year early in 1973.

The most western of the "Big Three", Algoma, derives both bonuses and deficits from its geographical setting. For example, the firm probably exports a greater percentage of its production to the U.S. than either Stelco or Dofasco. It has an edge when it comes to markets in Western Canada, particularly as a supplier of plate to fabricators of large-diameter pipe. Algoma is Canada's sole producer of wide-flange beams, rolling sections up to 24 inches and welding sections up to 48 inches.

Among its facilities, Algoma operates the widest hot-strip mill in Canada, the 106-inch mill started in 1963, and the widest plate-mill, the new 166-inch mill completed late last year.

Sysco is the largest maker of railroad rails in Canada. Its rails are produced from vacuum-treated steel and can be produced to a length of 25 metres. Sysco's new rail-finishing mill, if not the most modern in the world, is one of the most modern. In addition to rails, Sysco can also supply tie-plates. Sysco is favoured by its location at tidewater, which has enabled it to secure a fair amount of export business since it began operations.

The westernmost steel-producer in Canada is Western Canada Steel Limited, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Cominco Ltd., with plants in Calgary and Vancouver. Its current capacity is 175,000 tons a year of electric-furnace steel and hot-rolled carbon bars and shapes. This company operates an electric-furnace plant and rolling-mill in Hawaii that produces 75,000 tons a year. Cominco/Western serves Western Canadian customers in the mining, milling, lumbering and construction industries with a range of steel and steel products that includes hot-rolled bar and light structural merchant-mill shapes such as channels, angles, flats, rounds, squares and reinforcing bar, as well as a wide variety of hot-forged standard, special and custom fasteners.

In Quebec, Sidbec-Dosco is making rapid strides toward joining the ranks of the integrated producers in Canada. This will occur when the company begins receiving direct reduced pellets from its Midland-Ross "Midrex" plant -- now under construction at Contrecoeur Works -- for its new electric furnaces. The expansion and modernization program will eventually raise Sidbec-Dosco's raw-steel capacity to 1.5 million tons a year by 1980.

Sidbec-Dosco makes such basic products as hot- and cold-rolled sheet, bars, wire rod, re-bars, small and intermediate shapes and skelp at two locations in Quebec. It also manufactures secondary products such as wire and wire products, fasteners, steel joists and roof-decking in Montreal and Toronto.