

# Youngstown Steels for Collapse of Its Way of Life

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*Closing of steel works  
means trouble for  
Youngstown*

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**Youngstown, Ohio** — Since before this century began, the destiny of millions of men and of the steelmaking areas that have been their home has lain in mills like Youngstown Steel's Campbell Works.

The works are a mammoth grouping of gray-rust buildings and thickets of smokestacks and cylindrical blast furnaces stretching along the Mahoning River between green hills with workers' houses marching up the sides.

Tuesday the huge mill was operating as it has since 1900, white steam and red dust rising toward gray clouds, the smell of burning coal making the nose wrinkle, the blast of horns from locomotives punctuating the industrial bustle.

But a tornado or flash flood may as

well have wiped it all from the face of the Earth.

Monday, the Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. delivered a blow to this city by announcing that it was all but shutting down the mill.

## Not the Only One

"From what I understand, it's going down at the end of this week, and they'll never light it back up again," said Jim Woods, 30, a crane operator in an open hearth shop. Woods said he was considering going down to New Stanton, Pa., to seek employment in the Volkswagen plant there.

Youngstown Sheet & Tube's action comes on the heels of other bad news. US Steel plans to lay off some of its 6,000 workers here, but hasn't said how many.

Jones & Laughlin Steel Co. said last week that it would cut its work force by 150 when it closes its suburban Niles conduit plant. Republic Steel, with 7,000 jobs in the area, says it may lay off a few hundred.

Seldom are the effects as drastic, so telescoped in time, so concentrated in one blow as they are here. But Youngstown's sudden crisis — and it is being treated as such, almost as if it were a natural disaster — is a variant of what is happening to the aging industrial cities of the East and Middle West.

[President Carter was described Wednesday as being alarmed by the news out of Youngstown. Sen. John Heinz (R-Pa.) said after a group of Republicans had breakfast with Carter that the president

was eager to meet with steel industry and union representatives to discuss the cutbacks.]

## 12% of Jobs Going

In Youngstown, if no reprieve comes, 5,000 jobs — roughly 12% of all jobs in basic steel in a metropolitan area that calls itself the Steel Valley — are about to disappear. This is expected to throw thousands of others out of work as well, severely reduce the tax base and send off a migration of the unemployed to other parts of the state and nation.

It would be the eclipse of a culture that began developing before 1900, with the steel mill at its center and the tavern, the church and the union hall on its periphery. That is the precise arrangement

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