



ing with the country's resources, remarking that 'Where there is sugar cane there will be steel.' Reform is only a stone's throw from where my grandfather's store was and most of these people were family customers. So, my father decided to start a manufacturing operation in Reform and give employment to the community. He had already made contacts through his trading and buying and selling; he had good ties with Puerto Rico and good friends there in the steel market. So, he began his first significant manufacturing investment by entering into a partnership with Caribbean Steel, based in Puerto Rico. Dansteel and Caribbean Steel would combine to establish Trinrico Steel and Wire Products Lim-

ited. And that's why Trinrico ended up in Reform Village."

According to Ramoutarsingh, Trinrico Steel was soon manufacturing welded wire mesh, nails, chain link fencing, and rebar processed from coils. Daniel's father also entered into an exclusive business relationship with Bekaert International, a world market and technology leader in steel wire transformation and coatings, processing the company's galvanized, coated wires into chain link fabric, galvanized welded wire mesh, and barbed wire. He formed the Dansteel Group of Companies that would eventually grow to include a chain of Hardware Stores, Gulf City Shopping Mall, and

Trinrico Steel and Wire Products Limited.

With the advent of ISCOTT, the state owned iron and steel company that used iron ore to produce billet, wire rod, and rebar in coil, Jack established CENTRIN (Central Trinidad Steel), an integrated rolling mill specializing in re-bar and merchant bars such as angles, flats and squares. The year was 1983, and the Dansteel Group of Companies was now regional and extra -regional manufacturers and exporters of steel and wire products to the Caribbean, North American, and Central American Markets.

Unfortunately, the elder Ramoutarsingh soon ran into difficulties because of a global downturn, a recession, and the foreclosure of the state-owned, sole, raw material producer, ISCOTT. Raw material procurement became a challenge and protectionist policies that favored ISPATT, the new supplier, caused a 50 percent spike in the price of locally supplied steel, thereby making his manufactured products uncompetitive in the world marketplace. He spent ten years in court battles, but finally won a decision mandating that the local material supplier had to sell to him at the average world-market price. But, according to Ramoutarsingh, Trinrico was stagnant for many years because his father was busy fighting these legal skirmishes. In addition, he had to liquidate the Dansteel Group and sell his hardware stores in an effort to save CENTRIN and Trinrico. In the end, only Trinrico remained.

Trinrico continued to produce, but the establishment of several new local and regional manufacturers, plus the separation from the former Group, challenged the company. The former sister com-

