

outcome of the fight probably will not be definitely known until several lawsuits concerning the battle are decided.

Mr. Evans contends Wabco management acted unethically by turning down Crane's merger proposal after insufficient consideration and then turning to American Standard before Crane had enough time to come up with a better offer. Wabco management replies that Mr. Evans sought to pull off a "dishonest swindle" by trying to induce Wabco shareholders to exchange their common stock, which carried an ownership interest in the company, for Crane debentures that would have given them no ownership interest in the merged concern (Crane later modified the proposal to make the debentures it is offering partially convertible into Crane common stock).

Getting Personal

As happens frequently in an Evans fight, the battle has gotten into personalities. A. King McCord, Wabco chairman, has accused Mr. Evans of offering him "inappropriate" financial inducements, including stock options in a merged company, in an effort to win his backing for combination with Crane. "I was shocked" at this offer, he says.

Mr. Evans, in reply, tells an inquirer with a chuckle that he sees nothing wrong with the offer—except that, since Mr. McCord rejected it, "I guess it wasn't inappropriate enough, wouldn't you say?"

The mixture of banter and bluntness in that reply is indicative of the personality that makes Mr. Evans so controversial. To an interviewer, he seems a curious blend of boyish enthusiasm and steely calculation. He is a stocky, nervously active man of medium height whose round face is habitually twisted into a grin—sometimes apparently out of simple good humor, sometimes in obvious relish over victory in a business deal.

Friends find him a pleasant and even charming social companion, whose seemingly boundless energy can be engaged by a discussion of politics or early American art as well as by business. He delights in showing a visitor the 19th-century prints of New York scenes that decorate his Park Avenue office in that city, and he confides that although he is a lifelong Republican—he was a Taft-pledged delegate to the Republican National Convention in 1952—he has contributed money this year to Senator Eugene McCarthy's campaign for the Democratic nomination because he thinks the U.S. involvement in Vietnam is "immoral."

But his best friends concede that this chatty acquaintance becomes a very different person in business deals. An associate who describes Mr. Evans as "quite shy and proper on the personal side" says that "on the business side he's extremely bellicose—rough, hard-driving, a tough guy." George Moore, chairman of First National City Bank of New York, puts it this way: "Tom Evans is a tough, realistic, competent businessman whom you don't want to run afoul of unless you know precisely where all the aces are."

Former Aide's View

To many of his employees, Mr. Evans seems a shouting tyrant whose wrath is apt to erupt at any time. A confrontation with him can be a nerve-shattering experience for a subordinate, says one former Porter executive: "He'll call somebody a dumb bastard or an ignorant son of a bitch, and the guy has no choice but to put up with it—until he can find another job."

In any case, friends, adversaries and employees agree on two traits, Mr. Evans shows to everyone. He is blunt—to the point of creating problems for himself says one associate: "Sometimes I think he needs a personal public-relations counselor." And he has displayed uncommon determination in taking over companies; some 43 have been absorbed into H. K. Porter alone in the last 19 years, many over the resistance of their managements, and nearly all have been profoundly transformed under his stern make-money-quick-or-else demands.

Though, like the Mellons, he comes from Pittsburgh, Mr. Evans is only distantly related to the banking family whose money launched Mellon National Bank & Trust Co., Gulf Oil Corp., Aluminum Co. of America and other giant concerns. (In the Wabco fight, in fact, four company directors associated with Mellon Bank are among his opponents; he refers to one, the bank's chairman, as "my ex-friend Johnny Mayer," and he has had Crane Co. take \$2 million in deposits out of the bank.) After graduating from Yale in 1931, he began his career inconspicuously as a clerk in the chairman's office at Gulf Oil.