

But Porter doesn't deny that many executives are simply fired, abruptly and without apology, because they don't meet Mr. Evans' exacting standards for profit performance. "We are totally ruthless with people who can't handle the job," says J. Stuart Morrow, president.

The executives who last are handsomely rewarded. B. Campbell Blake, vice president and general manager of Porter's Connors Steel division, last year drew \$195,556 in salary and incentive bonuses—nearly twice the \$100,000 salary Mr. Evans himself took from Porter.

But though the pay can be high, the pressure from Mr. Evans is constant and intense, those who have worked for him say. Some contend it occasionally backfires, too.

When a general manager discovers he can't turn a profit as fast as he's supposed to, he starts looking for another method," says one former Porter executive. "He can fudge his figures, but he knows Evans is sharp and that won't work long. So he has to find something else." He implies this creates a temptation to cut corners on product quality as a method of improving profit margins.

Several sources offer such an explanation for the troubles of BPS paint, a product line that Porter acquired in 1960 but sold in 1964 after the paint had acquired a reputation for uneven quality. Mr. Evans grins ruefully when this product is mentioned. "That was one of my mistakes," he says. He concedes Porter lost money on the paint operation—but adds that it got some tax benefits from selling the line.

Overall, the profit performance of Mr. Evans' companies recently has been somewhat uneven. Porter's net income hit an all-time high of \$7.4 million in 1966 but dropped last year to \$4.3 million, its lowest net since 1961. Crane has done somewhat better; though its 1967 profit was down to \$10.2 million, from \$11.3 million in 1966, earnings for the two years taken together represent a substantial improvement from the early 1960s, when it and other plumbing-fixture makers went through a deep profit slump.

On the Move

Mr. Evans runs Crane somewhat less closely than he does Porter; he leaves much of Crane's day-to-day operation to President Fabiani. But he still keeps a close eye on both companies. He logs about 100,000 miles a year in business flights around the country in his personal four-engine jet ("That doesn't include the fun trips to Europe or South America," he says), visiting companies he is thinking of having one or the other concern buy or dropping in on the 100-odd Crane and Porter plants.

On such visits, Mr. Evans probes into small details; he has a penchant for reading salesmen's call reports and checking up on direct-mail advertising operations. "He makes no effort to follow the chain of command," adds Porter President Morrow. "He will walk through a plant and tell a foreman what to do, even though the plant manager may be standing right next to him." But, Mr. Morrow says philosophically, "It's his company, and he can run it any damn way he wants."

Even sitting in his office on Park Avenue, Mr. Evans puts on a show of the energy that admirers say is his greatest executive talent—and that leaves a visiting reporter dazed. He twists and turns restlessly in his chair, his eyes darting occasionally to a closed-circuit television screen opposite his desk that flashes a constant flow of stock quotes piped in from the adjacent offices of Evans & Co. And, during the one-hour interview, he conducts this business:

A chat with Crane Co. vice president and controller James O'Brien, who reports some figures on the Crane-Wabco fight.

A discussion with son Ned of Ned's efforts to buy a Massachusetts apartment building as a personal investment for his father.

A discussion with Crane President Fabiani of merger talks Mr. Fabiani is conducting with executives of a boiler-making company in an office across the hall.

A brief personal visit to those merger talks.

A telephone call to George Champion, chairman of Chase Manhattan Bank and a director of Travelers Insurance Co., to ask his help in getting Travelers to abstain from voting its sizable block of Wabco shares against Crane ("Say, George," Mr. Evans begins the conversation, "you probably know we're having a problem with this damn Westinghouse Air Brake").

Another phone call to a mutual fund executive to set up an appointment to try to persuade him to sell the fund's stock in American Standard, Crane's rival