

Aggressive, Tough Southern Railway President Heads Firm Up Track To Success

By RAY CROMLEY
Newspaper Enterprise Assn.
WASHINGTON (NEA)—This is how one man on one road is beating some of the problems that face the railways.

When I went to see D. W. Brosnan, president of the Southern Railway System, I remembered what a union official had said Bros-

nan had told him in the midst of a labor dispute: "I intend to manage this railroad."

Two and a half hours with Bill Brosnan left me no doubt he means just that. He's aggressive, tough and stubborn. He's not going to drop firemen by attrition as they retire or quit. He has done this while other railroads are still negotiating.



NEW CARS FOR NEW BUSINESS — The Southern picked up new business by designing bigger, more efficient freight cars. At top is the "Big Dropper," an aluminum body car which carries more than 100 tons of coal, yet can be emptied in only 15 seconds. The entire bottom can be opened. The center picture is a standard size hopper car and the "Big John" which carries 90 tons of grain. At the bottom is the biggest boxcar ever built for regular service. It can carry 94 hogheads of tobacco.

PERSISTENT BILL
GREAT BEND, Kan. (UPI) — Bill Daniels, 32, got into a scuffle at a cafe Monday. When officers arrived to break it up, he hit one in the face.

Tuesday, Judge Roy Butler sentenced him to four months in city jail and fined him \$75. Daniels responded by hitting the judge in the face.

The jurist calmly added another six months to the sentence.

When he couldn't find anyone to design some of the big new money-saving freight cars he wanted, he rammed through anyway and designed them in his own shops.

An engineer from Georgia Tech, Brosnan began his railroad career in 1926 as a track laborer on the Southern. He became president of the system in February, 1962.

Brosnan's office is as no-nonsense as he is. Though it's just been redecorated in "early colonial" style, its furniture is modern. Behind Brosnan is a sign "YCSFSOYA" meaning "You Can't Sell Freight Sitting on Your Hands."

Brosnan and his former boss, Ashby De Butts, saw Southern industry growing fast, but the Southern Railway just holding its own as competitors took the new haul business. They saw itinerant truckers walking away with 66 per cent of the grain shipments into the Southeast. They saw truckers hacking away at lumber, cement, chicken feed, vegetables.

A team of Southern men followed rail shipments around to find out why customers were dropping away. The men found rough handling was damaging goods. The research team's answer: a cushioned underframe car that would absorb considerable shocks.

A team ordered to win back the business of hauling leaf tobacco in hogheads came up with a super-long 85-foot car for economy and wide doors for easy loading.

When Southern heard about work on pipelines to carry coal, a research group visited shippers and made time-and-motion studies on loading and unloading. Seven hundred and fifty of the resulting 100-ton coal cars, used in multiple-car shipments with quick turnarounds, replaced 5,000 conventional cars. Coal cars of 150 and 200 tons are on the designing boards.

Having developed special cars to haul freight cheaply enough to win business from the truckers, Southern's next job was to get the ICC to okay rate cuts.



PRESIDENT — Bill Brosnan, president of the Southern Railway, says "I intend to manage this railroad."

Minor rate changes caused no problem; Brosnan's sensational grain-rate proposals caused a furor. Brosnan asked for permission to slash rates by as much as 66 per cent on multiple-car, through shipments in his 90-ton Big John freight cars. It took Brosnan 18 months to fight the battle through the ICC. He won part of a loaf, the cheap rate for 450-ton shipments. He lost out on the 900-ton and 1,000-ton rates because they would hit the barge lines too hard.

Brosnan told me he would keep fighting.

He even plans to step up the ante in another round. He's working on plans now for 150 or 200-ton grain cars that will cut costs further.

Brosnan said the economies of big, through, grain hauls are such that he can make money at \$3.97 a ton in Big John multiple car lots.

(Next: Jervis Langdon and the bright young men of B. and O.)

PUPPY THEFT
KANSAS CITY, Mo. (UPI)—Mrs. Alice Neal bought two German shepherd puppies five months ago to train as watchdogs.

She wanted to stop frequent, petty thefts from her home.

Mrs. Neal reported Monday that someone scaled the chain link fence around her house and stole the pups.

ROAD TO SOCIALISM
ALGIERS (UPI) — Premier Ahmed Ben Bella said Monday night Algeria's start toward socialism is "now irreversible."

In a radio-television speech Ben Bella said:

"It will continue in the days and weeks to come with the launching of a national campaign for the democratic reorganization of the management committees (which run socialized businesses and farms) and by the preparation, in the most favorable circumstances, of their national congress, first steps towards popular structures and agrarian reform."

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