

# 'Organization Men' Lack Some Things

By Phillip Stoddard Brown

E. I. duPONT de NEMOURS & CO. (Inc.) has been running an eye-catching advertisement in the newspapers of the country. It depicts a group of smiling, self-assured men and women trouncing gaily to work. They are "Organization Men," productive, happy and well-mannered, so the ad reads. On their way, they pass a bearded man with a guitar, seated on a park bench.



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The introspective bench-sitter is Bertie the Beatnik, a non-organization type. His hair is uncombed. He is wearing sandals, a black shirt and glasses. (None of the "organization men" wear glasses.)

The long text of the ad is devoted to singing the praises of the "Organization Man." Other people are referred to in the first sentence as "the less vigorous members of our society."

Bertie, I've concluded, is me. He's also the lawyer who keeps irregular hours. He's the free lance writer who works by himself. He's the mechanic, the walls of whose alley shop are decorated with license plates and calendar nudes. He's the corner grocer who makes the wife of a duPont vice president wait while he chats with the plumber's wife.

Bertie is the self-employed man or woman without fringe benefits. He gets no sick leave, no paid vacation and no pension when he retires. He doesn't eat in a company cafeteria, or bowl on an office team. He lives without those bureaucratic amenities: a key to the executive washroom, use of a company car, an entertainment allowance and trips to Puerto Rico and Mexico.

## Small Business in the District Area

In the Washington area, there were nearly 18,000 active proprietors of unincorporated retail and service businesses in the fall of 1958. About 6400 of these had no payroll. In the District, there were more barber and beauty shops and more watch repair businesses than in 1954, but fewer shoe and electrical repair shops and not so many pressing and tailoring establishments.

The small fellow hasn't done well in the grocery business. In the metropolitan area, there were about 2700 food stores in 1948 and scarcely more than 2000 in the fall of 1958, when the population was 50 per cent greater. In a few other fields, too he has been bullied into getting bigger, or getting out.

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But in the aggregate, it appears that small business is getting a slightly larger share of retail and service business than it got in 1954, partly because of the growing importance of retail services relative to goods. This conclusion, however, is tentative and one that may be reversed when more details are available in the final report of the 1958 census.

Certainly the number of professional people in private practice in Washington has increased very greatly and it's likely that their "share" of total personal income is larger.

Most small businessmen and professional people are not afraid of being put out of business by big organizations. There will always be a lot of things they can do better and quicker and at less cost. They can buy a plane ticket and be off to New York, jotting down the cost after they get seated; the "organization man" has to have something called a voucher that has a life of its own. The small fellow can pick up a phone and hire somebody he knows to do a job; the "organization man" has to consult Personnel and personnel has to process forms and follow rules laid down by a V. P.—Human Relations.

## Free to Pick Up Hat, Walk Out

James Forrestal once said that a man who isn't free to pick up his hat and walk out hasn't earned the right to make policy decisions. Well, there aren't many of this type in the ranks of "organization men." Not many officials of business and Government can afford to give up their pension rights, and besides they haven't anywhere to go on short notice. So they play along. Corporations make Edsel-size mistakes, partly because of this, and the Government makes even more costly ones.

A wise boss recognizes that the ambitions and prejudices of his subordinates are likely to color their judgment on some matters. More often than the public realizes, "an outside guy" is sent for—one whose remuneration comes from many sources and whose reputation depends more on being right than "reasonable."

Don't pity the small fellow. He doesn't object to emptying his own wastebasket now and again, or working a longer day, so long as he doesn't have to punch a time clock, or jump up and make for the boss' office when a buzzer rings. He likes walking alone. He's boss, which is something better than being president. Often, he can afford to be honest with himself, as well as with his customers.

So thank you for the invitation, Gentlemen of E. I. duPont de Nemours, but mine will not be one of the bright shiny faces, quick-stepping it to work with you "organization men" in the Golden Sixties. At the same time, Bertie and Jake and Joe and I won't think of you as peas in a pod, but as snowflakes, each different from all the myriad others . . . Don't be so defensive. And do stop running those silly ads.