

J. Ryan Stone  
Political Science 370  
1<sup>st</sup> Paper  
Bureaucracy: Friend or Foe?  
Paper due September 20, 2004

George Roche exemplifies the argument against bureaucracy in his essay “Bureaucracy: Enemy of the People”. Firstly, he lets you know that even Webster’s Third New International Dictionary defines bureaucracy as “a system in administration marked by constant striving for increased functions and power, by lack of initiative and flexibility, by indifference to human needs or public opinion, and by a tendency to defer decisions to superiors and to impede action with red tape.” He lets you know the mistakes, flounders, bumbles, and idiosyncrasies of the federal bureaucratic machines that “infest” this fine country. Although I agree with Roche’s case against the bureaucrats to a certain extent his argument is made up of outlandish facts that are unfounded and outdated (most of his examples are from the 1970’s and we have to forgive him for that). It is clear to me that Milward and Rainey present the better argument for bureaucrats. Most often than not you will find that many people do work for our government and support their families by bureaucracy. Given the arguments for and against bureaucracy I have to say that the argument against is really extreme and opinionated and the argument for is more realistic and believable.

In my own opinion there are several reasons why bureaucrats are viewed negatively. Repetition is the enemy of the ordinary bureaucrat. Every two years we are bombarded by political machines that all have the same agenda: to get rid of the wrongs in today’s government. A candidate will convince you that the only way to get away from the present wrongs is to vote for them; thus, further creating distrust for governmental agencies. For example, Gov. James E. McGreevey on July 7<sup>th</sup>, accused New Jersey's

United States attorney of using a fund-raising investigation as a political "smear campaign." These accusations are merely an example of allegations that fly from politicians further discrediting our bureaucratic institutions. The scope of problems also set up hurdles just like Milward and Rainey outline that many governmental agencies have to undertake problems that no one knows how to solve so opportunities for disappointment to the general public are abundant. Those tasks are also sometimes unpopular like stopping moonshine production where it is rampant or like back when integration of schools began and bureaucrats had to enforce it even where it was unwanted, or like in an editorial from the LA Times where the editor complains that the assets control office has trained hundreds of customs officials, who search 100% of the flights to and from Cuba at airports in Los Angeles, Miami and New York many times finding those famous Cuban Cigars.

Many people also get a bad taste for bureaucrats in the media. Whistleblowers sound off the mistakes of bureaucracies. Daily, officials make decisions, not one official but thousands, but if one of them takes a bribe and his decision is influenced by that bribe does it make the headlines of our local newspapers. Like the story from Newsday about a Brooklyn contractor who gave an \$11,000 bribe to a construction manager at York College to inflate costs on a day care center by almost \$300,000. Another drawback of the bureaucrats is the fact that there is no other choice. Americans enjoy the opportunity to choose, I can go to more than a hundred places tonight to eat dinner, but if I want my driver's license I must go to the Department of Motor Vehicles. Speaking of the DMV, where else would a corporate CEO go and be ordered around by a young black woman?

Bureaucracies employ and empower women and minorities to a greater extent than the private sector.

The private sector is winning the battle of public opinion. Marketing and the American standard have inclined people to believe that private industry is effective, successful and supported on the sturdy doctrine of a market economy. We think of many companies we frequent like supermarkets where we expect to find friendly, knowledgeable, and satisfied employees available to assist us. Bureaucrats are viewed as full of inefficient, uncaring empire builders, living off the sweat of people who really work for a living. Bureaucracy enters the game with a full count: three balls and two strikes; and industry have already hit the ground running. I want to bring my argument back to a point that I began with, many bureaucrats that are employed are supporting their families and I am sure that most of them enjoy their jobs.

Although there is a negative view of bureaucrats caused by many more reasons than I personally can list, I think that bureaucracies are not the enemy of the people. They are our faithful servant and that was their original intent to make our lives easier. The bureaucratic “red tape” definition was probably written after Webster went to the DMV to renew his license and forgot his insurance card and had to return to the back of the line. George Roche’s argument that the bureaucrats waste our money, time, and patience is supported with little sound examples and has wasted our time with his rants and outrageous examples.

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