

seen interruption of his production schedule. To the plant physician it is first of all the illness of an individual, but the question of the patient's health must be directly related to his employment status. This link between health and employment is likely to create tension between the physician and the supervisor, on one hand, the physician and the worker as a patient, on the other. Schematically put, the physician is likely to take the patient's side in his relations to the supervisor, and he is probably compelled to take a somewhat supervisory view of the worker's illness. It is not surprising under these circumstances if the privacy of the doctor-patient relationship is threatened. The physician's knowledge of the worker's condition becomes in a sense managerial property. At the same time, the worker is somewhat apprehensive lest his illness and the information about himself which he must give to the physician, and which are, after all, private matters, come to be used in a supervisory context and without his consent. This natural apprehension can be minimized by any policy which explicitly defines and respects the confidences that are necessary if the physician is to give the worker adequate medical care.

Most of the problems which I have touched on are solved daily and in piecemeal fashion. This is as it should be, and it may be unnecessary to add that the sociologist has no over-all solutions to offer. It is a common observation, on the other hand, that these piecemeal solutions sometimes lead to a cumulation of vexations and misinterpretations, from which the participants find it difficult to extricate themselves. It is at times like this, or perhaps in order to avoid such emergencies, that the detached perspective of the sociologist may prove useful. His detachment allows him to study the situation and perhaps to facilitate the reorientation of the participants. At the same time he must realize that the participants probably regard him with suspicion, because none of them can be sure what his findings will reveal. The ideal condition for a sociologic survey lies in the complete independence of the investigator respecting the interests of all participants. Leighton has remarked that people like to use the social scientist as the "drunk" uses a lamp post, for support, not for illumination. You have a right to suspect any sociologist who permits himself to be used in this way.

I have deliberately emphasized the cross pressures which characterize the role of the plant physician. I have done so in the hope that the physician in industry may find it useful to adopt this perspective on occasion and to be aware of the ambivalence inherent in his dual role as physician and as managerial employee. So far as he can look with detachment at the cross pressures to which his role exposes him, he will help management, he will help the worker and he will help himself.