

DR. COOPER:

The next paper on our program, which will relate to some of the "Physiological Studies of the Health of Fibrous Glass Workers," will be presented by another of the Mellon Institute Fellows. A physician who received his degree from the University of Oklahoma, spent five years in Saudi, Arabia with the Arabian American Oil Company, and after he returned to the United States, was Medical Director for Mack Trucks in Hagerstown, Maryland. Dr. Benjamin J. Lambiotte began graduate training at the University of Pittsburgh in 1966 where he received his Master of Public Health degree, and is now in his third year of residency program for Occupational Medicine Board Certification: Dr. Lambiotte.

PHYSIOLOGICAL STUDIES OF HEALTH OF
FIBROUS GLASS WORKERS

Benjamin J. Lambiotte, M.D. *

In our efforts to define and measure the effects of industrial processes, products and wastes on health, it is necessary to make certain hypotheses within a framework of known and accepted pathologic entities. In this case, pneumoconiosis is defined as "a diagnosable disease of the lungs produced by the inhalation of dusts."

In this study, our concern is with the dusts that result from the processes and products of the fibrous glass industry.

Dr. Utidjian has presented the initial study of these workers. Further detailed study of pulmonary function on a segment of that population is planned. The hypothesis of this planned study simply stated is: inhalation of fibrous glass dusts will cause demonstrable changes in the pulmonary function of exposed workers.

If this hypothesis is true, then the tests that measure these functions will show greater degradation in the highly exposed, older workers with long service than in the lesser exposed workers of the same age group with long service.

If the hypothesis is not true, then there should be no difference in the pulmonary function of the two groups.

The appropriate selection of tests of pulmonary function that will give evidence to prove or disprove the hypothesis is based upon what we know about the behavior of, and lung reactions to, dusts of similar physical characteristics as fibrous glass.

*IHF Resident Fellow in Occupational Medicine. Industrial Hygiene Foundation, 5231 Centre Avenue, Pittsburgh, Pa. 15232.