

Paul Crump-crd
By Phil Ochs

In the state of Illinois 'bout nine years ago
 A cold blooded killer he went against the law
 He killed a factory guard when his robbery did fail
 And they caught him and they threw him in the jail.
 He lay there in his cell locked up with his hate
 Not many men knew of him and less cared for his fate.
 And he knew no peace of mind when his trial was comin' by
 The judge said, "You are guilty you must die."

But Paul Crump is alive today
 He's a-sittin' in a cell, he's got somethin' to say
 Every man has got something to give
 And if a man can change, then a man should live.

They sent him to Cook County Jail, a jail known far and wide
 Where pity was a stranger and brave men often cry.
 They locked him in the death row to count the days before
 To the day they came a knockin' at his door.
 But another warden came along, Jack Johnson was his name;
 He knew how prison living could drive a man to shame.
 He had no need of pistols in a solitary cell
 But a word of trust would help him just as well

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Between the warden and the convict a friendship slowly grew
 And one learned from the other that a man can live anew.
 Then the warden called the convict, "You must leave the devil's plan
 "The time has come for you to be a man."
 Then the convict found religion and he started him to learn
 He wrote himself a novel called Burn Killer Burn.
 And as his dying day grew near, to the warden he did cry
 "You must pull the switch and I must die."

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It was up to Governor Kerner to keep him from the grave
 Was rehabilitation a reason to be saved?
 The hour was comin' closer, the word was spread around
 A new and better answer must be found.
 Well the electric chair was cheated, the convict didn't pay.
 A new concept of justice was born and raised that day.
 Now throughout this peaceful land there are others set to die
 What better time than now to question why?

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