

Phil Ochs, Paul Crump

Dm G
In the state of Illinois 'bout nine years ago
Dm C Bb A
A cold blooded killer he went against the law
Dm G
He killed a factory guard when his robbery did fail
Dm C G
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."
Bb F
But Paul Crump is alive today
C F
He's a-sittin' in a cell, he's got somethin' to say
Dm G
Every man has got something to give
C Am
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
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.
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."
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.
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?
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.