

In *God is for Real*, Man, Carl Burke, chaplain to an American prison, has brought together a number of paraphrases of Biblical stories, from both Old and New Testaments, made by young underprivileged people, in their own beatnik jargon. To judge by these essays, which one should regard as enlightening rather than intentionally amusing, the youngsters seem willing to accept, on their own terms, not according to the forms of a Church which has seemingly deserted them, the concepts of God as Maker and Christ as Saviour. They relate the Bible stories to their own experiences of hate and love and meanness and kindness. They are beginning to understand that, maybe, God is for real.

What emerges from both these little books is that children often become criminal because they lack love and understanding from those who should be standing in the place of God to them. They are young persons in need of God's love and care, who cannot be expected to have respect for the idea of God as Father when their own parents are depraved or inadequate. As a young borstal lad once said to me: "Why are they surprised if I am violent? Violence is the only thing I have known in my life".

If these small books, each in its own special way, help anybody to penetrate only a little to the minds of the alienated young ones in prisons and borstals, they will have done well.

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recommendations of the Mountbatten Report are seen as a whole, they offer a great opportunity for the realisation of the hopes of a great number of prison officers and, I would add, of those who work with them.

It would be most distressing if we lost this opportunity. Already "security officers" are being trained at Wakefield; it is up to us to urge on our Department that corresponding implementation should be given to the other side of the coin—to press for similar training in group work and rehabilitation.

The urgency of this matter cannot be over emphasised. For, already, it seems that a hasty decision has been taken: in agreeing to implement the report's suggestion (section 17) for a new grade of senior prison officer has the Prison Department avoided consideration of the much more relevant type of reorganisation of grades proposed by Mr. Nicholson?

If 1967 is eventually seen as a year which marked only a fresh concern with the implementation of our custodial aims, the fault will be ours and not Lord Mountbatten's.

I am,

Yours etc.,

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