-Derek Nuttall writes



WHEN IT BEGAN, THE ISSUE over the Falklands Islands seemed unreal. Now tragically, it is only too real. Lives have been lost. Wives, parents and children have been bereaved.

We contacted the Ministry of Defence and SSAFA to offer help as back up to that provided by their welfare, social and pastoral workers. We are prepared to do whatever we can in the short-term and we have particular concern for later, after the bereaved leave Service quarters and the close support of service families, when the spotlight has faded, when lonely adjustments have to be made.

One of Cruse's strengths lies in its ability and willingness to stay with people for as long as necessary.

SHARING KNOWLEDGE

A consultation day was arranged at Ilminster, Somerset on June 22, between our branch counsellors in the South West where practically all of them are near a service base, and those in the Services and SSAFA providing care.

Among those who agreed to participate and share their knowledge of the special aspects of service bereavement were Mr. P. G. Barker, Naval Personal and Family Service, HMS Drake, the Rev. John Fail, senior chaplain, Forces HQ, South West District; Lt. Col. Lerwill, Controller, Family and Welfare Service, UK Land Forces; the Rev. Sq. Leader Hesketh, Staff Chaplain to the RAF; Miss L. Bampton and Mrs. E. Hedgeley from the Naval Personal and Family Service, Devonport, Mrs. J. Law (County Sec) and Mrs. J. Sutton (Social Worker) representing SSAFA and Miss Cecily Manser, senior social worker, RAF Wroughton.

Dr. Colin Murray Parkes and Dr. Dora Black also took part.

DEBATE ON BURIAL

Branches throughout Britain were encouraged to contact their nearest bases to offer help and our chairman circulated ways of helping and outlined some of the special dimensions of this form of bereavement.

A debate arose following the burial of Servicemen on the battlefield. Some favoured leaving them in a War Grave, others suggested they be brought back to Britain.

I am impressed by the need bereaved people have for a focus for grief and feel that wherever possible, bodies should be brought home for burial or the scattering of ashes at the wish of the family. This helps acceptance, an important factor when the death is of a young fit person and happens many miles from home.

The Ilminster Consultation proved useful both for the information exchanged and the agreement to further co-operation between Service personnel, SSAFA and Cruse. One important point, was the decision that when the bereaved leave Service quarters they will be given a letter telling of the help Cruse provides should they wish to turn to us.

BEREAVEMENT CARE is published for all Cruse workers and others who wish to deepen their understanding of bereavement. It is sold subject to the condition that it shall not be lent, re-sold, reproduced in part or in entirety, hired out or otherwise circulated without the publisher's consent.

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REVIEWS

COMPLETING THE CIRCLE
Margaret Torrie MBE, Turnstone Press 1982;pp£2.95 (£3.30 by post from Cruse)

This paperback by the founder of Cruse now retired is published for all of us meeting the challenge of the fifties onwards and searching for more certainties among so much uncertainty. It spurs us on to greater self-awareness and deeper strengths. If at times we see ourselves in an unfavourable light,that too is what it is all about.

HELPING PEOPLE NOW
Video and film directed by Christian Marnham for the National Society for Cancer Relief. Hire cost £11, incl. insurance and packaging,from John Gray Central Film Library,C.O.I.,Hercules Road, London,SE1 7DU.(01.928.2345)

The original work of the Society for Cancer Relief was to help sufferers in cash and kind, and this is still done. This film however deals mainly with the Society's own hospices, day-care, homecare and educational work.

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