

mained behind and destroyed and burnt the cottages of the evicted people . . .

"An area of 140 square miles in the Yirrkala Mission on the Arnhem Land Reserve was leased for mining bauxite in 1963. The Aborigines living in the area had their tribal hunting grounds confiscated without consultation. These Aborigines, however, petitioned Parliament and as a result a Select Committee was set up to investigate. The Committee concluded from their findings that the Aborigines had a moral right to the ground of their ancestors. The outcome, however, remains in doubt and local Aborigines state that they doubt that the Balande (white people) can safely be trusted."

Apart from the serious loss of land for hunting and food supplies, says the report, the results of this alienation are that "those who are forced to leave their people and live isolated lives in the white community often have few or no skills and little knowledge of how to adapt to this alien way of life."

"In few cases is any attempt made to prepare the receiving community or to educate or train the adult Aborigines had a moral right to the grounds of their ancestors. In consequence, they become a frustrated, apathetic and dispirited people, who have lost their identity. While they remain thus, they are incapable of providing the springboard into modern life that their children's future demands."

Among other things the report calls for the creation of an Aboriginal Land Trust administered by a board of Aboriginal trustees who would take over all titles to Reserve land including those now leased to whites. The Trust would have no right of sale or permanent lease.

The report concludes: "Land dispossession is not past history, but is continuing unabated today. We repeat that Aborigines have lost over two million acres of land since 1959, and it appears they will continue to lose their land to pastoral, mining and oil companies, unless something is done . . .

"The Reserve, by providing both a training ground and the security of a homeland, could provide the basis for a sense of group recognition and group pride. Out of this could come the self-confidence and independence so necessary if the Aborigine is to take his rightful place among the respected communities of our Australian nation."

BOOK REVIEWS BY ROY DOUGLAS



Dark Satanic Mills

THE TOWN LABOURER 1760-1832 by J. L. and Barbara Hammond is a classic work, first published in 1917 and often reprinted. A new edition, in paperback form (Longmans, 14s.) has recently appeared. The book

RUSSIAN ABORIGINES

THE KORYAKS, aborigines of North-East Siberia have staged a new choreographic suite *Hololo* ("Holiday"). This is a series of scenes showing the life of this small nation of seven thousand.

The Koryaks live in the north of the Kamchatka peninsula. Their local council has an area of nearly 116,000 square miles under its jurisdiction. Their main occupations are reindeer-breeding, hunting and fishing, which bring them annual incomes running into 45 million roubles.

The way of life of the Koryaks has completely changed over the past fifty years. They used to live in mud huts but they now have houses wired for radio and electricity and have cinemas and libraries, and eighteen hospitals with free medical services. Many Koryaks have become teachers, engineers, doctors and veterinary surgeons.

Formerly, they were almost wholly illiterate and had no written language of their own. Now there are Koryak writers educated in Moscow and Lenin-grad.—Novosti Information Service, Moscow.

is a famous and harrowing story of the misery and degradation of the early years of the industrial revolution.

Whether we accept or reject the contention of Hayek and others that the conditions of the poor were actually improved rather than reduced during this period, there is no gainsaying that the story which the Hammonds tell, and which they document with such impressive scholarship, is a horrible one indeed.

What is the moral? An earlier generation tended to draw from this and other similar works the conclusion that the evil thing, the *causa in esse* of this suffering, was economic *laissez faire*. Yet a similar tale could be told of almost any society in recorded history. Some of us may see common features in these societies, notably as far as land tenure is concerned, and may conclude that the primary cause of this exploitation and misery lay in these common features.

But there are other lessons to be drawn as well. In spite of the last few chapters, where the protests and grumbles of the poor and their defenders are examined, the palatable fact is that for most of the time, most people, rich and poor alike, accepted the prevailing order of things without serious question. Even when we do find them protesting, we often find the grounds of their protest intensely conservative. A wealthy *parvenu* is arraigned by the poverty-stricken workers as much for presuming to the state of his social betters as for acquiring his wealth unjustly. Workmen were sometimes angry about bosses who had risen from the ranks—but they were dazzled by lords.

It is instructive to examine the arguments advanced in defence of the social inequalities of the time. Some of these arguments were very impressive, and it is hard to pick out the fallacy. There is much more to be said for Malthus (*pace* Henry George) than some of us care to

admit. There was the argument of "the last half hour." If an employee works ten hours a day, and his master makes 5 per cent profit, it is hard to explain to the master that his profit will not be blotted out if the hours of work are reduced to nine and a half, and turned to a loss if they are brought down to nine. What blew these arguments sky-high was not so much dialectic as events.

We are all much too prone to read the past in the light of the present—to feel ridicule or even hatred towards men who were living lives or proposing arguments which seemed valid in the context of their own time and place. It is all too easy to regard the solution to a mystery story as obvious when one has surreptitiously read the last chapter of the book.

When we read the Hammonds' book today, we derive from it a message which may be very different from what the authors intended. We observe that most people will accept the values, assumptions and beliefs of almost any society in which they happen to find themselves. When change does occur, it frequently occurs for reasons which bear little relation to the intellectual or moral arguments which are advanced for that change.

Home Truths on the Common Market

VIVE LE GENERAL! To those of us who believe that de Gaulle is the best friend this country has in Europe, here indeed is the full substantiation of our opinion. To those who feel doubt on the subject, here is a most formidable exposition of the calamity from which we have been delivered.

Douglas Jay writes with great lucidity, and with what one might call the cold passion of the scholar. Here is the very book for which we have all been waiting so long: a book which deals, point by point, with all the arguments advanced in favour of Britain joining the Common Market. If it receives the readership it deserves, the Common Market, so far as this country is concerned, will be as dead as mutton, and the rank-and-file of all three parties will turn and rend their leaders for the deception and the half-truths and the woolly platitudes and the jolly-along which persuaded them to endorse this most dangerous proposal.

I do not pretend that all the arguments that Douglas Jay advances are acceptable to libertarians. There is no doubt that he approaches the subject from the standpoint of a man who believes in a degree of state planning that would appal many readers of this magazine. He makes idolatrous genuflexions towards many sacred cows, and burns incense before many false gods. Yet he contrives to present the free trade objections to the Common Market with unanswerable force.

After the Common Market.—A Better Alternative for Britain, by Douglas Jay. Penguin Special. 4s. 0d.

The author deals with the political arguments as well as those formulated on economic grounds. He believes in world government and in the eventual unification of the human race. He shows, with devastating skill, how British membership of the Common Market would increase and not reduce the political and economic divisions that sunder the human race.

The positive alternative which Mr. Jay proposes is a sort of glorified EFTA embracing Western Europe, North America, and perhaps Australia and Japan. The member states would gradually eliminate tariffs against each other while retaining the right to put tariffs as high or low as they please against the outside world.

One is left with the impression that the author is a man with a great and incisive mind; a man who by and large, talks the same language as libertarians understand; and that the logic of his reasoning would lead him to free trade. He has already shown himself a man of principle, who has sacrificed a high position in the state, and the prospect of a higher one, for the beliefs which he holds. When the party to which he still belongs crashes in irretrievable ruin at the next election, one of the men whom one would wish to salvage from the wreckage for the general good of the nation is Douglas Jay.

A Long Way To Go

A NEW PAMPHLET published by the New Orbits Group of Liberals is aimed essentially at what I might call an "in" audience; at people who are members of the Liberal Party—and Liberals, furthermore, who think that what happens at Party Assemblies, and what is written in magazines which Liberals read is really of importance. The main thesis seems to be that much of the current arguments among Liberals about "selective" versus "universal" social security benefits is unreal to the extent that it betokens a difference of approach rather than a difference over substantive policies. With this conclusion one is entitled to agree.

I felt a good deal of admiration for the perceptive brain of the author—an Oxford University Liberal, aged 21—and his pamphlet would get a very good mark as an undergraduate dissertation in one of the social sciences, but he has not got the answer to the real problem. We have a system of social security benefits of one kind or another that is not organised in accordance with any underlying principle. Like Topsy, it just grewed. What is now needed is a revision of the whole thing from top to bottom, in the light of the many profound social changes that have taken place since Beveridge. Personally, I should like to see a review of all the rest of our taxation and government expenditure for good measure. But perhaps that is asking for a degree of political radicalism which simply is "not on."

Fair Welfare by Philip Goldenburg. New Orbits Group (Liberal Publication Dept. 2s. 0d.)