

Why Not Give It Back to the Indians?

At last there is genuine concern about the ugliness that is spreading over the United States in what Eric Sevareid feels is "surely the cultural crime of the century." Commenting on Peter Blake's book *God's Own Junkyard*, he states, "there is a fundamental moral and, therefore, ought to be a fundamental legal difference between ugly movies, ugly TV commercials, ugly music, ugly books and ugly buildings, highways and streets. The former can be avoided; we have a choice. The latter cannot be avoided; we have no choice at all." Other important books, like the one mentioned last month, by Secretary of the Interior Udall, *The Quiet Crisis*, are calling attention to the "crashing vulgarity in the cities and dreary uniformity in the suburbs."

If the citizens cannot be made to see the virtues of land value taxation as a proven and workable method of avoiding the unsightly sprawl, then why not start over and give the land back to the Indians? Thanks to Leoane Anderson, extension director in Denver, who furnishes us with selective clippings, we have a copy of the Denver Post with an interesting revelation about a 1887 law, long obscured and hidden but recently discovered by Amos A. Hopkins-Dukes, a Kiowa Indian.

Mr. Hopkins-Dukes, now 34, college educated and a former marine, is the grandson of a Kiowa chief. He recalls that his grandmother used to say the Indians would some day get back the land that was rightfully theirs

by treaty. After much search this persevering grandson found a record of the treaty which provided that any Indian man, woman or child could seek and be granted without cost, up to 160 acres of federal land unless it was "otherwise appropriated." He has laid claim to 160 acres of federal grazing land in Western Colorado, but the Bureau of Land Management often finds convenient dodges for dealing with smart Indians, such as the claim that the land is not suitable for grazing or is more valuable for the timber than for agricultural purposes.

One ranch expert concedes that "the treatment of the Indian was outrageous throughout American history," but he says the rights of the present users should be considered before allotments are made. The sheep and wool industry is in trouble now, according to one wool grower, and taking their public lands away would be disastrous.

"The march on Washington may be the right way for the Negro people but not for us," said Mr. Hopkins-Dukes. Court action will drag on for years no doubt, but he is patient. Though an American by birth, he does not claim citizenship. He says the Supreme Court ruled that Indian tribes retain all the powers of nations, and the Kiowa nation has not given up much of its power. It did, however, unwittingly give up its land. Indians believe that the land belongs to all and should not be privately owned but should be used wisely and preserved for future generations. That is quite different from the present motivation.

Taxes on semi-occupied plots in Tel Aviv have been raised 100 per cent. There are high taxes on "explored" urban property to encourage owners to develop them. Some owners had evaded the penalty by retaining parcels as junk yards, etc. "The new increase will nip this kind of invasion." — From a Zionist new letter.