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Rostow

Ls. from Leeds - Pyu 1963

A question is put about the new fashion of regarding "industrial society" as

A question is put on Rostow's well-known concept of "industrial society" and its place within the various trends of sociology.

"There exist poisonous and pernicious technocratical trends in America, which are more militant and more tendentious than ever before. But these have no bearing at all on the the thoughts of Parsons-Smelser and on their writings on the industrial revolution. (K.P. defends Smelser, since Smelser does not share Clapham's view that there never was an ind. rev. and he sincerely argues that his views are not antagonistic to the workers, nor to socialism)

"Smelser is not prepared to lend his sociological tenets as a base to antisocialist tendencies, certainly not consciously. But the same can not be said of other - mainly American - schools of thought in sociology. In works that involve serious descriptive efforts and are being disseminated with enormous financial backing, demographers and other social scientists interpret the appearance of industrial plant as the fate of humanity, from which to draw the same conclusions as to the line of future development, ir respective of the diversity of trends and thought contents.

"The technocratic group disseminated voluminous works in 35 countries, veritable universal analyses on industrialization. This school regards bestiality as the future of mankind and undertak to lay down the bases for it as a scientifically grounded destiny."

"Thesre is a great need for socialist scienific thinking, to

counter what here is in the making. This is what is moving me. (what impells me).

A question on Rostow is repeated - is it not an urgent task to give their critique in the socialist world?

"The economic history of the Rostow school is heavily influenced by the prevailing political circles.

"The main ideological tendency with Rostow and his school is to prove that history is inessential, by pointing to "spontaneous, immanent laws of motion" of society. Thus, for instance, according to them the great Russian revolution was quite gratuitous, and no credit can be given to history for it, since ultimately the same development anyhow occurred everywhere, as shown by the various economic indices. In my view such an ideological programme is nothing else than nihilism. In Rostow's view mankind's pre-history has come to a stop with his book. What comes after is nothing else than the further development and expansion of technology, in which the capitalists rule supreme.

"I am afraid, yu are not sufficiently aware of the dangers that are in store for those who believe in socialism, merely, because there is not sufficient contact between these worlds, and we cannot quite gauge which are the strong points within the world of socialism which provide refutation by facts of those prognoses and illusions on which American economic history and sociology base themselves, be it directly or by implication.

This is mainly what I wanted to say on Rostow's work, which undoubtedly is a work using scholarly methods and must be given serious consideration. In my appreciation he stands for views that have already been refuted by events. But the cause of socialism is far brom being secure enough to dispense with the labours of research and basic thinking.