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Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum Archives

Paul Studenski Collection - Scrapbook, Volume 2 (2 of 2), 1915-1961

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The second factor which changed my intended temporary visit to America into a permanent one was the fact that I had found here better opportunities than in the other two countries to study economics and political science and to engage in these fields professionally. These were my original fields of interest, but I had been diverted from them in the other countries by circumstances that were largely beyond my control. Thirdly, I found here the nearest approach to an ideal social order.

I found in America in 1911 much less poverty than in any of the other countries; much more democracy and equality of opportunity and an almost total absence of social distinctions; less bureaucracy and less injustice; greater readiness to accept new ideas and to act upon them; greater faith in the perfectibility of human institutions and in the possibilities of attaining a better social order by orderly processes, without the use of force; greater activity in every direction; greater hospitality and friendliness towards foreigners; and greater humility in the appraisal of own accomplishments. These characteristics of America appealed to my essentially active nature and to my groping for social justice, that began during my early boyhood and had never left me since.

Today, almost fifty years later I find most of these characteristics still imbedded in the American society, but alongside them also others of a more mixed nature. I find the economic problems of today to be much more complex and the economic outlook for the future much more uncertain and challenging than were those of years ago.

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