

Our Enemy, the State

Editor's Pick. Written by Albert Jay Nock.

There are two methods, or means, and only two, whereby man's needs and desires can be satisfied. One is the production and exchange of wealth; this is the *economic means*. The other is the uncompensated appropriation of wealth produced by others; this is the *political means*. The primitive exercise of the political means was, as we have seen, by conquest, confiscation, expropriation, and the introduction of a slave economy. The conqueror parcelled out the conquered territory among beneficiaries, who thenceforth satisfied their needs and desires by exploiting the labour of the enslaved inhabitants. The feudal State, and the merchant-State, wherever found, merely took over and developed successively the heritage of character, intention and apparatus of exploitation which the primitive State transmitted to them; they are in essence merely higher integrations of the primitive State.

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