

To Do Great Damage

A handful of us dreamers long for the withering away of the state. It's not going to happen, of course, for reasons too numerous to list, much less to explicate here.

Probably the most significant of the reasons why the state won't lose its powers is that the great majority of people everywhere want it to have those powers. They also want, of course, the state to use its powers in ways that feather their nests and make life miserable for people they dislike.

The USA is certainly no exception to this claim. Nor is this condition something that has developed recently. Throughout the country's history, from the earliest colonial settlements to the present. Americans have been gung ho to send forth the state to plunder on their behalf and to attack those who stood in their way or frightened them (e.g., Native people, uppity blacks, Mexicans, waves of immigrants from despised societies, such as the Irish, Italians, Poles, Chinese, Japanese, many Latin Americans).

An individual can't rape and pillage successfully on his own or as a member of a family or a small band. He needs a state if he is determined to do great damage, and the great majority of Americans have always sought, in one way or another, to do great damage.