

John Locke. *Second Treatise of Government*. Chap. II. Of the State of Nature.

To understand political power right, and derive it from its original, we must consider, what state men are naturally in, and that is, a state of perfect freedom to order their actions, and dispose of their possessions and persons, as they think fit, within the bounds of the law of nature, without asking leave, or depending upon the will of any other man.

(...) But though this be a state of liberty, yet is not a state of licence: though man in this state have an uncontrollable liberty to dispose of his person or possessions, yet he has no liberty to destroy himself, or so much as may creature in his possession, but where some nobler use than its bare preservation calls for it. The state of nature has a law of nature to govern it, which obliges every one: and reason, which is that law, teaches all mankind, who will but consult it, that being all equal and independent, no one ought to harm another in his life, health, liberty or possessions.

John Locke. *Second Treatise of Government*. Chap. VII. Of Political or Civil Society.

...it is easy to discern, who are, and who are not, in political society together. Those that are united into one body, and have a common established law and judicature to appeal to, with authority to decide controversies between them, and punish offenders, are in civil society one with another: but those who have no so common appeal, I mean on earth, are still in the state of nature.

And this puts men out of a state of nature into that of a commonwealth, by setting up a judge on earth, with authority to determine all the controversies, and redress the injuries they may happen to any member of the commonwealth; which judge is the legislative, or magistrates appointed by it.

John Locke. *Second Treatise of Government*. Chap. VIII. Of the Beginning of Political Societies.

Men being, as been said, by nature, all free, equal, and independent; no one can be put out of this estate, and subjected to the political power of another, without his own consent. The only way whereby any one divests himself of his natural liberty, and puts on the bonds of civil society, is by agreeing with other men to join and unite into a community for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living one amongst the another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties, and a greater security against any, that are not of it.

(...) When any number of men have so consented to make one community or government, they are thereby presently incorporated, and make one body politic...

(...) Whosoever therefore out of state of nature unite into a community, must be understood to give up all the power, necessary to the ends for which they unite into society, to the majority of the community...

And this is done by barely agreeing to unite into one political society, which is all the compact that is, or needs be, between the individuals, that enter into, or make up a commonwealth. And thus that, which begins and actually constitutes any political society, is nothing but the consent of any number of freemen capable of a majority to unite and incorporate into such a society. And this is that, and that only, which did, or could give beginning to any lawful government in the world.

(...) So that their politic societies all began from a voluntary union, and the mutual agreement of men freely acting in the choice of their governors, and forms of government.

John Locke. *Second Treatise of Government*. Chap. IX. Of the Ends of Political Society and Government.

If man in the state of nature be so free, as has been said; if he be absolute lord of his own person and possessions, equal to the greatest, and subject to nobody, why will he part with his freedom? Why will he give up this empire, and subject himself to the dominion and control of any other power? To which it is obvious to answer, that though in the state of nature he hath such a right, yet enjoyment of it is very uncertain, and constantly exposed to the invasion of others: for all being kings as much as he, every man his equal, and the greater part no strict observers of equity and justice, the enjoyment of the property he has in this state is very unsafe, very unsecure. This makes him willing to quit a condition, which however free, is full of fears and continual dangers: and it is not without reason, that he seeks out, and is willing to join in society with others, who are already united, or have a mind to unite, for the mutual preservation of their lives, liberties and estates, which I call by the general name, property.

The great and chief end, therefore, of men's uniting into commonwealths, and putting themselves under government, is the preservation of their property.

John Locke. *Second Treatise of Government*. Chap. XVIII. Of Tyranny.

...tyranny is the exercise of power beyond right... Thus that learned king, who well understood the notion of things, makes the difference betwixt a king and a tyrant to consist only in this, that one makes the laws the bounds of his power, and the good of the public, the end of his government; the other makes all give way to his own will and appetite.

(...) Where-ever law ends, tyranny begins...