**Writings of Political Philosophers Who Impacted the Founding Fathers**

**Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651):**

Whatsoever therefore is consequent to a time of war, where every man is enemy to every man, the same consequent to the time wherein men live without other security than what their own strength and their own invention shall furnish them withal.

In such condition there is no place for industry, because the fruit thereof is uncertain: and consequently no culture of the earth; no navigation, nor use of the commodities that may be imported by sea; no commodious building; no instruments of moving and removing such things as require much force; no knowledge of the face of the earth; no account of time; no arts; no letters; no society; and which is worst of all, continual fear, and danger of violent death; and the life of man, solitary, poor, nasty, brutish, and short.

From this fundamental law of nature, by which men are commanded to endeavour peace, is derived this second law: that a man be willing, when others are so too, as far forth as for peace and defence of himself he shall think it necessary, to lay down this right to all things; and be contented with so much liberty against other men as he would allow other men against himself.

* *According to Hobbes, what is the natural condition of man’s life like (i.e. when no government is present?*
* *What is Hobbes’ remedy for this situation?*

**John Locke, *Two Treatises on Government* (1690)**

Men being…by nature all free, equal, and independent, no one can be…subjected to the political power of another without his own consent…To protect natural rights governments are established…

Since men hope to preserve their property by establishing a government, they will not want that government to destroy their objectives. When legislators try to destroy or take away the property of the people, or try to reduce them to slavery, they put themselves in to a state of war with the people who can then refuse to obey the laws.

* *According to Locke, how should the government protect peoples’ natural rights?*
* *What does Locke say should happen if these rights are not protected?*

**Montesquieu, *Spirit of Laws* (1748)**

Democratic and aristocratic states are not in their own nature free. Political liberty is to be found only in moderate governments; and even in these it is not always found. It is there only when there is no abuse of power. But constant experience shows us that every man invested with power is apt to abuse it, and to carry his authority as far as it will go. Is it not strange, though true, to say that virtue itself has need of limits?

To prevent this abuse, it is necessary from the very nature of things that power should be a check to power. A government may be so constituted, as no man shall be compelled to do things to which the law does not oblige him, nor forced to abstain from things which the law permits.

I should be glad to inquire into the distribution of the three powers, in all the moderate governments we are acquainted with, in order to calculate the degrees of liberty which each may enjoy. But we must not always exhaust a subject, so as to leave no work at all for the reader. My business is not to make people read, but to make them think.

* *According to Montesquieu, why should government’s power be limited?*
* *How would Montesquieu limit the power of government?*