**JOHN LOCKE**

A.  John Locke is the theoretical architect of democracy as it exists in the Western World.

1. His ideas expressed in S*econd Treatise on Civil Government*, were influential in forming the political philosophy of the founders of the American government.

2.     Phrases such as “All men are created equal”, “Life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness,” “We hold these truths to be self-evident,” are taken directly from the writings of Locke.

B.     Although Hobbes and Locke lived in difficult times, Hobbes grew sour on human nature, but Locke did not. Locke is very much opposed to Hobbes.

1.  Locke's view of the "State of Nature":

a.  In the state of nature, men live on the whole peaceably.

b. They own private property, such as land, and also have private possessions.

c. Men by nature are not wholly selfish:

they sometime work for the good of others

they cooperate with each other.

Sometimes, however, on the other hand, they do act egotistically.

 2. The only law that governs them is what Locke calls “The Law of Nature.”

a.  This states that “no one ought to harm another in his life, health liberty or possessions.”

b.  But sometimes there are lawbreakers.

There is a right to punish them

There would be no reason for men to leave the state of nature and to form societies except that difficulties arise in applying punishment to those who break the law.

c.   In order to overcome the state of nature, men require

a judiciary that will administer the law impartially,

an executive who can enforce the law when it is broken

a legislature that can lay down consistent laws

 d.  Men create a society by a voluntary agreement among themselves to build these institutions.

C.     According to Locke there are certain areas of human conduct that are beyond governmental interference. Locke calls these “rights.”

1.  This idea is the direct ancestor of the famous Bill of Rights in the American Constitution.

2.   The main right that Locke emphasizes, however is the right to own private property.

3.     Locke argues that all men are equal in the sense that they have rights that are more powerful than those given them by society

a.  They rights are not given to them by society, therefore they cannot be taken away by society

b.  Locke believes every man should be given equal treatment before the law

D.  Locke’s attitude toward government.

1. Society is created in order to eliminate the defects of the state of nature.

a.  When men leave the state of nature in order to enter society, they thereby give up the power to punishment to an executive whom they appoint.

b. The executive is appointed by the people and therefore is responsible to them.

c. The whole purpose of government is:

to make laws for the regulation and preservation of property

for the protection of the community against outside aggression

2.  The source of authority lies with the people who appoint the government.