

as soon as he begins to terrorise or go against the will of the people he will face rebellion. This is likely to end in slaughter by the people; therefore it is in his best interest to do right by the state.

Furthermore, Hobbes would argue that his commonwealth is the lesser of a state of terror than the state of nature, because it prevents people from dying horrible untimely deaths. Hobbes defines the state of nature as being, “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,” (Leviathan, 1651). Although the sovereign does operate through fear, he is not free to terrorize the masses because of the possible retribution of rebellion. His enforcement of fear of punishment is necessary to maintain peace and ensure the common defense of people. The Leviathan is a means of preventing the fall back into the state of nature and the fear of that society. Fear in the state of nature is inescapable, and “while men are in the natural condition [...] fear cannot be taken away,” (Leviathan, 1651, p.94). Hobbes says that fear is ever present in human existence, but that in his commonwealth there is a sense of security and an assurance of preservation of life, which does not exist in the state of nature. For this reason, the commonwealth is ideal, and The Leviathan seeks to frame people’s minds and allow them to understand this. Also, certain elements of fear that help to sustain co-operation are engrained habits of thought which prevent individuals from acting unjust; fear in the commonwealth does not come solely from the threat of the sovereign. This means that the sovereign does not necessarily have to terrorize the people in order for fear to exist within the covenant.

Moreover, an element of fear needs to be present in this commonwealth to ensure that the masses will obey. Although, there are other factors that are important as well, like the idea that it is in one’s self-interest to co-operate and strive for peace because it will save the individual from the common evil and engrained habits of thought which prevent us from acting in a certain manner. If a man understands Hobbes’ Leviathan he will understand that it is in his best interest to form a commonwealth, because the sovereign acts in a way that reduces the chances that people will hurt one another.

To counter-point, John Locke would say that Hobbes’ commonwealth is actually an absolutist state of terror. Although both Hobbes and Locke were social contract theorists and natural law theorists, Locke viewed Hobbes Leviathan as a monstrous state of absolute power. For Locke absolutism is a disease, and he believes that if a ruler seeks absolute power he puts himself in a state of war with his subjects and hence the people have the right and the duty to kill such rulers. Although, Locke’s solution, is that the only important role of the state is to ensure that justice be done, and that man is by nature a social animal, he will naturally resolve conflict and therefore man’s natural state is a state of peace (Locke, 1988). This can only be true if we ignore the realist perspective that at his core man is self-interested. However, there is much proof not only in the history of war, but also in the concept of Darwinism (‘survival of the fittest’), that individuals are focused primarily on their own