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Quotes by Jefferson, Thomas

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My only fear is that I may live too long. This would be a subject of dread to me.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The world is indebted for all triumphs which have been gained by reason and humanity over error and oppression.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Never spend your money before you have earned it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Enlighten the people generally, and tyranny and oppressions of body and mind will vanish like evil spirits at the dawn of day.

- Jefferson, Thomas

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal; that they are

endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness

- Jefferson, Thomas

Walking is the best possible exercise. Habituate yourself to walk very fast.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The happiest moments of my life have been the few which I have passed at home in the bosom of my family.

- Jefferson, Thomas

This is the fourth?

- Jefferson, Thomas

In the fevered state of our country, no good can ever result from any attempt to set one of these fiery zealots to rights, either in fact or principle. They are determined as to the facts they will believe, and the opinions on which they will act. Get by them, therefore, as you would by an angry bull; it is not for a man of sense to dispute the road with such an animal.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Whenever there are in any country uncultivated lands and unemployed poor, it is clear that the laws of property have been so far extended as to violate natural right. The earth is given as a common stock for man to labor and live on. The small landowners are the most

precious part of a state.

- Jefferson, Thomas

We seldom report of having eaten too little.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Agriculture, manufactures, commerce, and navigation, the four pillars of our prosperity, are then most thriving when left most free to individual enterprise. Protection from casual embarrassments, however, may sometimes be seasonably interposed.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The will of the people is the only legitimate foundation of any government, and to protect its free expression should be our first object.

- Jefferson, Thomas

But friendship is precious, not only in the shade, but in the sunshine of life; and thanks to a benevolent arrangement of things, the greater part of life is sunshine.

- Jefferson, Thomas

To myself, personally, it brings nothing but increasing drudgery and daily loss of friends.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Friendship is but another name for an alliance with the follies and the misfortunes of

others. Our own share of miseries is sufficient: why enter then as volunteers into those of another?

- Jefferson, Thomas

No occupation is so delightful to me as the culture of the earth, and no culture comparable to that of the garden.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The Creator has not thought proper to mark those in the forehead who are of stuff to make good generals. We are first, therefore, to seek them blindfold, and then let them learn the trade at the expense of great losses.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I think with the Romans, that the general of today should be a soldier tomorrow if necessary.

- Jefferson, Thomas

We may consider each generation as a distinct nation, with a right, by the will of its majority, to bind themselves, but none to bind the succeeding generation, more than the inhabitants of another country.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Peace, commerce and honest friendship with all nations; entangling alliances with none.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Whenever the people are well informed, they can be trusted with their own government; that whenever things get so far wrong as to attract their notice, they may be relied on to set them to rights.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate object of good government.

- Jefferson, Thomas

My reading of history convinces me that most bad government results from too much government.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I have no ambition to govern men. It is a painful and thankless office

- Jefferson, Thomas

That government is the strongest of which every man feels himself a part.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Experience demands that man is the only animal which devours his own kind, for I can apply no milder term to the general prey of the rich on the poor.

- Jefferson, Thomas

It is more dangerous that even a guilty person should be punished without the forms of law than that he should escape.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Happiness is not being pained in body or troubled in mind.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Our greatest happiness does not depend on the condition of life in which chance has placed us, but is always the result of a good conscience, good health, occupation, and freedom in all just pursuits.

- Jefferson, Thomas

A mind always employed is always happy. This is the true secret, the grand recipe, for felicity.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The sovereign invigorator of the body is exercise, and of all the exercises walking is the best.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Honesty is the first chapter of the book of wisdom.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Ignorance is preferable to error; and he is less remote from the truth who believes nothing, than he who believes what is wrong.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Information is the currency of democracy.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just; that his justice cannot sleep forever.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Great innovations should not be forced on slender majorities.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Take not from the mouth of labor the bread it as earned.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Certainly one of the highest duties of the citizen is a scrupulous obedience to the laws of the nation. But it is not the highest duty.

- Jefferson, Thomas

It is the trade of lawyers to question everything, yield nothing, and talk by the hour.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The natural progress of things is for liberty to yield and government to gain ground.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Timid men prefer the calm of despotism to the tempestuous sea of liberty.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The God who gave us life, gave us liberty at the same time.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The boisterous sea of liberty is never without a wave.

- Jefferson, Thomas

It behooves every man who values liberty of conscience for himself, to resist invasions of it in the case of others: or their case may, by change of circumstances, become his own.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I would rather be exposed to the inconveniences attending too much liberty than those attending too small a degree of it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

He who permits himself to tell a lie once, finds it much easier to do it a second and a third

time till at length it becomes habitual.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Always take hold of things by the smooth handle.

- Jefferson, Thomas

When angry, count to ten before you speak. If very angry, count to one hundred.

- Jefferson, Thomas

An association of men who will not quarrel with one another is a thing which has never yet existed, from the greatest confederacy of nations down to a town meeting or a vestry.

- Jefferson, Thomas

There is a natural aristocracy among men. The grounds of this are virtue and talents.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I'm a great believer in luck, and I find the harder I work, the more I have of it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I find that the harder I work, the more luck I seem to have.

- Jefferson, Thomas

In truth, politeness is artificial good humor, it covers the natural want of it, and ends by

rendering habitual a substitute nearly equivalent to the real virtue.

- Jefferson, Thomas

What signify a few lives lost in a century or two? The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure.

- Jefferson, Thomas

A little rebellion now and then... is a medicine necessary for the sound health of government.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I have not observed men's honesty to increase with their riches.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Whenever you are to do a thing, though it can never be known but to yourself, ask yourself how you would act were all the world looking at you, and act accordingly.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I do not take a single newspaper, nor read one a month, and I feel myself infinitely happier for it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers or

newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate for a moment to prefer the latter.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The man who reads nothing at all is better educated than the man who reads nothing, but newspapers.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The advertisements are the most truthful part of a newspaper.

- Jefferson, Thomas

It is neither wealth nor splendor; but tranquillity and occupation which give happiness.

- Jefferson, Thomas

To compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Errors of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The art of life is the art of avoiding pain; and he is the best pilot, who steers clearest of the rocks and shoals with which it is beset.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Peace and friendship with all mankind is our wisest policy, and I wish we may be permitted to pursue it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

While wading through the whimsies, the puerilities, and unintelligible jargon of this work [Plato's Republic], I laid it down often to ask myself how it could have been that the world should have so long consented to give reputation to such nonsense as this?

- Jefferson, Thomas

Do not bite at the bait of pleasure, till you know there is no hook beneath it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude from achieving his goal; nothing on earth can help the man with the wrong mental attitude.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Banking establishments are more dangerous than standing armies.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I sincerely believe that banking establishments are more dangerous than standing armies, and that the principle of spending money to be paid by posterity, under the name of funding, is but swindling futurity on a large scale.

- Jefferson, Thomas

When a man assumes a public trust he should consider himself a public property.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Politics are such a torment that I would advise every one I love not to mix with them.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I have never been able to conceive how any rational being could propose happiness to himself from the exercise of power over others.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I hope our wisdom will grow with our power, and teach us, that the less we use our power the greater it will be.

- Jefferson, Thomas

No man will ever bring out of the Presidency the reputation which carries him into it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Pride costs more than hunger, thirst and cold.

- Jefferson, Thomas

In matters of principals, stand like a rock; in matters of taste, swim with the current.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Never put off till tomorrow what you can do today.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Public employment contributes neither to advantage nor happiness. It is but honorable exile from one's family and affairs.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Question with boldness even the existence of a God; because, if there be one, he must more approve of the homage of reason, than that of blind-folded fear.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I hold it that a little rebellion, now and then, is a good thing, and as necessary in the political world as storms in the physical. It is a medicine necessary for the sound health of government.

- Jefferson, Thomas

We rarely repent of having eaten too little.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The republican is the only form of government which is not eternally at open or secret war with the rights of mankind.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The tree of liberty must be refreshed from time to time, with the blood of patriots and tyrants. It is its natural manure.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Resort is had to ridicule only when reason is against us.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The whole commerce between master and slave is a perpetual exercise of the most boisterous passions, the most unremitting despotism on the one part, and degrading submissions on the other. Our children see this, and learn to imitate it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Every citizen should be a soldier. This was the case with the Greeks and Romans, and must be that of every free state.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Speeches that are measured by the hour will die with the hour.

- Jefferson, Thomas

We confide in our strength, without boasting of it; we respect that of others, without fearing it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I cannot live without books.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Books constitute capital. A library book lasts as long as a house, for hundreds of years. It is not, then, an article of mere consumption but fairly of capital, and often in the case of professional men, setting out in life, it is their only capital.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The most valuable of all talents is that of never using two words when one will do.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The selfish spirit of commerce, which knows no country, and feels no passion or principle but that of gain.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I find the pain of a little censure, even when it is unfounded, is more acute than the pleasure of much praise.

- Jefferson, Thomas

It is part of the American character to consider nothing as desperate -- to surmount every difficulty by resolution and contrivance.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Taste cannot be controlled by law.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The glow of one warm thought is to me worth more than money.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Merchants have no country. The mere spot they stand on does not constitute so strong an attachment as that from which they draw their gains.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Tranquility is the old man's milk.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Traveling makes a man wiser, but less happy.

- Jefferson, Thomas

For here we are not afraid to follow truth wherever it may lead...

- Jefferson, Thomas

It is error alone which needs the support of government. Truth can stand by itself.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The man who fears no truth has nothing to fear from lies.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Resistance to tyrants is obedience to God.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I have sworn upon the altar of God eternal hostility against every form of tyranny over the mind of man.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Victory and defeat are each of the same price.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty.

- Jefferson, Thomas

How much pain worries have cost us that have never happened?

- Jefferson, Thomas

A strict observance of the written laws is doubtless one of the high virtues of a good citizen, but it is not the highest. The laws of necessity, of self-preservation, of saving our country when in danger, are of higher obligation.

- Jefferson, Thomas

If there be one principle more deeply rooted than any other in the mind of every American, it is that we should have nothing to do with conquest.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Nothing gives a person so much advantage over another as to remain always cool and unruffled under all circumstances.

- Jefferson, Thomas

A coward is much more exposed to quarrels than a man of spirit.

- Jefferson, Thomas

With your talents and industry, with science, and that stedfast honesty which eternally pursues right, regardless of consequences, you may promise yourself every thing but health, without which there is no happiness. An attention to health then should take place of every other object. The time necessary to secure this by active exercises, should be devoted to it in preference to every other pursuit.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The happiest moments of my life have been the few which I have past at home in the bosom of my family. public employment contributes neither to advantage nor happiness. It is but honorable exile from ones family and affairs.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Perfect happiness I believe was never intended by the deity to be the lot of any one of his creatures in this world; but that he has very much put in our power the nearness of our approaches to it, is what I as stedfastly believe.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Believing that the happiness of mankind is best promoted by the useful pursuits of peace, that on these alone a stable prosperity can be founded, that the evils of war are great in their endurance, and have a long reckoning for ages to come, I have used my best endeavors to keep our country uncommitted in the troubles which afflict Europe, and which assail us on every side.

- Jefferson, Thomas

We are endeavoring, too, to reduce the government to the practice of a rigorous economy, to avoid burdening the people, and arming the magistrate with a patronage of money, which might be used to corrupt and undermine the principles of our government.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The same prudence which in private life would forbid our paying our own money for

unexplained projects, forbids it in the dispensation of the public moneys.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The main objects of all science, the freedom and happiness of man. [are] the sole objects of all legitimate government.

- Jefferson, Thomas

If, in my retirement to the humble station of a private citizen, I am accompanied with the esteem and approbation of my fellow citizens, trophies obtained by the bloodstained steel, or the tattered flags of the tented field, will never be envied. The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate object of good government.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Were we directed from Washington when to sow, & when to reap, we should soon want bread.

- Jefferson, Thomas

If we can prevent the government from wasting the labors of the people, under the pretence of taking care of them, they must become happy.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I think our governments will remain virtuous for many centuries; as long as they are chiefly agricultural; and this will be as long as there shall be vacant lands in any part of America.

When they get piled upon one another in large cities, as in Europe, they will become corrupt as in Europe.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I confess I have the same fears for our South American brethren; the qualifications for self-government in society are not innate. They are the result of habit and long training, and for these they will require time and probably much suffering.

- Jefferson, Thomas

To preserve the freedom of the human mind and freedom of the press, every spirit should be ready to devote itself to martyrdom; for as long as we may think as we will, and speak as we think the condition of man will proceed in improvement. The generation which is going off the stage has deserved well of mankind for the struggles it has made, and for having arrested the course of despotism which had overwhelmed the world for thousands and thousands of years. If there seems to be danger that the ground they have gained will be lost again, that danger comes from the generation your contemporary. But that the enthusiasm which characterizes youth should lift its parricide hands against freedom and science would be such a monstrous phenomenon as I cannot place among possible things in this age and country.

- Jefferson, Thomas

That to compel a man to furnish contributions of money for the propagation of opinions which he disbelieves and abhors, is sinful and tyrannical.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Almighty God hath created the mind free. All attempts to influence it by temporal punishments or burthens are a departure from the plan of the holy author of our religion No man shall be compelled to frequent or support any religious worship or ministry or shall otherwise suffer on account of his religious opinions or belief, but all men shall be free to profess and by argument to maintain, their opinions in matters of religion. 1 I know but one code of morality for men whether acting singly or collectively. 2

- Jefferson, Thomas

Peace, commerce, and honest friendship, with all nationsentangling alliances with none.

- Jefferson, Thomas

It is, therefore, with the sincerest pleasure I have observed on the part of the British government various manifestations of a just and friendly disposition towards us; we wish to cultivate peace and friendship with all nations, believing that course most conducive to the welfare of our own; it is natural that these friendships should bear some proportion to the common interests of the parties.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The desire to preserve our country from the calamities and ravages of war, by cultivating a disposition, and pursuing a conduct, conciliatory and friendly to all nations, has been sincerely entertained and faithfully followed. It was dictated by the principles of humanity, the precepts of the gospel, and the general wish of our country, and it was not to be doubted that the Society of Friends, with whom it is a religious principle, would sanction it

by their support.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I have come to a resolution myself as I hope every good citizen will, never again to purchase any article of foreign manufacture which can be had of American make be the difference of price what it may.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Here was buried Thomas Jefferson author of the Declaration of American Independence of the Statute of Virginia for Religious Freedom, and Father of the University of Virginia

- Jefferson, Thomas

If a nation expects to be ignorant and free, in a state of civilization, it expects what never was and never will be. The functionaries of every government have propensities to command at will the liberty and property of their constituents. There is no safe deposit for these but with the people themselves; nor can they be safe with them without information. Where the press is free, and every man able to read, all is safe.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I know no safe depository of the ultimate powers of the society but the people themselves; and if we think them not enlightened enough to exercise their control with a wholesome discretion, the remedy is not to take it from them, but to inform their discretion by education. This is the true corrective of abuses of constitutional power.

- Jefferson, Thomas

To draw around the whole nation the strength of the General Government, as a barrier against foreign foes, to equalize and moderate the public contributions, that while the requisite services are invited by due remuneration, nothing beyond this may exist to attract the attention of our citizens from the pursuits of useful industry, nor unjustly to burthen those who continue in those pursuits these are functions of the General Government on which you have a right to call.

- Jefferson, Thomas

We hold these truths to be self-evident: That all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights, among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, that to secure these rights governments are instituted among men. We solemnly publish and declare, that these colonies are and of right ought to be free and independent states and for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of divine providence, we mutually pledge our lives, our fortunes and our sacred honour.

- Jefferson, Thomas

We hold these truths to be sacred & undeniable; that all men are created equal & independant, that from that equal creation they derive rights inherent & inalienable, among which are the preservation of life, & liberty, & the pursuit of happiness.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I am for a government rigorously frugal & simple, applying all the possible savings of the public revenue to the discharge of the national debt; and not for a multiplication of officers & salaries merely to make partisans, & for increasing, by every device, the public debt, on the principle of its being a public blessing.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I, however, place economy among the first and most important of republican virtues, and public debt as the greatest of the dangers to be feared.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I wish it were possible to obtain a single amendment to our constitution. I would be willing to depend on that alone for the reduction of the administration of our government to the genuine principles of its constitution; I mean an additional article, taking from the federal government the power of borrowing.

- Jefferson, Thomas

And to preserve their independence, we must not let our rulers load us with perpetual debt. We must make our election between economy and liberty, or profusion and servitude.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The maxim of buying nothing without the money in our pocket to pay for it, would make of our country one of the happiest upon earth. Experience during the war proved this; as I

think every man will remember that under all the privations it obliged him to submit to during that period he slept sounder, and awaked happier than he can do now. Desperate of finding relief from a free course of justice, I look forward to the abolition of all credit as the only other remedy which can take place.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Were I to commence my administration again, the first question I would ask respecting a candidate would be, Does he use ardent spirits?

- Jefferson, Thomas

In questions of power, then, let no more be heard of confidence in man, but bind him down from mischief by the chains of the Constitution.

- Jefferson, Thomas

And lastly, let us provide in our constitution for its revision at stated periods.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The constitution, on this hypothesis, is a mere thing of wax in the hands of the judiciary, which they may twist and shape into any form they please.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Cultivators of the earth are the most valuable citizens. They are the most vigorous, the most independant, the most virtuous, and they are tied to their country and wedded to its liberty and interests by the most lasting bands. As long therefore as they can find

employment in this line, I would not convert them into mariners, artisans, or any thing else. But our citizens will find employment in this line till their numbers, and of course their productions, become too great for the demand both internal and foreign.

- Jefferson, Thomas

You have not been mistaken in supposing my views and feeling to be in favor of the abolition of war. Of my dispos[i]tion to maintain peace until its condition shall be made less tolerable than that of war itself, the world has had proofs, and more, perhaps, than it has approved. I hope it is practicable, by improving the mind and morals of society, to lessen the dispos[i]tion to war; but of its abolition I despair.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The character of our coasts, remarkable in considerable parts of it for admitting no vessels of size to pass near the shores, would entitle us, in reason, to as broad a margin of protected navigation, as any nation whatever. Not proposing, however, at this time, and without a respectful and friendly communication with the Powers interested in this navigation, to fix on a distance to which we may ultimately insist on the right of protection, the President gives instructions to the officers, acting under this authority, to consider those heretofore given them as restrained for the present to the distance of one sea-league, or three geographical miles from the sea-shore. This distance can admit of no opposition as it is recognized by treaties between some of the Powers with whom we are connected in commerce and navigation, and is as little or less than is claimed by any of them on their own coasts.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I am not an advocate for frequent changes in laws and Constitutions. But laws and institutions must go hand in hand with the progress of the human mind. As that becomes more developed, more enlightened, as new discoveries are made, new truths discovered and manners and opinions change, with the change of circumstances, institutions must advance also to keep pace with the times. We might as well require a man to wear still the coat which fitted him when a boy as civilized society to remain ever under the regimen of their barbarous ancestors.

- Jefferson, Thomas

But this momentous question, like a fire bell in the night, awakened and filled me with terror.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I thought the work would be very innocent, and one which might be confided to the reason of any man; not likely to be much read if let alone, but, if persecuted, it will be generally read. Every man in the United States will think it a duty to buy a copy, in vindication of his right to buy, and to read what he pleases.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I have sometimes asked myself whether my country is the better for my having lived at all? I do not know that it is. I have been the instrument of doing the following things; but they would have been done by others; some of them, perhaps, a little better.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Yet where does this anarchy exist? Where did it ever exist, except in the single instance of Massachusetts? And can history produce an instance of a rebellion so honourably conducted? God forbid we should ever be 20. years without such a rebellion. The people can not be all, and always, well informed. The part which is wrong will be discontented in proportion to the importance of the facts they misconceive. If they remain quiet under such misconceptions it is a lethargy, the forerunner of death to the public liberty.

- Jefferson, Thomas

In truth, the abuses of monarchy had so much filled all the space of political contemplation, that we imagined everything republican which was not monarchy. We had not yet penetrated to the mother principle, that governments are republican only in proportion as they embody the will of their people, and execute it. Hence, our first constitutions had really no leading principles in them. But experience and reflection have but more and more confirmed me in the particular importance of the equal representation then proposed.

- Jefferson, Thomas

But every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle. We have called by different names brethren of the same principle. We are all republicanswe are federalists.

- Jefferson, Thomas

One half of our brethren who fight and pay taxes, are excluded, like Helots, from the rights of representation, as if society were instituted for the soil, and not for the men inhabiting it; or one half of these could dispose of the rights and the will of the other half, without their consent.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Were our State a pure democracy, in which all its inhabitants should meet together to transact all their business, there would yet be excluded from their deliberations, 1. infants, until arrived at years of discretion. 2. Women, who, to prevent depravation of morals and ambiguity of issue, could not mix promiscuously in the public meetings of men. 3. Slaves, from whom the unfortunate state of things with us takes away the right of will and of property. Those then who have no will could be permitted to exercise none in the popular assembly; and of course, could delegate none to an agent in a representative assembly. The business, in the first case, would be done by qualified citizens only.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate, than that these people are to be free; nor is it less certain that the two races, equally free, cannot live in the same government. Nature, habit, opinion have drawn indelible lines of distinction between them.

- Jefferson, Thomas

When a man assumes a public trust, he should consider himself as public property.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The second office of this government is honorable & easy, the first is but a splendid misery.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The mobs of great cities add just so much to the support of pure government, as sores do to the strength of the human body. It is the manners and spirit of a people which preserve a republic in vigor. A degeneracy in these is a canker which soon eats to the heart of its laws and constitution.

- Jefferson, Thomas

A sense of this necessity, and a submission to it, is to me a new and consolatory proof that wherever the people are well informed they can be trusted with their own government; that whenever things get so far wrong as to attract their notice, they may be relied on to set them to rights.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Peace with all nations, and the right which that gives us with respect to all nations, are our object.

- Jefferson, Thomas

That peace, safety, and concord may be the portion of our native land, and be long enjoyed by our fellow-citizens, is the most ardent wish of my heart, and if I can be instrumental in procuring or preserving them, I shall think I have not lived in vain.

- Jefferson, Thomas

With earnest prayers to all my friends to cherish mutual good will, to promote harmony and conciliation, and above all things to let the love of our country soar above all minor passions, I tender you the assurance of my affectionate esteem and respect.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The question Whether one generation of men has a right to bind another, seems never to have been started either on this or our side of the water. I set out on this ground, which I suppose to be self evident, that the earth belongs in usufruct to the living: that the dead have neither powers nor rights over it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The art of reasoning becomes of first importance. In this line antiquity has left us the finest models for imitation; I should consider the speeches of Livy, Sallust, and Tacitus, as pre-eminent specimens of logic, taste, and that sententious brevity which, using not a word to spare, leaves not a moment for inattention to the hearer. Amplification is the vice of modern oratory.

- Jefferson, Thomas

If there be any among us who would wish to dissolve this Union or to change its republican form, let them stand undisturbed as monuments of the safety with which error of opinion may be tolerated where reason is left free to combat it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

But let me beseech you, Sir, not to let this letter get into a newspaper. Tranquillity, at my age, is the supreme good of life. I think it a duty, and it is my earnest wish, to take no further part in public affairs. The abuse of confidence by publishing my letters has cost me more than all other pains.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The basis of our governments being the opinion of the people, the very first object should be to keep that right; and were it left to me to decide whether we should have a government without newspapers, or newspapers without a government, I should not hesitate a moment to prefer the latter. But I should mean that every man should receive those papers and be capable of reading them.

- Jefferson, Thomas

If the American people ever allow private banks to control the issuance of their currency, first by inflation and then by deflation, the banks and corporations that will grow up around them will deprive the people of all their property until their children will wake up homeless on the continent their fathers conquered.

- Jefferson, Thomas

We must train and classify the whole of our male citizens, and make military instruction a regular part of collegiate education.

- Jefferson, Thomas

A Decalogue of Canons for observation in practical life. 1. Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day. 2. Never trouble another for what you can do yourself. 3. Never spend your money before you have it. 4. Never buy what you do not want, because it is cheap; it will be dear to you. 5. Pride costs us more than hunger, thirst and cold. 6. We never repent of having eaten too little. 7. Nothing is troublesome that we do willingly. 8. How

much pain have cost us the evils which have never happened. 9. Take things always by their smooth handle. 10. When angry, count ten, before you speak; if very angry, an hundred.

- Jefferson, Thomas

the giver of life, who gave it for happiness and not for wretchedness.

- Jefferson, Thomas

I would rather be exposed to the inconveniencies attending too much liberty than those attending too small a degree of it.

- Jefferson, Thomas

It behoves every man who values liberty of conscience for himself, to resist invasions of it in the case of others; or their case may, by change of circumstances, become his own.

- Jefferson, Thomas

God who gave us life gave us liberty. 1 Can the liberties of a nation be secure when we have removed a conviction that these liberties are the gift of God? Indeed I tremble for my country when I reflect that God is just, that his justice cannot sleep forever. 2 Commerce between master and slave is despotism. 3 Nothing is more certainly written in the book of fate than that these people are to be free. 4 Establish the law for educating the common people. 5 This it is the business of the State to effect and on a general plan. 6

- Jefferson, Thomas

The bank mania is one of the most threatening of these imitations. It is raising up a monied aristocracy in our country which has already set the government at defiance, and although forced at length to yield a little on this first essay of their strength, their principles are unyielded and unyielding.

- Jefferson, Thomas

A strict observance of the written laws is doubtless one of the high duties of a good citizen, but it is not the highest. The laws of necessity, of self-preservation, of saving our country when in danger, are of higher obligation. To lose our country by a scrupulous adherence to written law, would be to lose the law itself, with life, liberty, property and all those who are enjoying them with us; thus absurdly sacrificing the end to the means.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Architecture worth great attention. As we double our numbers every 20 years we must double our houses. Besides we build of such perishable materials that one half of our houses must be rebuilt in every space of 20 years. So that in that term, houses are to be built for three fourths of our inhabitants. It is then among the most important arts: and it is desirable to introduce taste into an art which shews so much.

- Jefferson, Thomas

As, for the safety of society, we commit honest maniacs to Bedlam, so judges should be withdrawn from their bench, whose erroneous biases are leading us to dissolution. It may indeed injure them in fame or in fortune; but it saves the republic, which is the first and supreme law.

- Jefferson, Thomas

Jefferson was against any needless official apparel, but if the gown was to carry, he said: For Heavens sake discard the monstrous wig which makes the English judges look like rats peeping through bunches of oakum.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The firmness with which the people have withstood the late abuses of the press, the discernment they have manifested between truth and falsehood, show that they may safely be trusted to hear everything true and false, and to form a correct judgment between them.

- Jefferson, Thomas

At the establishment of our constitutions, the judiciary bodies were supposed to be the most helpless and harmless members of the government. Experience, however, soon showed in what way they were to become the most dangerous; that the insufficiency of the means provided for their removal gave them a freehold and irresponsibility in office; that their decisions, seeming to concern individual suitors only, pass silent and unheeded by the public at large; that these decisions, nevertheless, become law by precedent, sapping, by little and little, the foundations of the constitution, and working its change by construction, before any one has perceived that that invisible and helpless worm has been busily employed in consuming its substance. In truth, man is not made to be trusted for life, if secured against all liability to account.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The germ of dissolution of our federal government is in the constitution of the federal judiciary; an irresponsible body, working like gravity by night and by day, gaining a little to-day and a little to-morrow, and advancing its noiseless step like a thief, over the field of jurisdiction, until all shall be usurped from the States, and the government of all be consolidated into one.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The great object of my fear is the federal judiciary. That body, like gravity, ever acting, with noiseless foot, and unalarming advance, gaining ground step by step, and holding what it gains, is ingulfing insidiously the special governments into the jaws of that which feeds them.

- Jefferson, Thomas

The judiciary of the United States is the subtle corps of sappers and miners constantly working under ground to undermine the foundations of our confederated fabric. A judiciary independent of a king or executive alone, is a good thing; but independence of the will of the nation is a solecism, at least in a republican government.

- Jefferson, Thomas

When the people fear their government, there is tyranny; when the government fears the people, there is liberty.

- Jefferson, Thomas



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