

Quotes on the U.S. Constitution

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"National Security' is the root password to the Constitution."

Phil Karn

"Arguing that the words of the Constitution have no fixed meaning is tantamount to arguing that we have no Constitution; a Constitution serves no purpose if the branches of government it is supposed to limit can define their own powers."

W. James Antle III

"Our culture has forgotten what the Founders knew: The American experiment is a moral, not just a political, exercise."

Charles Colson

"The sole purpose of our Constitution is to define the limited role of government in order to guarantee individual rights."

Tom DeWeese

"If the Constitution is to be construed to mean what the majority at any given period in history wish the Constitution to mean, why a written Constitution?"

Frank J. Hogan, President, American Bar Association, 1939

"The whole of the Bill (of Rights) is a declaration of the right of the people at large or considered as individuals. It establishes some rights of the individual as unalienable and which consequently, no majority has a right to deprive them of."

Albert Gallatin of the New York Historical Society, October 7, 1789

"Where rights secured by the Constitution are involved, there can be no rule-making or legislation which would abrogate them."

U.S. Supreme Court in *Miranda v. Arizona* 380 U.S. 436 (1966)

"Constitutional rights may not be infringed simply because the majority of the people choose that they be."

U.S. Supreme Court in *Westbrook v. Mihaly* 2 C3d 756

"All laws which are repugnant to the Constitution are null and void."

U.S. Supreme Court in *Marbury v. Madison*, 5 US (2 Cranch) 137, 174, 176, (1803)

"No one is bound to obey an unconstitutional law and no courts are bound to enforce it."

16 Am. Jur. Sec. 177 late 2d, Sec 256

"The constitutional republic of our Founding Fathers is not an anachronism. If the federal government were to abstain from the activities not authorized by the Constitution and rededicate itself to its constitutionally delegated functions, we would in fact be more secure and more able to respond to this national campaign of terror."

W. James Antle III

"I believe in the United States of America as a Government of the people, by the people, for the people; whose just powers are derived from the consent of the governed; a democracy in a republic; a sovereign Nation of many sovereign States; a perfect union, one and inseparable; established upon those principles of freedom, equality, justice, and humanity for which American patriots sacrificed their lives and fortunes. I therefore believe it is my duty to my country to love it; to support its Constitution; to obey its laws; to respect its flag; and to defend it against all enemies."

William Tyler Page, 1918 -- The American's Creed

"A treaty cannot be made which alters the Constitution of the country, or which infringes and express exceptions to the power of the Constitution."

Alexander Hamilton

"Liberty lies in the hearts of men and women; when it dies there, no constitution, no law, no court can save it."

Judge Learned Hand

"It is only when the People become ignorant and corrupt, when they degenerate into a populace, that they are incapable of exercising their sovereignty. Let us, by all wise and constitutional measures, promote intelligence among the People, as the best means of preserving our liberties."

James Monroe

"The Constitution is not an instrument for the government to restrain the people, it is an instrument for the people to restrain the government -- lest it come to dominate our lives and interests."

Patrick Henry

"The liberties of our country, the freedom of our civil constitution, are worth defending at all hazards; and it is our duty to defend them against all attacks. We have received them as a fair inheritance from our worthy ancestors; they purchased them for us with toil and danger and expense of treasure and blood. It will bring an everlasting mark of infamy on the present generation, enlightened as it is, if we should suffer them to be wrested from us by violence without a struggle, or be cheated out of them by the artifices of false and designing men."

Samuel Adams, 1780

"The only foundation of a free Constitution, is pure virtue, and if this cannot be inspired into our People, in a greater Measure than they have it now, they may change their rulers, and the forms of Government, but they will not obtain a lasting Liberty. They will only exchange Tyrants and tyrannies."

John Adams

"We have no government armed with power capable of contending with human passions unbridled by morality and religion. Avarice, ambition, revenge would break the strongest cords of our Constitution as a whale goes through a net. Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other."

John Adams

"Statesmen, my dear Sir, may plan and speculate for liberty, but it is Religion and Morality alone, which can establish the Principles upon which Freedom can securely stand. The only foundation of a free Constitution is pure Virtue, and if this cannot be inspired into our People in a greater Measure than they have it now, they may change their Rulers and the forms of Government, but they will not obtain a lasting liberty."

John Adams

"Though written constitutions may be violated in moments of passion or delusion, they furnish a text to which those who are watchful may again rally and recall the people; they fix too for the people the principles of their political creed."

Thomas Jefferson

"[An] act of the Congress of the United States... which assumes powers... not delegated by the Constitution, is not law, but is altogether void and of no force."

Thomas Jefferson

"On every question of construction (of the Constitution) let us carry ourselves back to the time when the Constitution was adopted, recollect the spirit manifested in the debates, and instead of trying what meaning may be squeezed out of the text, or invented against it, conform to the probable one in which it was passed."

Thomas Jefferson in a letter to William Johnson, June 12, 1823

"With respect to the words general welfare, I have always regarded them as qualified by the detail of powers (enumerated in the Constitution) connected with them. To take them in a literal and unlimited sense would be a metamorphosis of the Constitution into a character which there is a host of proofs was not contemplated by its creators."

James Madison

"I cannot undertake to lay my finger on that article of the Constitution which granted a right to Congress of expending, on objects of benevolence, the money of their constituents."

James Madison

"I have said that the Declaration of Independence is the ring-bolt to the chain of your nation's destiny; so, indeed, I regard it. The principles contained in that instrument are saving principles. Stand by those principles, be true to them on all occasions, in all places, against all foes, and at whatever cost."

Frederick Douglass

"We have strayed a great distance from our Founding Fathers' vision of America. They regarded the central government's responsibility as that of providing national security, protecting our democratic freedoms, and limiting the government's intrusion in our lives -- in sum, the protection of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. They never envisioned vast agencies in Washington telling our farmers what to plant, our teachers what to teach, our industries what to build. The Constitution they wrote established sovereign states, not mere administrative districts for the federal government. They believed in keeping government as close as possible to the people."

Ronald Reagan

"Isn't our choice really not one of left or right, but of up or down? Down through the welfare state to statism, to more and more government largesse accompanied always by more government authority, less individual liberty, and ultimately, totalitarianism, always advanced

as for our own good. The alternative is the dream conceived by our Founding Fathers, up to the ultimate in individual freedom consistent with an orderly society."

Ronald Reagan (Remarks on accepting the GOP Presidential Nomination, Dallas, Texas August 23, 1984.)

"The strength of the Constitution lies entirely in the determination of each citizen to defend it. Only if every single citizen feels duty bound to do his share in this defense are constitutional rights secure."

Albert Einstein

"It is difficult to maintain the illusion that we are interpreting a Constitution, rather than inventing one."

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Anthony Scalia, in his minority dissenting opinion in Nebraska vs. Carhart

"A Bill of Rights that means what the majority wants it to mean is worthless."

U.S. Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia

"The conscience of this nation is the Constitution."

Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas

"The Constitution is not neutral. It was designed to take the government off the backs of the people."

Supreme Court Justice William O. Douglas

"The Constitution and the Bill of Rights we designed to get the government off the backs of the people -- all the people. Those great documents guarantee to us all the rights to personal and spiritual self-fulfillment. But that guarantee is not self-executing. As nightfall does not come all at once, neither does oppression. In both instances, there is a twilight when everything remains seemingly unchanged. And it is in such a twilight that we all must be most aware of the change in the air -- however slight -- lest we become unwitting victims of the darkness."

Supreme Court Justice William Douglas

"The Constitution needs allegiance and loyalty and renewal and understanding with each generation, or else it's not going to last."

Supreme Court Justice Anthony Kennedy

"You in the media ought to be ashamed of yourselves to call the provisions and the guarantees of the Bill of Rights 'Technicalities'. They're not. We are what we are because of those guarantees."

Supreme Court Justice William Brennan

"The Bill of Rights never gets off the page and into the lives of most Americans."

Supreme Court Justice William Brennan

"It is my belief that there are 'absolutes' in our Bill of Rights, and that they were put there on purpose by men who knew what words meant, and meant their prohibitions to be 'absolutes'."

Supreme Court Justice Hugo Black, The Bill of Rights, 35 NYU L.R. 865, 1970

"We, the people, are the rightful masters of both Congress and the courts; not to overthrow the Constitution, but to overthrow men who pervert the Constitution."

Abraham Lincoln

"Our new Constitution is now established, and has an appearance that promises permanency; but in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes."

Benjamin Franklin

"The Constitution only gives people the right to pursue happiness. You have to catch it yourself."

Benjamin Franklin

When Benjamin Franklin was leaving the Philadelphia Constitutional Convention Hall, someone asked him, "Well, Doctor, what have we got? A republic or a monarchy?". Ben answered, "A republic, if you can keep it."

"Hold on, my friends, to the Constitution and to the Republic for which it stands. Miracles do not cluster, and what has happened once in 6000 years, may not happen again. Hold on to the Constitution, for if the American Constitution should fail, there will be anarchy throughout the world."

Daniel Webster

"Good intention will always be pleaded for every assumption of power... The Constitution was made to guard the people against the dangers of good intentions. There are men in all ages who mean to govern well, but they mean to govern. They promise to be good masters, but they mean to be masters."

Daniel Webster

"Lastly, our ancestors established their system of government on morality and religious sentiment. Moral habits, they believed, cannot safely be on any other foundation than religious principle, nor any government be secure which is not supported by moral habits."

Daniel Webster

"Any attempt to pass or enforce an unconstitutional law -- especially any law that violates the first ten amendments to the Constitution, commonly known as the Bill of Rights -- is a crime punishable by ten years in prison and a ten thousand dollar fine for each offense."

Title 18 U.S.C, Sections 241 and 242

"And that the said Constitution be never construed to authorize Congress to infringe the just liberty of the press, or the rights of conscience; or to prevent the people of the United States, who are peaceable citizens, from keeping their own arms; or to raise standing armies, unless necessary for the defense of the United States, or of some one or more of them; or to prevent the people from petitioning, in a peaceable and orderly manner, the federal legislature, for a redress of grievances; or to subject the people to unreasonable searches and seizures of their persons, papers or possessions."

Samuel Adams