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Q U O T E S

F O R

F R E E D O M

1. Children should be educated and instructed in the principles of freedom. - John Adams: Defense of the Constitutions, 1787

2. But a Constitution of Government once changed from Freedom, can never be restore. Liberty, once lost, is lost forever. - John Adams

3. If ye love wealth better than liberty, the tranquility of servitude than the animated contest of freedom, go from us in peace. We ask not your counsels or arms. Crouch down and lick the hands which feed you. May your chains sit lightly upon you, and may posterity forget that you were our countrymen! - Samuel Adams

4. If it be asked what is to restrain the House of Representatives from making legal discriminations in favor of themselves and a particular class of the society? I answer, the genius of the whole system, the nature of just and constitutional laws, and above all the vigilant and manly spirit which actuates the people of America, a spirit which nourishes freedom, and in return is nourished by it. - James Madison: Federalist No. 57, February 19, 1788

5. Since the general civilization of mankind, I believe there are more instances of the abridgment of the freedom of the people by gradual and silent encroachments of those in power than by violent and sudden usurpations. - James Madison: speech to the Virginia Ratifying Convention, June 6, 1788

6. Freedom has been hunted round the globe; reason was considered as rebellion; and the slavery of fear had made men afraid to think. But such is the irresistible nature of truth, that all it asks, and all it wants, is the liberty of appearing. - Thomas Paine; Right of Man 1791

7. Those who expect to reap the blessing of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it. - Thomas Paine; The American Crisis, No. 4, September 11, 1777

8. The truth is, all might be free if they valued freedom, and defended it as they ought. - Samuel Adams: Essay in the Boston Gazette, October 14, 1771

9. To argue with a person who has renounced the use of reason is like administering medicine to the dead. - Thomas Paine: The Crisis No. V- The American Crisis

10. A fondness for power is implanted, in most men, and it is natural to abuse it, when acquired. - Thomas Jefferson: The Farmer Refuted 1775

11. Government is instituted for the common good; for the protection, safety, prosperity, and happiness of the people; and not for the profit, honor, or private interest of any one man, family, or class of men; therefore, the people alone have an incontestable, unalienable, and inalienable right to institute government; and to reform, alter, or totally change the same, when their protection, safety, prosperity, and happiness require it. - John Adams; Thoughts on Government 1776

12. Rebellion to tyrants is obedience to God. - Benjamin Franklin: Pennsylvania Evening Post, December 14, 1775

13. If ever the time should come, when vain and aspiring men shall possess the highest seats in government, our country will stand in need of its experienced patriots to prevent its ruin. - Samuel Adams: Letter to James Warren, October 24, 1780

14. To compel a man to subsidize with his taxes the propagation of ideas which he disbelieves and abhors is sinful and tyrannical. - Thomas Jefferson: A Bill for Establishing Religious Freedom

15. Only a virtuous people are capable of freedom. As nations become corrupt and vicious, they have more need for masters. - Benjamin Franklin: letter to the Abbés Chalut and Arnoux, 1787

16. I thank God that I have lived to see my country independent and free. She may long enjoy her independence and freedom if she will. It depends on her virtue. - Samuel Adams

17. It is favorable to liberty. Freedom can exist only in a society of knowledge. Without learning, men are incapable of knowing their rights, and where learning is confined to a few people, liberty can be neither equal nor universal. - Benjamin Rush: Essay 1786

18. But it is religion and morality alone, which can establish the principles upon which freedom can surely stand. - John Adams: letter to Zabdiel Adams, June 21, 1776

19. And as the property of land is parceled out among the inhabitants, and almost every farmer is a freeholder. The spirit of liberty will be kept awake, and the love of freedom deeply rooted. And when strength and liberty combine, it is easy to foresee that a people will not long submit to arbitrary sway. Thus, by a blind infatuation and madness of politics, a weak, short-sighted Ministry, have been ruining their country, and hastening a period they seemed to dread, by the very means which they intended to prevent it. - Charles Thomson: letter to Benjamin Franklin, November 26, 1769

20. Let us therefore animate and encourage each other, and show the whole world that a Freeman, contending for liberty on his own ground, is superior to an slavish mercenary on earth. - George Washington: New York, July 2, 1776

21. Liberty must at all hazards be supported. we have a right to it, derived from our Maker. But if we had not, our fathers have earned and bought it for us, at the expense of their ease, their estates, their pleasure, and their blood. - John Adams: A Dissertation on the Canon and Feudal Law, 1765

22. The only foundation of a free Constitution, is pure Virtue, and if this cannot be inspired into our People, in a great 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: letter to Zabdiel Adams, June 21, 1776

23. And it proves, in the last place, that liberty can have nothing to fear from the judiciary alone, but would have everything to fear from its union with either of the other departments. - Alexander Hamilton: Federalist No. 78, 1788

24. There is a certain enthusiasm in liberty, that makes human nature rise above itself, in acts of bravery and heroism. - Alexander Hamilton: The Farmer Refuted, February 23, 1775

25. Neither the wisest constitution nor the wisest laws will secure the liberty and happiness of a people whose manners are universally corrupt. - Samuel Adams: Essay in the Public Advertiser, 1749

26. Liberty, when it begins to take root, is a plant of rapid growth. - George Washington: letter to James Madison, March 2, 1788

27. Every man who loves peace, every man who loves his country, every man who loves liberty ought to have it ever before his eyes that he may cherish in his heart a due attachment to the Union of America and be able to set a due value on the means of preserving it. - James Madison: Federalist No. 41, January 1788

28. All men are created equally free and independent, and have certain inherent rights, of which they cannot, by any compact, deprive or divest their posterity: among which are the enjoyment of life and liberty, with the means of acquiring and possessing property, and pursuing the obtaining happiness and safety. - George Mason: First draft, Virginia Declaration of Rights, 1776

29. The preservation of the sacred fire of liberty, and the destiny of the republican model of government, are justly considered deeply, perhaps as finally, staked on the experiment entrusted to the hands of the American people. - George Washington: First Inaugural Address, April 30, 1789

30. The value of liberty was thus enhanced in our estimation by the difficulty of its attainment, and the worth of characters appreciated by the trial of adversity. - George Washington: letter to the people of South Carolina, Circa 1790

31. When the people fear their government, there is tyranny; when the government fears the people, there is liberty. - Thomas Jefferson

32. Guard with jealous attention the public liberty. Suspect everyone who approaches that jewel. - Patrick Henry

33. They who can give up essential liberty to obtain a little temporary safety, deserve neither liberty nor safety. - Benjamin Franklin: 1775

34. The only foundation for a useful education in a republic is to be laid in religion. Without this there can be no virtue, and without virtue there can be no liberty, and liberty is the object and life of all republican governments. - Benjamin Rush: On the Mode of Education Proper in a Republic 1806

35. Arbitrary power is most easily established on the ruins of liberty abused to licentiousness.- George Washington: Circular to the State, June 8, 1793

36. We have been assured, sir, in the sacred writings, that 'except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it.' I firmly believe this; and I also believe that without His concurring aid we shall succeed in this political building no better than the builders of Babel; we shall be divided by our little partial, local interests, our projects will be confounded and we ourselves shall become a reproach and a byword down to future ages. And, what is worse, mankind may hereafter, from this unfortunate instance, despair of establishing government by human wisdom and leave it to chance, war, or conquest. - Benjamin Franklin

37. Political contests are necessary sometimes, as well as military, to afford exercise and practice, and to instruct in the art of defending liberty and property. - James Madison: to William Bradford, Jr. January 21

38. After all, Sir, we must submit to this idea, that the true principle of a republic is that the people should choose whom they please to govern them. Representation is imperfect in proportion as the current of popular favor is checked. This great source of free government, popular election, should be perfectly pure, and the most unbounded liberty allowed. - Alexander Hamilton: Speech in the New York Assembly, June 21, 1788