

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS QUOTES

The firmest security of peace is the preparation during peace of the defenses of war.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Inaugural Address, Mar. 4, 1825

Individual liberty is individual power, and as the power of a community is a mass compounded of individual powers, the nation which enjoys the most freedom must necessarily be in proportion to its numbers the most powerful nation.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, letter to James Lloyd, Oct. 1, 1822

Courage and perseverance have a magical talisman, before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish into air.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, oration at Plymouth, 1802

From the experience of the past we derive instructive lessons for the future.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Inaugural Address, Mar. 4, 1825

The conflict between the principle of liberty and the fact of slavery is coming gradually to an issue. Slavery has now the power, and falls into convulsions at the approach of freedom. That the fall of slavery is predetermined in the counsels of Omnipotence I cannot doubt; it is a part of the great moral improvement in the condition of man, attested by all the records of history. But the conflict will be terrible, and the progress of improvement perhaps retrograde before its final progress to consummation.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, journal, Dec. 11, 1838

The imagination of a eunuch dwells more and longer upon the material of love than that of man or woman ... supplying, so far as he can, by speculation, the place of pleasures he can no longer enjoy.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, journal, Apr. 4, 1831

If your actions inspire others to dream more, learn more, do more and become more, you are a leader.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, attributed, *The Paradox of Power*

Posterity: you will never know how much it has cost my generation to preserve your freedom. I hope you will make good use of it.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, attributed, *The Rebirth of a Nation*

Of the two great political parties which have divided the opinions and feelings of our country, the candid and the just will now admit that both have contributed splendid talents, spotless integrity, ardent patriotism, and disinterested sacrifices to the formation and administration of this Government, and that both have required a liberal indulgence for a portion of human infirmity and error.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Inaugural Address, Mar. 4, 1825

America, in the assembly of nations, since her admission among them, has invariably, though often fruitlessly, held forth to them the hand of honest friendship, of equal freedom, of generous reciprocity. She has uniformly spoken among them, though often to heedless and often to disdainful ears, the language of equal liberty, of equal justice, and of equal rights. She has, in the lapse of nearly half a century, without a single exception, respected the independence of other nations while asserting and maintaining her own. She has abstained from interference in the concerns of others, even when conflict has been for principles to which she clings, as to the last vital drop that visits the heart. She has seen that probably for centuries to come, all the contests of that Aceldama the European world, will be contests of inveterate power, and emerging right. Wherever the standard of freedom and Independence has been or shall be unfurled, there will her heart, her benedictions and her prayers be. But she goes not abroad, in search of monsters to destroy. She is the well-wisher to the freedom and independence of all. She is the champion and vindicator only of her own. She will commend

the general cause by the countenance of her voice, and the benignant sympathy of her example. She well knows that by once enlisting under other banners than her own, were they even the banners of foreign independence, she would involve herself beyond the power of extrication, in all the wars of interest and intrigue, of individual avarice, envy, and ambition, which assume the colors and usurp the standard of freedom. The fundamental maxims of her policy would insensibly change from liberty to force. The frontlet on her brows would no longer beam with the ineffable splendor of freedom and independence; but in its stead would soon be substituted an imperial diadem, flashing in false and tarnished lustre the murky radiance of dominion and power. She might become the dictatress of the world; she would be no longer the ruler of her own spirit.... Her glory is not dominion, but liberty. Her march is the march of the mind.

To furnish the means of acquiring knowledge is ... the greatest benefit that can be conferred upon mankind. It prolongs life itself and enlarges the sphere of existence.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, report on the establishment of the Smithsonian Institution, 1846

Religion, charity, pure benevolence, and morals, mingled up with superstitious rites and ferocious cruelty, form in their combination institutions the most powerful and the most pernicious that have ever afflicted mankind.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, journal, Nov. 22, 1831

The will of the people is the source and the happiness of the people the end of all legitimate government upon earth.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, Inaugural Address, Mar. 4, 1825

Always vote for principle, though you may vote alone, and you may cherish the sweetest reflection that your vote is never lost.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, attributed, *Pocket Patriot: Quotes from American Heroes*

My wants are many, and, if told,
Would muster many a score;
And were each wish a mint of gold,
I still would want for more.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, *The Quincy Patriot*, Sep. 25, 1841

Death fixes forever the relation existing between the departed spirit and the survivors upon earth.

JOHN QUINCY ADAMS, journal, Jul. 24, 1831

The best guarantee against the abuse of power consists in the freedom, the purity, and the frequency of popular elections

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