



The Oxford Dictionary of Political Quotations

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Looking back at the recent presidential elections, it would be fair to ask if politicians have anything worth saying--or have soundbites and spindoctors killed true political wit? The answer--a surprising yes-- can be found in Antony Jay's outstanding *Oxford Dictionary of Political Quotations*, the last word on which politicians, both at home and abroad, have uttered lasting words.

This diverse and fresh collection of over 4,000 quotations embraces the world of politics and politicians from biblical times to the present day, with quotations from a wide range of voices, from Aeschylus to Malcolm X, from Boris Yeltsin to Bill Clinton. Here are every facet of political life, from the pivotal and momentous to the rhetorical, the sincere, the bemused, the tongue-in-cheek, and the downright rude, with memorable words from the old hands as well as from contemporary quotable figures. There are politicians' views on political events, quips about other politicians, thoughts on the presidency, the British monarchy, Europe, economics, warfare, and the state of society, as well as deeper political truths. Fully up to date with comments from both politicians and pundits, we find:

Bella Abzug on Richard Nixon: he "impeached himself. He gave us Gerald Ford as his revenge." John Nance Gardner on the worth of office: "The vice-presidency isn't worth a pitcher of warm piss." Nikita Krushchev on politicians: "the same all over. They promise to build a bridge where there is no river." Ross Perot on political roles: "An activist is the guy who cleans the river, not the guy who concludes its dirty." Newt Gingrich on Bob Dole: "the tax collector for the welfare state."

These are accompanied by discerning and incisive comments from a whole host of other figures such as Al Capone, Peter Cook, Mahatma Gandhi, Dorothy Parker, George Washington, Charles de Gaulle, Juan Peron, and Jean-Paul Sartre.

Those with an interest in politics or contemporary affairs or anyone with a healthy dose of cynicism and an appetite for irony will enjoy this sparkling tour of spoken life in the public eye. In Douglas Hurd's words, "at a time when politics and politicians are in the dumps, Antony Jay reminds us that not all of the profession have been inarticulate and forgettable dimwits."

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