**Great/Inspiring Austro-Libertarian Quotes**Liberty Speaks – lsnp.org

A picture containing text, person, posing, suit

Description automatically generated“If public opinion is ultimately responsible for the structure of government, it is also the agency that determines whether there is freedom or bondage. There is virtually only one factor that has the power to make people unfree—tyrannical public opinion. The struggle for freedom is ultimately not resistance to autocrats or oligarchs but resistance to the despotism of public opinion. It is not the struggle of the many against the few but of minorities—sometimes of a minority of but one man—against the majority. The worst and most dangerous form of absolutist rule is that of an intolerant majority.”

“It is ideas that group men into fighting factions, that press the weapons into their hands, and that determine against whom and for whom the weapons shall be used. It is they alone, and not arms, that, in the last analysis, turn the scales.”

“Don't be afraid to speak up. Remember, whatever you say about the subject and however wrong it might be, the same thing has already been said by some eminent economist.”

“Economics must not be relegated to classrooms and statistical offices and must not be left to esoteric circles. It is the philosophy of human life and action and concerns everybody and everything. It is the pith of civilization and of man's human existence…All present-day political issues concern problems commonly called economic. All arguments advanced in contemporary discussion of social and public affairs deal with fundamental matters of…economics. Everybody's mind is preoccupied with economic doctrines…Everybody thinks of economics whether he is aware of it or not. In joining a political party and in casting his ballot, the citizen implicitly takes a stand upon essential economic theories…As conditions are today, nothing can be more important to every intelligent man than economics. His own fate and that of his progeny is at stake…all reasonable men are called upon to familiarize themselves with the teachings of economics. This is, in our age, the primary civic duty. Whether we like it or not, it is a fact that economics cannot remain an esoteric branch of knowledge accessible only to small groups of scholars and specialists. Economics deals with society's fundamental problems; it concerns everyone and belongs to all. It is the main and proper study of every citizen.”

“If we want to avoid the destruction of Western civilization and the relapse into primitive wretchedness, we must change the mentality of our fellow citizens. We must make them realize what they owe to the much vilified "economic freedom," the system of free enterprise and capitalism. The intellectuals and those who call themselves educated must use their superior cognitive faculties and power of reasoning for the refutation of erroneous ideas about social, political and economic problems and for the dissemination of a correct grasp of the operation of the market economy. They must start by familiarizing themselves with all the issues involved in order to teach those who are blinded by ignorance and emotions. They must learn in order to acquire the ability to enlighten the misguided many. It is a fateful error on the part of our most valuable contemporaries to believe that economics can be left to specialists in the same way in which various fields of technology can be safely left to those who have chosen to make any one of them their vocation. The issues of society's economic organization are every citizen's business. To master them to the best of one's ability is the duty of everyone.”

“The body of economic knowledge is an essential element in the structure of human civilization; it is the foundation upon which modern industrialism and all the moral, intellectual, technological, and therapeutical achievements of the last centuries have been built. It rests with men whether they will make the proper use of the rich treasure with which this knowledge provides them or whether they will leave it unused. But if they fail to take the best advantage of it and disregard its teachings and warnings, they will not annul economics; they will stamp out society and the human race.”

“…just because they cannot think for themselves the masses follow the lead of the people we call educated. Once convince these, and the game is won…I know only too well how hopeless it seems to convince impassioned supporters of the Socialistic Idea by logical demonstration that their views are preposterous and absurd. I know too well that they do not want to hear, to see, or above all to think, and that they are open to no argument. But new generations grow up with clear eyes and open minds. And they will approach things from a disinterested, unprejudiced standpoint, they will weigh and examine, will think and

act with forethought. It is for them that this book is written.”

“The problems involved are purely intellectual and must be dealt with as such. It is disastrous to shift them to the moral sphere and to dispose of supporters of opposite ideologies by calling them villains. It is vain to insist that what we are aiming at is good and what our adversaries want is bad. The question to be solved is precisely what is to be considered as good and what as bad. The rigid dogmatism peculiar to religious groups and to Marxism results only in irreconcilable conflict. It condemns beforehand all dissenters as evildoers, it calls into question their good faith, it asks them to surrender unconditionally. No social cooperation is possible where such an attitude prevails. No better is the propensity, very popular nowadays, to brand supporters of other ideologies as lunatics. Psychiatrists are vague in drawing a line between sanity and insanity. It would be preposterous for laymen to interfere with this fundamental issue of psychiatry. However, it is clear that if the mere fact that a man shares erroneous views and acts according to his errors qualifies him as mentally disabled, it would be very hard to discover an individual to which the epithet sane or normal could be attributed. Then we are bound to call the past generations lunatic because their ideas about the problems of the natural sciences and concomitantly their techniques differed from ours. Coming generations will call us lunatics for the same reason. Man is liable to error. If to err were the characteristic feature of mental disability, then everybody should be called mentally disabled.”

“Liberalism is rationalistic. It maintains that it is possible to convince the immense majority that peaceful cooperation within the framework of society better serves their rightly understood interests than mutual battling and social disintegration. It has full confidence in man's reason. It may be that this optimism is unfounded and that the liberals have erred. But then there is no hope left for mankind's future.”

“The solution to the present problem of massive, overwhelming poverty is nothing other than the science of economics. As should be increasingly clear, economics is a science which can make possible the construction of a social and political system in which human success is a feature of normal everyday life everywhere. It is truly the humanitarian science, and only those who have studied it well and who are prepared to implement its teachings deserve to be called friends of mankind. The most important charity that true friends of mankind can pursue is to disseminate knowledge of this vital subject as widely and as deeply as they know how.” – George Reisman (Mises’ student)

A person wearing glasses

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“The curious task of economics is to demonstrate to men how little they really know about what they imagine they can design.”

“It is necessary to realize that the sources of many of the most harmful agents in this world are often not evil men but high-minded idealists, and that in particular the foundations of totalitarian barbarism have been laid by honourable and well-meaning scholars who never recognized the offspring they produced.”

“Most people are still unwilling to face the most alarming lesson of modern history: that the greatest crimes of our time have been committed by governments that had the enthusiastic support of millions of people who were guided by moral impulses. It is simply not true that Hitler or Mussolini, Lenin or Stalin, appealed only to the worst instincts of their people: they also appealed to some of the feelings which also dominate contemporary democracies.”

“Perhaps the fact that we have seen millions voting themselves into complete dependence on a tyrant has made our generation understand that to choose one's government is not necessarily to secure freedom.”

"Competition is, after all, always a process in which a small number makes it necessary for larger numbers to do what they do not like, be it to work harder, to change habits, or to devote a degree of attention, continuous application, or regularity to their work which without competition would not be needed."

“Socialism is simply a re-assertion of that tribal ethics whose gradual weakening had made an approach to the Great Society possible.”

"The argument for liberty is not an argument against organization, which is one of the most powerful tools human reason can employ, but an argument against all exclusive, privileged, monopolistic organization, against the use of coercion to prevent others from doing better."

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(From last 2 parts of 70th. bday speech)

**We Haven’t Been Good Enough**

“…the hard thing must be said that, collectively, we just haven't been good enough. We haven't convinced the majority. Is this because the majority just won't listen to reason? I am enough of an optimist, and I have enough faith in human nature, to believe that people will listen to reason if they are convinced that it is reason. Somewhere, there must be some missing argument, something that we haven't seen clearly enough, or said clearly enough, or, perhaps, just not said often enough.

A minority is in a very awkward position. The individuals in it can't afford to be just as good as the individuals in the majority. If they hope to convert the majority they have to be much better; and the smaller the minority, the better they have to be. They have to think better. They have to know more. They have to write better. They have to have better controversial manners. Above all, they have to have far more courage. And they have to be infinitely patient.

…I figure I must have written in total some 10,000 editorials, articles, and columns; some 10,000,000 words! And in print! The verbal equivalent of about 150 average-length books! And yet, what have I accomplished? I will confess in the confidence of these four walls that I have sometimes repeated myself. In fact, there may be some people unkind enough to say I haven't been saying anything new for fifty years! And in a sense they would be right. I have been preaching essentially the same thing. I've been preaching liberty as against coercion; I've been preaching capitalism as against socialism; and I've been preaching this doctrine in every form and with any excuse. And yet the world is enormously more socialized than when I began.

……Yet, in spite of this, I am hopeful. After all, I'm still in good health, I'm still free to write, I'm still free to write unpopular opinions, and I'm keeping at it. And so are many of you. So I bring you this message: Be of good heart: be of good spirit. If the battle is not yet won, it is not yet lost either.

**Our Continuing Duty**

I suppose most of you in this room have read that powerful book, George Orwell's 1984. On the surface it is a profoundly depressing novel, but I was surprised to find myself strangely encouraged by it. I finally decided that this encouragement arose from one of the final scenes in it. The hero, Winston Smith, is presented as a rather ordinary man, an intelligent but not a brilliant man, and certainly not a courageous one. Winston Smith has been keeping a secret diary, in which he wrote: "Freedom is the freedom to say that two and two makes four." Now this diary has been discovered by the Party. O'Brien, his inquisitor, is asking him questions. Winston Smith is strapped to a board or a wheel, in such a way that O'Brien, by merely moving a lever, can inflict any amount of excruciating pain upon him (and explains to him just how much pain he can inflict upon him and just how easy it would be to break Smith's backbone). O'Brien first inflicts a certain amount of not quite intolerable pain on Winston Smith. Then he holds up the four fingers of his left hand, and says, "How many fingers am I holding up? Winston knows that the required answer is five. That's the Party answer. But Winston can't say anything else but four. So O'Brien moves the lever again, and inflicts still more agonizing pain upon him, and says, "Think again. How many fingers am I holding up?" Winston Smith says, "Four. Four. Four fingers." Well, he finally capitulates, as you know, but not until he has put up a magnificent battle.

None of us is yet on the torture rack; we are not yet in jail; we're getting various harassments and annoyances, but what we mainly risk is merely our popularity, the danger that we will be called nasty names. So, before we are in the position of Winston Smith, we can surely have enough courage to keep saying that two plus two equals four.

This is the duty that is laid upon us. We have a duty to speak even more clearly and courageously, to work harder, and to keep fighting this battle while the strength is still in us. But I can't do better than to read the words of the great economist, the great thinker, the great writer, who honors me more than I can say by his presence here tonight, Ludwig von Mises. This is what he wrote in the final paragraph of his great book on socialism 40 years ago:

"Everyone carries a part of society on his shoulders; no one is relieved of his share of responsibility by others. And no one can find a safe way out for himself if society is sweeping towards destruction. Therefore, everyone, in his own interests, must thrust himself vigorously into the intellectual battle. None can stand aside with unconcern; the interests of everyone hang on the result. Whether he chooses or not, every man is drawn into the great historical struggle, the decisive battle into which our epoch has plunged us."

Those words - uncannily prophetic words - were written in the early 1920's. Well, I haven't any new message, any better message than that. Even those of us who have reached and passed our 70th birthdays cannot afford to rest on our oars and spend the rest of our lives dozing in the Florida sun. The times call for courage. The times call for hard work. But if the demands are high, it is because the stakes are even higher. They are nothing less than the future of human liberty, which means the future of civilization.