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Quotes by Truman, Harry S

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Harry S Truman (there is no period after "S") was born in Lamar, Missouri, in 1884. He grew up in Independence, and for 12 years prospered as a Missouri farmer. He went to France during World War I as a captain in the Field Artillery. Returning, he married Elizabeth Virginia Wallace, and opened a haberdashery in Kansas City. A very active Freemason, Truman received his Masonic degrees in Belton Lodge No. 450 in Grandview, Missouri in 1909. In 1911, Truman and several other Masons organized Grandview Lodge No. 618, and Truman served as the first Master of the Lodge.

In 1940, Truman was elected Grand Master of the Grand Lodge of Missouri, and would serve as such until October 1941. Truman became a US Senator in 1934 and was active in monitoring the war effort while in the Senate.

Brother Franklin D. Roosevelt chose Truman to be his Vice-Presidential candidate in the 1944 elections, which Roosevelt won. During his few weeks as Vice President, Truman scarcely saw President Roosevelt, and received no briefing on the development of the atomic bomb or the unfolding difficulties with Soviet Russia. Suddenly these and a host of other wartime problems became Truman's to solve when, on April 12, 1945, he became President upon the death of Roosevelt. He told reporters, "I felt like the moon, the stars, and all the planets had fallen on me."

As President, Truman made some of the most crucial decisions in history. Soon after V-E Day, the war against Japan had reached its final stage. An urgent plea to Japan to surrender was rejected. Truman, after consultations

with his advisers, ordered atomic bombs dropped on cities devoted to war work. Two were Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Japanese surrender quickly followed in 1945. In 1948, campaigning against the backdrop of crises in foreign affairs around the globe, Truman won a term as President in his own right. Deciding not to run for a second term, Truman retired from the Presidency in 1953 and returned to Independence, Missouri where he died on December 26, 1972 at the age of 88.

Bio submitted by: Phillip G. Elam

Whenever I make a bum decision, I go out and make another one.

- Truman, Harry S

It's a recession when your neighbor loses his job; it's a depression when you lose your own.

- Truman, Harry S

Give me a one-handed economist! All my economists say, On the one hand on the other.

- Truman, Harry S

Whenever a man does the best he can, then that is all he can do.

- Truman, Harry S

If you want to get elected, shake hands with 25, 000 people between and November 7.

- Truman, Harry S

I always remember an epitaph which is in the cemetery at Tombstone, Arizona. It says:
Here lies Jack Williams. He done his damndest. I think that is the greatest epitaph a man
can have.

- Truman, Harry S

Whenever you have an efficient government, you have a dictatorship.

- Truman, Harry S

Being too good is apt to be uninteresting.

- Truman, Harry S

Well, I wouldn't say that I was in the great class, but I had a great time while I was trying
to be great.

- Truman, Harry S

Study men, not historians.

- Truman, Harry S

Any man who has had the job I've had and didn't have a sense of humor wouldn't still be
here.

- Truman, Harry S

I learned that a great leader is a man who has the ability to get other people to do what they don't want to do and like it.

- Truman, Harry S

How do you live a long life? Take a two-mile walk every morning before breakfast.

- Truman, Harry S

A president either is constantly on top of events or, if he hesitates, events will soon be on top of him. I never felt that I could let up for a moment.

- Truman, Harry S

The human animal cannot be trusted for anything good except en masse. The combined thought and action of the whole people of any race, creed or nationality, will always point in the right direction.

- Truman, Harry S

The buck stops here.

- Truman, Harry S

We must build a new world, a far better world -- one in which the eternal dignity of man is respected.

- Truman, Harry S

The atom bomb was no great decision. It was merely another powerful weapon in the arsenal of righteousness.

- Truman, Harry S

I would rather have peace in the world than be President.

- Truman, Harry S

It is understanding that gives us an ability to have peace. When we understand the other fellow's viewpoint, and he understands ours, then we can sit down and work out our differences.

- Truman, Harry S

If that's art, I'm a Hottentot!

- Truman, Harry S

Whenever a fellow tells me he is bipartisan, I know he's going to vote against me.

- Truman, Harry S

Within the first few months I discovered that being president is like riding a tiger. A man has to keep riding or be swallowed.

- Truman, Harry S

When a leader is in the Democratic Party he is a boss, and when he is in the Republican

Party he is a leader.

- Truman, Harry S

A politician is a man who understands government and it takes a politician to run a government. A statesman is a politician who's been dead for fifteen years.

- Truman, Harry S

It takes a politician to run a government. A statesman is a politician who's been dead for fifteen years.

- Truman, Harry S

I always considered statesmen to be more expendable than soldiers.

- Truman, Harry S

How far would Moses have gone if he had taken a poll in Egypt?

- Truman, Harry S

Being a President is like riding a tiger. A man has to keep on riding or he is swallowed.

- Truman, Harry S

Some of the Presidents were great and some of them weren't. I can say that, because I wasn't one of the great Presidents, but I had a good time trying to be one, I can tell you that.

- Truman, Harry S

The president is the representative of the whole nation and he's the only lobbyist that all the one hundred and sixty million people in the country have.

- Truman, Harry S

When you get to be President, there are all those things, the honors, the twenty-one gun salutes, all those things. You have to remember it isn't for you. It's for the Presidency.

- Truman, Harry S

I do not believe there is a problem in this country or the world today which could not be settled if approached through the teaching of the Sermon on the Mount.

- Truman, Harry S

If you can't stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.

- Truman, Harry S

Intense feeling too often obscures the truth.

- Truman, Harry S

I never gave anybody hell! I just told the truth and they thought it was hell.

- Truman, Harry S

We must have strong minds, ready to accept facts as they are.

- Truman, Harry S

The United Nations is designed to make possible lasting freedom and independence for all its members.

- Truman, Harry S

When a fellow tells me he's bipartisan, I know he's going to vote against me.

- Truman, Harry S

I have found the best way to give advice to your children is to find out what they want and then advise them to do it.

- Truman, Harry S

All my life, whenever it comes time to make a decision, I make it and forget about it.

- Truman, Harry S

We shall never be able to remove suspicion and fear as potential causes of war until communication is permitted to flow, free and open, across international boundaries.

- Truman, Harry S

Conceit is God's gift to little men.

- Truman, Harry S

If you can't convince them; confuse them.

- Truman, Harry S

I've said many a time that I think the Un-American Activities Committee in the House of Representatives was the most un-American thing in America!

- Truman, Harry S

People are very much wrought up about the Communist bugaboo.

- Truman, Harry S

They said we were soft, that we would not fight, that we could not win. We are not a warlike nation. We do not go to war for gain or for territory; we go to war for principles, and we produce young men like these. I think I told every one of them that I would rather have that medal, the Congressional Medal of Honor, than to be President of the United States.

- Truman, Harry S

I got very well acquainted with Joe Stalin, and I like old Joe! He is a decent fellow. But Joe is a prisoner of the Politburo.

- Truman, Harry S

The Buck Stops Here

- Truman, Harry S

Shortly after I was elected, in Nineteen Hundred and Forty-eight, I made up my mind that I would not seek another term. I have seen a great many men in public life, and one of their besetting sins is to stay in office too long. Nowadays, in such organizations as the Army and the civil service and industry, there is compulsory retirement, but no such regulations prevail in politics. I decided that I would not be guilty of this common failing, and that I should make way for younger men and the Constitutional Amendment Number twenty-two, the two-term amendment, does not apply to me. The people responsible for the 22nd amendment thought I was not worth considering and that I'd be beaten in 1948 so I was exempted.

- Truman, Harry S

Whenever the press quits abusing me I know I'm in the wrong pew. I don't mind it because when they throw bricks at me I'm a pretty good shot myself and I usually throw 'em back at 'em.

- Truman, Harry S

The legislative job of the President is especially important to the people who have no special representatives to plead their cause before Congress and that includes the great majority. I sometimes express it by saying the President is the only lobbyist that one hundred and fifty million Americans have. The other twenty million are able to employ people to represent them and that's all right, it's the exercise of the right of petition but someone has to look after the interests of the one hundred and fifty million that are left.

- Truman, Harry S

When contemplating General Eisenhower winning the Presidential election, Truman said, Hell sit here, and hell say, Do this! Do that! And nothing will happen. Poor Ikeit wont be a bit like the Army. Hell find it very frustrating.

- Truman, Harry S

You know, the greatest epitaph in the country is here in Arizona. Its in Tombstone, Ariz. , and this epitaph says, Here lies Jack Williams. He done his damndest. I think that is the greatest epitaph a man could have. Whenever a man does the best he can, then that is all he can do; and that is what your President has been trying to do for the last 3 years for this country.

- Truman, Harry S

There has been a lot of talk lately about the burdens of the Presidency. Decisions that the President has to make often affect the lives of tens of millions of people around the world, but that does not mean that they should take longer to make. Some men can make decisions and some cannot. Some men fret and delay under criticism. I used to have a saying that applies here, and I note that some people have picked it up, If you cant stand the heat, get out of the kitchen.

- Truman, Harry S

Politics is a fascinating game, because politics is government. It is the art of government.

- Truman, Harry S

Im proud that Im a politician. A politician is a man who understands government, and it takes a politician to run a government. A statesman is a politician whos been dead 10 or 15 years.

- Truman, Harry S

On May 14 I was informed that the Provisional Government of Israel was planning to proclaim a Jewish state at midnight that day, Palestine time, which was when the British mandate came to an end. I decided to move at once and give American recognition to the new nation. I instructed a member of my staff to communicate my decision to the State Department and prepare it for transmission to Ambassador Austin at the United Nations in New York. About thirty minutes later, exactly eleven minutes after Israel had been proclaimed a state, Charlie Ross, my press secretary, handed the press the announcement of the de facto recognition by the United States of the provisional government of Israel.

- Truman, Harry S



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