

Bill Ayers

Quotes

*War, Thinking, People, Years, Rights, Mean, Country, World, Kings, Eye, Ideas,
Movement, Children, Michigan, Real, Class, Writing, School, Two, Party*

Kill all the rich people. Break up their cars and apartments. Bring the revolution home, kill your parents, that's where it's really at.

~Bill Ayers

The US is indeed a terrorist nation. ...It's also the greatest purveyor of violence on earth over the past half century, and the foremost threat to world peace today.

~Bill Ayers

Your kids require you most of all to love them for who they are, not to spend your whole time trying to correct them.

~Bill Ayers

Everything was absolutely ideal on the day I bombed the Pentagon.

~Bill Ayers

I think Bowe Bergdahl, if he deserted, is a hero - I think throughout history we should build monuments to the unknown deserters.

~Bill Ayers

The only path to the final defeat of imperialism and the building of socialism is revolutionary war.

~Bill Ayers

Guilty as hell. Free as a bird. America is a great country.

~Bill Ayers

You need to find a way to live your life, that it doesn't make a mockery of your values.

~Bill Ayers

I don't regret setting bombs.

~Bill Ayers

I'm not so much against the war as I am for a Vietnamese victory. I'm not so much for peace as for a U.S. defeat.

~Bill Ayers

Teaching has always been, for me, linked to issues of social justice. I've never considered it a neutral or passive profession.

~Bill Ayers

I get up every morning and think...today I'm going to end capitalism.

~Bill Ayers

I was indicted on two federal conspiracies. My wife was on the Ten Most Wanted list. That's what fascism was going to look like. That's what it did look like.

~Bill Ayers

It's amazing where the paranoid mind can take you.

~Bill Ayers

I find some unity with Ron Paul.

~Bill Ayers

Education is the motor-force of revolution.

~Bill Ayers

The first thing I did [in Michigan] was join a picket line of a pizzeria in Ann Harbor in 1963 that didn't allow African Americans to eat there.

~Bill Ayers

Two thousand people a day were being murdered in Vietnam in a terrorist war, an official terrorist war.

~Bill Ayers

But the frat boys were all frivolous and idiotic in our minds now, a bunch

of conformist fools going through the motions of hip.

~Bill Ayers

I wanted a racially just society. I wanted to end wars. I wanted to end white supremacy. I wanted to create a world that was based on egalitarianism, sharing, racial justice.

~Bill Ayers

I wish I had been wiser. I wish I had been more effective, I wish I'd been more unifying, I wish I'd been more principled.

~Bill Ayers

Beginning to dismantle the Pentagon would save \$1 trillion a year - a small government proposal if ever there was one.

~Bill Ayers

I haven't been silent. I teach, I lecture at universities, I write, I'm not silent.

~Bill Ayers

I wasn't part of John Kennedy's vision of the world, or Lyndon Johnson's. I thought of them as anti-Communist imperial monsters.

~Bill Ayers

Every revolution seems impossible at the beginning, and after it happens, it was inevitable.

~Bill Ayers

I proposed a law that every country where the U.S. has a military base - those people should be allowed to vote in the American election.

~Bill Ayers

I don't buy the whole mythology of the sixties. I think I'm an intergenerational person.

~Bill Ayers

If the logic of capitalism is "expand or die," then either it has to die or the world has to die.

~Bill Ayers

[John] McCain seemed to be winking to the Right, and [Barack] Obama seemed to be winking to the Left. Neither one of them - if McCain had been elected we'd still be where we are on gay rights.

~Bill Ayers

When I was young, communism, which had a certain allure to me, was clearly a failed experiment in the Soviet Union and in China. And yet, anti-communism was as bad.

~Bill Ayers

I'm different in the sense that every minute of every day, I change. I'm thinking. But the basic principles that have powered me forward are still there. They're not different.

~Bill Ayers

It's the height of the Cold War, but I grew up in a political family and politics wasn't on the agenda.

~Bill Ayers

I dropped out in '64. And I came back to Michigan, in '65. In 1965, when I came back I had never heard of Vietnam.

~Bill Ayers

I more or less shared the view that life should be lived.

~Bill Ayers

There were no political ideas. It was an apolitical time. It was the '50s and in the privilege of the suburbs.

~Bill Ayers

Everyone who knew [Barack] Obama from being in Hyde Park knew he was the smartest guy in any room he walked into; a decent, compassionate, lovely person; pragmatic, middle-of-the-road and ambitious.

~Bill Ayers

It felt to me like I was living my life in a way that didn't make mockery of my values. That's what I intended to do. So, that became a very radicalizing proposition for me.

~Bill Ayers

It's the connection between schools and communities that creates greatness in schools.

~Bill Ayers

I'm not disappointed in [Barack] Obama. He said who he is; he's doing what he said he would do.

~Bill Ayers

It was Frederick Douglass, John Brown, Harriet Tubman, Wendell Phillips - these were the people who made abolition real. Now, none of you guys is in favor of slavery, right?

~Bill Ayers

It's not Lyndon Johnson who makes the black freedom movement; it's the black freedom movement who makes Lyndon Johnson.

~Bill Ayers

His [Martin Luther King] last book, *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community*, is a direct reference to angles, barbarism or socialism.

~Bill Ayers

Students for a Democratic Society was founded in 1961.

~Bill Ayers

[Martin Luther King] King was a socialist and King was an activist who was really a radical by the end.

~Bill Ayers

This 1965. We went to trial on our city. We were obviously borrowing tactics and strategy from the Black freedom movement, and we were echoing their approach to things.

~Bill Ayers

Imperialism or globalization - I don't have to care what it's called to hate it.

~Bill Ayers

We should open our eyes, see what's in front of us, and act.

~Bill Ayers

I wish I knew as much about anything today as I knew about everything when I was twenty.

~Bill Ayers

Your body's always going through changes. It's fattening or thinning or wrinkling or blotching, and the only thing you really have control over is putting some decoration on it.

~Bill Ayers

One of the things that's complicated about writing anything is that it's an act of narcissism, and then of course once it sails out into the world, you have to let go of it.

~Bill Ayers

Injustice anywhere is an assault on all of us. That means that we all can

get busy.

~Bill Ayers

To be a human being is to suffer. But it's the unnecessary suffering, it's the suffering that we visit upon one another, that really should be stopped.

~Bill Ayers

I'm an optimist in my heart - I'm a hopeless pollyanna just like my mother - but a pessimist in my head. I think that's the dialectic we all need to be in.

~Bill Ayers

I suffer from a genetic flaw, which is that my mother was a hopeless Pollyanna.

~Bill Ayers

Nothing is more boring than some old person going on and on about the way things used to be.

~Bill Ayers

I would say for the young: Don't be straight jacketed by ideology. Don't be driven by a structure of ideas.

~Bill Ayers

I knew Barack Obama, absolutely. And I knew him probably as well as thousands of other Chicagoans.

~Bill Ayers

I didn't kill innocent people.

~Bill Ayers

I have an addiction to caffeine.

~Bill Ayers

I think I am a radical. I have never deviated from that. By radical, I mean someone trying to go to the root of things.

~Bill Ayers

I was involved in the anti-war movement.

~Bill Ayers

The rhythm of being an activist today involves a pretty simple rhythm. You have to open your eyes to the reality before you. You have to look and see.

~Bill Ayers

Every relationship is an experiment and what one learns from it is so fascinating.

~Bill Ayers

I voted for Obama and I was delighted that he's been elected.

~Bill Ayers

I was a child of privilege and I woke up to a world on fire.

~Bill Ayers

When someone who's always been in your life is gone, it's a stunning adjustment of your own identity.

~Bill Ayers

Nixon probably was a nice guy.

~Bill Ayers

Writing a memoir has a particularly excited sense of narcissism.

~Bill Ayers

There's something so remarkable in the intensity of taking care of somebody who can't take care of him or herself. And then watching that

little person bloom into adolescence.

~Bill Ayers

Art and activism can be symbiotic. They don't have to be, of course; they can also be contradictory.

~Bill Ayers

Large numbers of people are broken from the notion that the system is working for people, that the system is just or humane or peaceful.

~Bill Ayers

The passions and commitments that ignited my activity as a student are the same passions and commitments that I have today.

~Bill Ayers

If you read the literature of Soviet Communism, you see a dogma that's chilling. On the other hand, if you read the literature of anti-communism, it's every bit as dogmatic.

~Bill Ayers

Being an activist and an artist - those two things should go together. You should allow the artistic sensibility to control some of your activism, but never should it be allowed to paralyze you.

~Bill Ayers

I don't think saying "I was wrong here, I was wrong there" absolves you of anything particularly, nor does it get you into heaven.

~Bill Ayers

In terms of my own behavior and activity, the funny thing about regrets and saying "I'm sorry," is that there's so much I would do differently and want to do differently moving forward.

~Bill Ayers

I was arrested in 1965 for opposing the war in Vietnam. There were 39 of us arrested that day. But thousands opposed us. And the majority of the people in the country supported the war then.

~Bill Ayers

I breathed the air of deliverance through books, and through books I leapt over the walls of confinement.

~Bill Ayers

The nice thing about being detained in Canada is it's like being in a Days Inn; it's very clean and very nice.

~Bill Ayers

I don't think of myself as a particularly nostalgic person.

~Bill Ayers

One hundred years from now, we'll all be dead. It's hard to believe. One hundred years from now, everyone we see every day will be gone.

~Bill Ayers

Terrorists destroy randomly.

~Bill Ayers

I've said for thirty years that capitalism is an exhausted system. But now you can see the handwriting everywhere. And one especially horrifying part is the fiscal crisis.

~Bill Ayers

Organizing the working class in England or the U.S. or any other advanced capitalist country has been a daunting challenge.

~Bill Ayers

In a world as out of balance as this world, everyone can find something to do. And the question isn't can you do everything; the question is, can

you do anything?

~Bill Ayers

Something about the fact that an African American had, given the long sad history of our country, now become President - that was exhilarating.

~Bill Ayers

There was a sense of palpable relief that George [W.] Bush was leaving and that the Republicans had slipped back and that was a wonderful feeling.

~Bill Ayers

Politicians are conservative by nature.

~Bill Ayers

There was one moment when J. Edgar Hoover and us had the same distorted lens about who we were - "a real threat," you know? He thought so and we thought so and we were buddies in that regard.

~Bill Ayers

It's worth remembering that in 1965, something like 20% of Americans were against the war. Something like 70% were for the war. So, it wasn't a popular or an easy thing to do.

~Bill Ayers

Without a doubt. It's woven into our DNA in a very deep way and so to kind of be smacked in the face with the hypocrisy of the America that we were sold was a liberating and harsh experience.

~Bill Ayers

Certainly my parents were Dr. [Benjamin] Spock-driven parents. So they were tolerant.

~Bill Ayers

I went underground. So I didn't see [my father] for 11 years. So that was pretty traumatic time for my parents for sure.

~Bill Ayers

Being arrested that also changed everything for me because I was suddenly seeing America from a different perspective all together. I did a couple of weeks in a county jail.

~Bill Ayers

I was a good liberal in some sense at that point. I wanted to end a war. I wanted to support the civil rights movement.

~Bill Ayers

Students for a Democratic Society was also affiliated with the civil rights movement everywhere.

~Bill Ayers

[Students for a Democratic Society] it's a social democratic program.

~Bill Ayers

The massive anti-war movement, which I was a part of and which was a major part of my life, never stopped the war in Vietnam.

~Bill Ayers

[Lyndon] Johnson was responding to a black freedom movement that was tearing the country open and he did what he had to do as a conservative politician.

~Bill Ayers

After I had known [Barack Obama] for a while, I remember saying to my partner, "You know, this guy is really ambitious, I think he wants to be Mayor of Chicago." That was the limit of my imagination.

~Bill Ayers

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