



TASA The Australian Sociological Association

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Over the next few weeks we are going to face a barrage of politics spin. One Dictionary of Sociology tell us that both political sociology and political science insist that political institutions must be treated as fully implicated in society not as a system that can be understood in isolation. That sounds nice and academic but then as Scottish physicist John C. Maxwell, once remarked *"People may hear your words, but they feel your attitude."* Having started looking at quotes I found some others that are perhaps appropriate to the present time.

"Men enter politics solely as a result of being unhappily married." (Cecil Northcote Parkinson)

"Politicians have no leisure, because they are always aiming at something beyond political life itself, power and glory, or happiness." (Aristotle)

"Great minds discuss ideas; average minds discuss events; small minds discuss people". (Eleanor Roosevelt)

"Whatever you do in life, surround yourself with smart people who'll argue with you." (John Wooden)

Then there is one quote which will sound very familiar. It is one of the Neoliberals favourite quotes:

"The Budget should be balanced, the Treasury should be refilled, public debt should be reduced, the arrogance of officialdom should be tempered and controlled, and the assistance to foreign lands should be curtailed, lest we will become bankrupt. People must again learn to work instead of living on public assistance."

However, the words really come from the Roman Politician, Cicero, from around 55 BC.

Then one final quote from the Greek philosopher Socrates. *"False words are not only evil in themselves, but they infect the soul with evil."*

One new book that is worth a read, especially at this time, is "ECONOBABBLE - How to decode political spin and economic nonsense" by Dr Richard Dennis, now Chief Economist of the Australian Institute. One reviewer, Ross Gittens has commented: "The best guide you'll find to the literal non-sense that usually passes for economic debate in this country."

Sorry to start the political debate so early, but as has been said, Sociology cannot be contain, it looks at the consequences of life.

One final quote of justification for me that comes from Confucius:

"Old age, believe me, is a good and pleasant thing. It is true you are gently shouldered off the stage, but then you are given such a comfortable front stall as spectator."

Alan Scott, Continuing education Officer.