

Trump Dismantles the Notion That ‘America Is Merely an Idea’ During Meeting with King Charles

President Donald Trump rejected the notion that “America is merely an idea,” arguing instead that the nation’s character and roots are grounded in the British view of liberty.

“America is an idea” is a phrase former President Joe Biden used in his campaign launch video in 2019. He then utilized it throughout his presidency and included it in his farewell letter last year as he was leaving office.

Biden also liked to point out, as he did in that letter, “We’ve never fully lived up to this sacred idea,” regarding the truths contained in the Declaration of Independence.

However, during a Tuesday ceremony at the White House to honor King Charles III, Trump chose to emphasize what the founders got right.

He contended that the American Revolution was actually an outgrowth of the English love of liberty developed well before July 4, 1776.

“Here in the shadows of monuments to George Washington and Thomas Jefferson, honoring the British King might seem an ironic beginning to our celebration of 250 years of American independence – but in fact, no tribute could be more appropriate,” the president said.



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"Long before Americans had a nation or a Constitution, we first had a culture, a character, and a creed. Before we ever proclaimed our independence, Americans carried within us the rarest of gifts: moral courage, and it came from a small but mighty kingdom from across the sea," he continued.

"For nearly two centuries before the Revolution, this land was settled and forged by men, women who bore in their souls the blood and noble spirit of the British. Here on a wild and untamed continent, they set loose the ancient English love of liberty and Great Britain's distinctive sense of glory, destiny, and pride," Trump said.

The British founded their first permanent colony in Jamestown, Virginia, in 1607, followed by Plymouth Colony in Massachusetts in 1620.

Trump next addressed Biden's characterization of America.

"In recent years, we've often heard it said that America is merely an idea. But the cause of freedom did not simply appear as an intellectual invention of 1776. The American founding was the culmination of hundreds of years of thought, struggle, sweat, blood, and sacrifice on both sides of the Atlantic," the president said.

"Fate drew a long arc from the meadow at Runnymede to the streets of Philadelphia that ran through the lives of people born and bred on the British code that no man should be denied either justice or right," Trump added.

The meadow at Runnymede is where King John was forced to sign the Magna Carta in 1215, guaranteeing the basic rights of an Englishman like due process of law, limits on taxation, and no arbitrary imprisonment by the king. It laid the foundation for the eventual rise of Parliament as a check on the power of the monarch.

In his 1774 essay "Summary View of the Rights of British

America," Thomas Jefferson reminded King George III regarding the colonists' rights, "Our ancestors, before their emigration to America, were the free inhabitants of the British dominions in Europe, and possessed a right which nature has given to all men, of departing from the country in which chance, not choice, has placed them, of going in quest of new habitations, and of there establishing new societies, under such laws and regulations as to them shall seem most likely to promote public happiness."

In other words, Americans were entitled to all the rights of their British peers under law, including no taxation without representation, trial by jury of one's peers, and many others.

As I noted in my book, "We Hold These Truths," about the influence of the Declaration of Independence, the notoriety Jefferson gained from the essay helped him become one of Virginia's delegates to the Continental Congress and a member of the drafting committee of the Declaration.

In his address to a joint session of Congress on Tuesday, King Charles highlighted the British heritage in the American experiment in liberty.

"The Founding Fathers were bold and imaginative rebels with a cause: 250 years ago, or, as we say in the United Kingdom, just the other day, they declared independence by balancing contending forces and drawing strength in diversity. They united 13 disparate colonies to forge a nation on the revolutionary idea of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness," he said.

"They carried with them and carried forward the great inheritance of the British Enlightenment, as well as the ideals which had an even deeper history in English Common Law and Magna Carta. These roots run deep, and they are still vital," King Charles said.

So Trump is right: America is not some ethereal idea, but a

nation grounded in a deep commitment to the rule of law, based on the very best of English liberty.

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