

*Administration of Joseph R. Biden, Jr., 2024*

**Remarks on the United States Supreme Court Ruling on Presidential Immunity**  
*July 1, 2024*

*The President.* Good evening.

The Presidency is the most powerful office in the world. It's an office that not only tests your judgment, perhaps even more importantly it's an office that can test your character, because you not only face moments where you need the courage to exercise the full power of the Presidency, you also face moments where you need the wisdom to respect the limits of the power of the office of the Presidency.

This Nation was founded on the principle that there are no kings in America. Each—each of us is equal before the law. No one—no one—is above the law, not even the President of the United States.

With today's Supreme Court decision on Presidential immunity, that fundamentally changed. For all—for all—practical purposes, today's decision almost certainly means that there are virtually no limits on what a President can do.

This is a fundamentally new principle, and it's a dangerous precedent because the power of the office will no longer be constrained by the law, even including the Supreme Court of the United States. The only limits will be self-imposed by the President alone.

This decision today has continued the Court's attack in recent years on a wide range of long-established legal principles in our Nation, from gutting voting rights and civil rights to taking away a woman's right to choose to today's decision that undermines the rule of law of this Nation.

Nearly 4 years ago, my predecessor sent a violent mob to the U.S. Capitol to stop the peaceful transfer of power. We all saw it with our own eyes. We sat there and watched it happen that day. Attack on the police. The ransacking of the Capitol. A mob literally hunting down the House Speaker, Nancy Pelosi. Gallows erected to hang the Vice President, Mike Pence. I think it's fair to say it was one of the darkest days in the history of America.

Now the man who sent that mob to the U.S. Capitol is facing potential criminal conviction for what happened that day. And the American people deserve to have an answer in the courts before the upcoming election. The public has a right to know the answer about what happened on January 6 before they ask to vote again this year.

Now, because of today's decision, that is highly, highly unlikely. It's a terrible disservice to the people of this Nation.

So now—now the American people have to do what the Court should have been willing to do, but would not. The American people have to render a judgment about Donald Trump's behavior. The American people must decide whether Donald Trump's assault on our democracy on January 6 makes him unfit for public office in the highest office in the land. The American people must decide if Trump's embrace of violence to preserve his power is acceptable.

Perhaps most importantly, the American people must decide if they want to entrust the President—once again, the Presidency to Donald Trump, now knowing he'll be even more emboldened to do whatever he pleases whenever he wants to do it.

You know, at the outset of our Nation, it was the character of George Washington, our first President, that defined the Presidency. He believed power was limited, not absolute, and that power would always reside with the people—always.

Now, over 200 years later, with today's Supreme Court decision, once again it will depend on the character of the men and women who hold that Presidency that are going to define the limits of the power of the Presidency, because the law will no longer do it.

I know I will respect the limits of the Presidential power, as I have for 3½ years. But any President, including Donald Trump, will now be free to ignore the law.

I concur with Justice Sotomayor's dissent today. She—here's what she said. She said: "In every use of official power, the President is now a king above the law. With fear for our democracy, I dissent," end of quote.

So should the American people dissent. I dissent.

May God bless you all, and may God help preserve our democracy. Thank you. And may God protect our troops.

*Q.* Mr. President, Mr. President, will you drop out of the race?

*Q.* Mr. President, do you have any plans to reassure Democrats why you are the best Democrat to beat Trump?

*Q.* What makes you so confident you should be the President?

*Q.* What advice—[inaudible]?

NOTE: The President spoke at 7:45 p.m. in the Cross Hall at the White House. In his remarks, he referred to Rep. Nancy Pelosi. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on July 2.

*Categories:* Addresses and Remarks : U.S. Supreme Court ruling on Presidential immunity.

*Locations:* Washington, DC.

*Names:* Pelosi, Nancy; Pence, Michael R.; Trump, Donald J.

*Subjects:* 2021 civil unrest and violence at U.S. Capitol; 2024 Presidential election; Abortion; Constitutional roles and separation of powers; Presidential powers, Constitutional limits and constraints; U.S. Supreme Court ruling on Presidential immunity; Voting rights, protection efforts.

*DCPD Number:* DCPD202400563.