

*CNN News Central*

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3:38:35 p.m.

5 minutes and 47 seconds

JAKE TAPPER: All right. A rousing address — rousing response rather to the address by King Charles the III in a joint meeting. There he is, greeting he and his wife, the queen, greeting the chairman and members of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, as well as members of the U.S. Supreme court. There he is saying hello to former Justice Stephen Breyer. A very rousing speech. No boos, no boos, as opposed to — as opposed to other speeches we hear in that chamber sometime by Americans. Let us get some reaction. David Chalian, there were some items in that speech that I think it's fair to say were included that, you know, are I wouldn't call them zingers against President Trump, but points of disagreement.

DAVID CHALIAN: And did not hide from them at all. I mean, I think a speech that was putting democratic values, the rule of law, the power of alliances, even a specific on the support of Ukraine's defense, these — these stand in complete opposition. And in fact, some of them are the very things that Donald Trump sort of rails against when he's complaining about Europe or the U.K., specifically. Now, King Charles doesn't come in here itching for a fight on it. He comes in with his position to be above it a bit and in his you know, very British, stiff upper lip kind of way. It's not that he was trying to get in a fight with President Trump, but he couldn't have seized the opportunity more to really stand clear on the importance of these things with a value system underneath it that is in contrast to a lot of what Donald Trump has been presenting on the world stage as it comes to these alliances.

TAPPER: Jamie.

JAMIE GANGEL: Yeah. So, to your point about boos, I may have lost count, but I think six or seven standing ovations, including a very long one. It's been a long time since, I think, in that chamber we have seen this kind of — of enthusiasm. Just to add to what David said about something that, you know, President Trump doesn't like to talk about a lot. King Charles talked a lot about the environment and nature, and he said, "from the depths of the Atlantic" — so, he was talking about NATO, but he even worked in the words to "the disastrously melting ice caps of the Arctic." And he brought it back over and — and over again. The other thing that I would say is just on a lighter note, he was absolutely charming throughout the whole thing. He — he talked about his five times great grandfather, King George. He talked about —

TAPPER: The mad King.

GANGEL: — and —

TAPPER: Just to be precise, about which, which King we're talking about — this was talking about —

GANGEL: — and about he — he said, I'm not part of some rearguard action.

TAPPER: 250 years later.

GANGEL: — after — yes.

TAPPER: — after we beat the Brits. Yes. Making sure we don't think he's a sleeper cell.

GANGEL: Right.

TAPPER: Max, I also couldn't help but notice that in the wake of President Trump referring to the royal Navy as — as having just a bunch of toys, King Charles talked about the immense pride he feels for the Royal Navy.

MAX FOSTER: Yeah. Because he — he served in it. And I think David's read on. This is — is correct, obviously because it's his read. But I think it was what I want to say is it was intentional. This was quite pointed. If you dig into the text, it was very bold and it was very much from the king's position. And I think there were moments in it, he was caught out by the reaction sometimes with his jokes, but also speaking to his audience, really talking about how Magna Carta formed the basis of the Constitution, which says there should be checks and balances on the executive. That obviously went down very well in Congress, but also, talking about the importance of that U.K./U.S./Europe partnership, that pillar really, really matters more important than ever, he said. And he talked about 9/11, how Europe came to America's defense. And I think that was partly speaking to the British audience, because there was something President Trump said about British troops not coming forward during the Afghan fight, and that was really offensive to many Brits. And it's why many members of Parliament said Charles shouldn't have gone over to America in the first place. But I think really the headline for Charles at least, was friends show up for each other. They can disagree, but it's that line that they have to rededicate each other to each other. And he's speaking there about, yes, we've got some problems at the moment. Let's rededicate. And he's speaking to history, a shared history. I mean, going back 60 million years actually to the separation of the continent, so he's really digging down there, but he gave lots of reasons for those members of Congress to realize that this is a very deep relationship and it won't go away.

TAPPER: Yeah. And just to put a button on your note about what King Charles had to say about 9/11, the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of which we commemorate this year, is that he noted, President Trump is often talking about how NATO is not there for us. NATO was never there for us. NATO has never done anything for the United States. And King Charles said in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, when NATO invoked Article V for the first time. And the Article V, of course, an attack on one member of NATO is an attack on all members of NATO, not just the first time. The only time kind of a reminder there for anybody in the room or anybody watching who might have forgotten that NATO has been there for the United States.

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3:49:01 p.m.

5 minutes and 50 seconds

Here with me, CNN royal historian Kate Williams as we watch these images from moments ago. The King and the queen entering the chamber for this joint meeting of leaders of the U.S. federal government. Kate, what stood out to you from King Charles's speech?

KATE WILLIAMS: Jake, I think many commentators have been surprised by King Charles's speech because, for a monarch, this was an extremely political speech. We saw Charles encouraging President Trump to safeguard nature, also to defend Ukraine and its courageous people. He also praised, as you were saying, the Royal Navy, after the President has criticized the Royal Navy. I mean, really, we saw defense over and over again of many of the claims that Trump has made about British culture, British servicemen, and indeed about the world. And I think, you know, I don't know how well this is going to go down with President Trump, but certainly Charles, I think, felt very clearly here that it was his moment to talk, speak to his sincere feelings about peace and understanding. And I did notice this very large applause. I think the greatest applause was for the king's words about 9/11 and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary and the suffering, but also that moment when he said that executive power should be subject to checks and balances, which is the purpose, the reason of congress got a huge amount of applause. And I think certainly a lot of people are going to be quite surprised by this speech. And we know that what Charles says has been signed off by the prime minister, Keir Starmer. The prime minister is really struggling in this country in terms of, you know, defense — support in Parliament. I think this is going — going to do a lot to bolster Keir Starmer's support here in the U.K., and also that for the King.

TAPPER: Interesting stuff. Kate Williams, thank you so much. Manu Raju is inside the chamber. We don't have a camera on him. We can't have a camera on him, but he has called in and he is able to tell us what he witnessed. Manu, from the cheap seats out here in the real world, it sounded as though King Charles got a lot of bipartisan applause. Repeatedly and enthusiastically. Is that what you saw inside the chamber?

MANU RAJU: Yeah, actually, universally, Jake, there were bipartisan ovations for King Charles, which is really unusual, of course, in this bitterly divided Congress where we have seen presidential addresses in particular being — the response in the crowd being very partisan — partisan standing ovations, heckling on one side, the occasional member being escorted out. None of that happened here. Almost on every single time that the members applauded, both sides applauded, both sides got up and cheered. And even on issues that have been divisive with the on Capitol Hill as of late, like on Ukraine, an issue that has increasingly divided the two parties, particularly dividing the Republican Party with — among themselves — when King Charles talked about how the United States needs to show support for defending Ukraine, both sides got up and gave him a rousing standing ovation. That is much different than what the reality of the political situation on that issue here on the Hill. That was interesting. Also, when King Charles talked about support for our natural systems of nod to the — the importance of protecting the environment, that — that was an issue that I saw Republicans and Democrats get up and give the King a standing ovation for as well. So, really, on issue after issue, you're seeing so much of a very positive, warm reception. I — it's unlikely to last very long here, Jake, but just a sign of how he was received here in front of House members and senators just a few moments ago. Jake.

TAPPER: All right. Thank you so much. CNN's Nic Robertson joins us now from Islamabad, where Pakistani mediators have been working to help bring an end to the Iran war. Nic, how would you assess the speech that King Charles just gave as he tries to reaffirm the relationship that the U.K. has with the U.S.?

NIC ROBERTSON: Yeah, it was, as Kate was saying, very political speech for the King to give and getting to his core issues, be it on the climate, be it on democracy, but also this sort of sense of shared responsibility, the shared responsibility of what we do today affects our children in the future. And to that point, he was talking about the importance of supporting Ukraine, but also very much alluding to the war in the Middle East. And of course, that is talking about the war that the United States and Israel are having with Iran that's on a temporary pause and ceasefire. So, I'm not sure that that's going to resonate, particularly out here in this region, but it certainly is that message that is felt in this region that it's going to take all these countries working together with the United States, the Gulf countries as well, mediators like Pakistan, Iran, and any other country that can signal to it that it needs to find an off-ramp. So, I think the King's speech here, although not directed to this region at all, really highlights that concern in the U.K. and in Europe writ large, that this is a war that is happening, that was started by the United States, but is of a concern for everyone. And if allowed to unravel, then that will have an impact on generations to come. So, I think perhaps that's the way in this region to understand what the King said. But I was struck by just how pointed he was at times. Jake, taking that opportunity, the respect, and using it to bring his message, Jake.

TAPPER: Yeah, it was pointed at times.