

The 'Left's War on U.S. History': Biden Bows to 'the Woke Left', Disbands the 1776 Commission

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Immediately after taking power, President Joe Biden revoked a recent Trump administration report that aimed to promote "patriotic education" about American history.

In an executive order signed last Wednesday on his first day in office, Biden disbanded Donald Trump's presidential 1776 Commission and withdrew a report it had released two days earlier.

Trump established the group in September to rally support from conservative voters and as a response to The New York Times' "1619 Project," which has been slammed by several historians for its factual errors.

In several stories reporting on Biden's move, the mainstream media panned Trump's 1776 Commission and its report saying the 16-member panel, included no professional historians of the United States and basically whitewashed US history. But one of those members of the panel, writing for The Daily Signal, said the panel was made up of historians, lawyers, academics, scholars, authors, former elected officials, and past public servants.

Victor David Hanson, a classicist and historian at the Hoover Institution at Stanford University, wrote "there was almost immediate criticism from the left" about the commission's report.

Hanson noted that at any other time than the divisive present, the report would not have been seen as controversial.

"The report repeatedly focuses on both the ideals of the American founding and the centuries-long quest to live up to them. It notes the fragility of such a novel experiment in constitutional republicanism, democratic elections, and self-government—especially during late 18th-century era of war and factionalism," he wrote. "The report does not whitewash the continuance of many injustices after 1776 and 1787—in particular chattel slavery concentrated in the South, and voting reserved only for free males."

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Hanson also pointed out that the 1776 Commission actually explained why and how these wrongs conflicted with America's founding documents.

"Two of the most widely referenced Americans in the report are Frederick Douglass and Martin Luther King, Jr. Both argued, a century apart, for the moral singularity of the U.S. Constitution. Neither wished to replace the Founders' visions; both instead demanded that they be fully realized and enforced," he wrote.

The historian also noted that self-correction and moral evaluation are essential elements intended by America's founding fathers.

"But any fair critic can see that the report's unifying message is that we are a people blessed with a singular government and history, that self-critique and moral improvement are innate to the American founding and spirit, and that America never had to be perfect to be both good and far better than the alternatives," Hanson wrote.

Mike Gonzalez, a senior fellow at The Heritage Foundation and a member of the panel, also questioned the speed at which Biden took down the report and disbanded the commission on his first day in office.

Writing about the "Left's War on U.S. History" for The Daily Signal, he asked, "Is that really the priority? As one of the commissioners, I guess I'm flattered. But is the baying from the woke left so furious that dissolving a commission named after our nation's founding, and deleting a report calling for teaching objective history, makes the top of the list?"

"The symbolism alone should give pause. But maybe the symbolism is the thing, and our new president wants to demonstrate his bona fides to the creators of the 1619 Project and their hard-left allies," he said.

Gonzalez reported the commission's chairman Larry P. Arnn, president of Hillsdale College, issued a statement along with Vice-Chair Carol Swain and Executive Director Matthew Spalding that pointed out the report called for "a return to the unifying ideas stated in the Declaration of Independence. It quotes the greatest Americans, black and white, men and women, in devotion to these ideas. The Commission may be abolished, but these principles cannot be. We will all continue to work together to teach and to defend them."

"To twist history to fit a political project is to write lies, which is why so many historians have criticized the 1619 Project, whose agenda is to make our America an object of contempt," Gonzalez wrote. "The people who do this understand that Edmund Burke was ultimately right when he wrote, 'To make us love our country, our country ought to be lovely.' And they want to do the opposite."

As CBN News reported last October, The New York Times brushed aside claims by several historians that the 1619 Project has major factual errors, basically saying that American history is open to interpretation. After a barrage of criticism for its historical inaccuracy, references to 1619 as America's true founding have been quietly removed from the 1619 website.

A group of 21 scholars also called for the Pulitzer Prize Board to strip Nikole Hannah-Jones of her 2020 award for her essay on the 1619 Project, saying it is "disfigured by unfounded conjectures and patently false assertions."

On The Glenn Show podcast, Columbia University Prof. John McWhorter told Brown University Prof. Glenn Loury the 1619 Project "subverts the truth."

"Buffalo Schools is using this, and Buffalo is not the only place. There is of course a podcast series. This is being used by serious people as kind of indoctrination of especially young black minds to think that the whole story we tell about America and its founding is a lie," he said.

The 1619 Project asks students to find "...examples of hypocrisy in the founding of the United States... and about evidence that...this nation was founded not as a democracy but as a slaveocracy..."

Dr. Carol Swain, who grew up in the Jim Crow south in a shack without running water and went on to teach at Princeton and Vanderbilt, calls the 1619 Project agenda-driven and a false narrative.

"If the curriculum was balanced, it would have to tell the positive side of America," Swain said. "America has been a success story and it's because whites and blacks worked together. And so, as a descendant of slaves, I feel blessed to be an American. Slavery is what it was. It was not

unique to America. And what is true of America was that there were always whites who fought against the institution of slavery," Swain said.