

Newt Gingrich: President Trump Made a 'Titanic Shift in U.S. Foreign Policy'

Perhaps he's giving the compliant liberal mainstream media a little too much credit, but former Speaker of the House Newt Gingrich wrote in an op-ed for *The Washington Post* that the press has missed the boat on an important development.

"While the media focused on the ephemeral questions—whether the president would use campaign rhetoric in a diplomatic setting, or how the trip would affect the Obama legacy—they largely missed the real drama of the moment: a titanic shift in U.S. foreign policy occurring right before their eyes," he wrote. "Trump stood before an unprecedented gathering of leaders to do something far more significant than utter a single phrase or undermine his predecessor's record. He was there to rally the Muslim world, in his words, 'to meet history's great test'—defeating the forces of terrorism and extremism. He did so in a way that no American president ever had before.

"While extending a hand of friendship to Muslim nations, he also issued them a clear challenge: to take the lead in solving the crisis that has engulfed their region and spread across the planet. 'Drive out the terrorists and extremists,' he urged them, or consign your peoples to futures of misery and squalor.

"To find a comparably dramatic moment in the history of U.S. foreign policy, we have to look all the way back to 1982. That June, 35 years ago next month, President Ronald Reagan stood in the Royal Gallery at the Palace of Westminster in London and called on the West to rally in defense of freedom and against communist aggression."

Gingrich added that no American president has previously attempted “so clearly” to unite not just the Western world, but the nations of the Middle East and Africa, against the forces of terrorism. And, he noted, no president has ever issued such a direct challenge to those same nations to do more.

“[N]ever before has an American president so plainly put the ultimate responsibility for eradicating terrorism on the nations of the region,” he wrote. “In doing so, Trump’s speech implicitly repudiated the approaches of his two immediate predecessors and promised instead what he characterized as a ‘principled realism,’ based on a clear-eyed view of America’s interests, security and limits.

“That this decisive shift in U.S. foreign policy occurred on a foreign trip within the first four months of the administration is all the more impressive. Reagan didn’t take his first international trip until well into his second year. And unlike President Barack Obama’s early speech to the Muslim world in 2009, Trump backed up his words with action.”

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