

President Trump Gave a Great Speech But Something Was Missing

Last night, President Trump delivered what even liberal commentators had to admit was a great speech.

Not only did the president set forth in clear language the many accomplishments of his first 40 days in office, but perhaps even more importantly, he also set a new tone and new terms for the debate about his policies.

While Democrats are still “grieving” over the lost election and trying to make phony charges of Russian “hacking” into a special prosecutor-worthy scandal, President Trump boldly and eloquently called Americans to think about the future:

In nine years, the United States will celebrate the 250th anniversary of our founding—250 years since the day we declared our independence.

It will be one of the great milestones in the history of the world.

But what will America look like as we reach our 250th year? What kind of country will we leave for our children?

I will not allow the mistakes of recent decades past to define the course of our future.

Invoking the future and his eloquently phrased vision of it was one of the rhetorical devices President Ronald Reagan used in some of his greatest speeches, and as it worked for President Reagan, so it worked for President Trump.

The president was also extremely effective in justifying his policies on immigration, and especially on immigration from

the seven terrorist hotspots identified in his original executive order pausing immigration from Iraq, Syria, Iran, Libya, Somalia, Sudan and Yemen:

It is not compassionate, but reckless, to allow uncontrolled entry from places where proper vetting cannot occur. Those given the high honor of admission to the United States should support this country and love its people and its values.

We cannot allow a beachhead of terrorism to form inside America—we cannot allow our nation to become a sanctuary for extremists.

That is why my administration has been working on improved vetting procedures, and we will shortly take new steps to keep our nation safe—and to keep out those who would do us harm.

This was simple, direct language every American could understand—and could see in the stony silence and lack of applause from the Democrats where they stood on keeping America and Americans safe from radical Islamic terrorism.

Indeed, one of the most remarkable aspects of President Trump's speech, and one not discussed by most network commentators on either the right or the left, was the effective way the president constantly put the Democrats on the defensive by gesturing toward them and looking at them as he delivered his calls for unity and joint action to solve the nation's problems and put Americans back to work.

The one commentator who did take notice of the Democrats' non-verbal communication was Fox Business' Lou Dobbs, who called the minority party's actions "churlish," a slightly antiquated term that was none the less right on target.

As one might expect, the president's remarks were long on listing his accomplishments and campaign promises fulfilled in

his first 40 days in office—and he was justified in taking credit for a long list of actions he undertook through executive orders:

- Moving the Dakota Access and Keystone pipelines forward.
- Setting in motion efforts to curb violent crime.
- Enforcing our immigration laws.
- Setting in motion a real plan to defeat ISIS.
- Withdrawing from the job-killing Trans Pacific Partnership.
- Placing a hiring freeze on non-military and non-essential federal workers.
- And many more bold actions and initiatives.

However, there was one notable campaign promise that remains not just unfulfilled, but entirely unaddressed in President Trump's first month in office—and that is the matter of rolling back Obama era encroachments on religious liberty.

During the campaign, then-candidate Donald Trump pledged that his administration would “do everything in its power to defend and protect religious liberty.”

A draft version of an executive order on religious liberty was leaked in late January called “Establishing a Government-Wide Initiative to Respect Religious Freedom.” When it failed to appear on the President's desk, rumors were circulating that a scaled-back version might be in the works, but there has been no word about it since.

Repealing Obama-era erosion of religious liberty and implementing strong protections for religious freedom across the federal government in many of the areas where it was eroded by Obama, such as health coverage, adoption, accreditation, tax exemption and government grants and contracts was the one glaring omission in President Trump's long list of early accomplishments.

However, that omission can be easily corrected in the near

future, and should not discourage conservatives because, as the President said: The time for small thinking is over. The time for trivial fights is behind us. {eo}

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