



# Trump's foreign policy speech: The devil's in the details

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In a [foreign policy speech](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XW8RqLN3Qao) (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XW8RqLN3Qao>) in Washington, DC, today, Republican presidential candidate Donald J. Trump spent time on the threat from radical Islam.

Trump made five key points on the issue. Though foreign policy experts and those inside the Beltway likely will scoff at Trump's address and its lack of specific policy details, a majority of Americans would agree with the sentiment in each of these items and much more of what he said in his speech beyond the issue of terrorism.



([http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/RTX2BXD6\\_trump\\_mayflower-e1461784391554.jpg](http://www.aei.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/RTX2BXD6_trump_mayflower-e1461784391554.jpg))

Donald Trump delivers a foreign policy speech at the Mayflower Hotel in Washington, DC, April 27, 2016. REUTERS/Jim Bourg.

First, he argued for the policy of containment. Presumably, that policy means keeping ISIS and other terrorist groups contained in their bases of operation. This isn't much different from the policy practiced by the Obama administration and our allies.

Next, Trump noted that the fight with radical Islam is a philosophical one. He stated that our Muslim allies in the Middle East will be part of the solution to eradicating radical Islam, as they also are at risk from terrorist attacks. Trump pointed out that those allies, however, need to understand that they must show appreciation of our efforts, which may allude to the [undisclosed 28-pages from the 9/11 report](http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/secret-28-pages-9-11-report-under-new-scrutiny-n556831) (<http://www.nbcnews.com/news/us-news/secret-28-pages-9-11-report-under-new-scrutiny-n556831>) that allegedly show some level of financial support for the 9/11 attackers from Saudi Arabia.

In terms of protecting the homeland, Trump questioned the Obama administration's refugee and visa policies that allow violent extremists into our country. Trump cited the San Bernardino terrorist attack in which, Tashfeen Malik, entered [America despite social media postings indicating adherence](http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/12/19/congressman-visa-review-san-bernardino-shooter-sloppily-approved/77630700/) (<http://www.usatoday.com/story/news/nation/2015/12/19/congressman-visa-review-san-bernardino-shooter-sloppily-approved/77630700/>) to jihad. Trump reiterated his proposal to "pause" Muslim immigration so we can reassess our policies and ensure that terrorists can't enter America.

Then, echoing [President Ronald Reagan's statement](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=waLJii_RrXs) ([https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=waLJii\\_RrXs](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=waLJii_RrXs)) to Mu'ammar Qadhafi in 1986 that Qadhafi had counted on America to be passive to his attacks on Americans but had counted wrong, Trump warned ISIS that its "days are numbered" and that he would end their existence "very quickly" upon becoming president.

Finally, Trump argued that America's foreign policy must contain a level of unpredictability to keep our enemies off balance, a suggestion that other national security leaders have put forth as well.

These five points form the broad contours of a Trumpian foreign policy as it relates to terrorists, but we still currently lack the specifics on exactly what a Trump administration plans to do to execute on these items. Whether you are a fan or critic of Trump, as is typically the case with his policy pronouncements, the devil is in the details, which we won't see unless he wins.

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