

Hillary Clinton on National Security Issues

Hillary on Terrorism Policy	150
Called war on terror “Bush’s war” but has played active role	
Hillary on Torture	152
Torture cannot be American policy, period	
Hillary on ISIL (Islamic State)	154
Not helping Free Syrian Army left vacuum for ISIS to fill	
Hillary on September 11 th	156
Called for wrath on those who attacked America on 9/11	
Hillary on Mideast Policy	158
Arab Spring: Egyptian uprising had destabilizing impact	
Hillary on Libya Policy	160
Overthrowing Gadhafi in Libya was successful, just slow	
Hillary on Benghazi	162
Benghazi: Figure out what happened to prevent repeating	
Hillary on Iranian Sanctions	164
Political restraint against Iran’s Ahmadinejad was a mistake	
Hillary on Iraq War	166
I got it wrong on 2002 Iraq War vote	
Hillary on Israel/Palestine	168
We are invested in Israel: negotiate a ceasefire in Gaza	
Hillary on Afghanistan War	170
Clinton-Gates combo won push for Afghan surge	
Hillary on Defense Spending	172
Our troops are stretched; so increase size of military	
Hillary on Veterans Policy	174
Fight the idea of privatizing the V.A.	
Hillary on Korea Policy	176
Get China involved with North Korea diplomacy	
Hillary on Russia Policy	178
Take a harder line with Russia’s Putin	

Donald Trump on National Security Issues

Trump on Terrorism Policy	151
Surveil mosques but don't close mosques	
Trump on Torture	153
Bring back waterboarding and a hell of a lot worse	
Trump on ISIL (Islamic State)	155
Get rid of ISIS, quickly: dry up their oil & their money	
Trump on September 11 th	157
New Jersey Muslims celebrated after 9/11	
Trump on Mideast Policy	159
We've spent \$5T in the Mideast and gotten nothing	
Trump on Libya Policy.....	161
We would be better off if Gadhafi were in charge right now	
Trump on Benghazi	163
Benghazi was a disaster; the Mideast is a mess	
Trump on Iranian Sanctions.....	165
Disgraceful deal gives Iran a lot & gets nothing for us	
Trump on Iraq War	167
I'm pro-military but I opposed invading Iraq in 2003	
Trump on Israel/Palestine	169
Support Israel, our unsinkable Mideast aircraft carrier	
Trump on Afghanistan War	171
Blunder to announce withdrawal timetable from Afghanistan	
Trump on Defense Spending	173
3% of GNP for military is too low	
Trump on Veterans Policy	175
Fix veteran's hospitals, and pay private doctors for them	
Trump on Korea Policy	177
China should make Kim Jong Un disappear	
Trump on Russia Policy	179
Let Russia bash ISIS; let Germany defend Ukraine	

Hillary Clinton on Terrorism Policy

Called war on terror “Bush’s war” but has played active role

[After 9/11], on the campaign trail, and especially in television debates, Clinton is at pains to frame the so-called war on terror as “Bush’s war,” but she’s had an active part in it. It isn’t as if her 9/11 speech was an exception. Clinton supported Bush’s invasion and bombardment of Afghanistan. She voted for the USA PATRIOT Act, which gave the government new unconstitutional tools of search and seizure even as federal agents were sweeping thousands of innocent civilians off the streets of US cities, notably in New York.

Source: The Contenders, by Laura Flanders, p. 19, Nov. 11, 2007

Consistently supported tough anti-terrorism measures

The only exception to Hillary’s party-line voting were her support for the Iraq War and her votes for appropriations to fund it, her uniform support for tough anti-terrorism measures, and—in an attempt to curry favor with the media—her opposition to nullification of the FCC rules making media consolidation easier.

Hillary has amassed a good legislative record on fighting terrorism. She has pushed hard for threat assessments on bioterrorism, to protect the food supply, promote benefits to children of terror victims, increase homeland security grants, investigate securing radioactive materials, require annual inspections of high-risk sites, identify potential terror sites, encourage bomb-scanning technology, and improve protection at our embassies. But none of these bills has passed.

[On spending bills], Hillary has proposed additional spending to improve military housing, keep open facilities on closed defense bases, upgrade armed forces medical readiness, and increase aid to blind veterans.

Source: Condi vs. Hillary, by Dick Morris, p. 86-88, Oct. 11, 2005

Donald Trump on Terrorism Policy

Surveil mosques but don't close mosques

Q: You've said that we have to consider closing mosques. What would be your criteria for closing a mosque? And how does that square with the First Amendment? You've said your top priority would be to preserve and protect our religious liberties. Is that only for Christians?

TRUMP: Well, I don't want to close mosques; I want mosques surveilled. And all I would do, certainly there are certain hot spots and everybody knows they're hot spots. Good material was coming out of those mosques. We were learning a lot. And they were stopping problems and potential problems by learning what was happening. I don't want to close up mosques but things have to happen where, you have got to use strong measures or you're going to see buildings coming down all over New York City and elsewhere.

Source: ABC This Week interview, Nov. 22, 2015

Defeat ISIS and stop Islamic terrorists

Businessman and celebrity Donald Trump got a standing ovation from most of the crowd at the Iowa Freedom Summit as he blasted rank-and-file Republican politicians and described President Barack Obama as either grossly incompetent or having ulterior motives in leading the country: "I know what needs to be done to make America great again. We can make this country great again. The potential is enormous and I am seriously thinking of running for president," Trump remarked as the crowd cheered.

Trump said the country is in trouble and if he wins the presidency he would defeat ISIS and stop Islamic terrorists. He said he would reduce the federal budget deficit and build a fence on the nation's southern border to stop illegal immigration, adding, "I mean seriously securing" the border.

Source: Des Moines Register on Iowa Freedom Summit, Jan. 24, 2015

Hillary Clinton on Torture

Torture cannot be American policy, period

Q: Let's say we were to capture the #3 man in Al Qaida, and we know there's a bomb about to go off, and we have 3 days, and we know this guy knows where it is. Should there be a presidential exception to allow torture in that kind of situation?

A: As a matter of policy it cannot be American policy, period. There is very little evidence that it works. Now, there are a lot of other things that we need to be doing that I wish we were: better intelligence; working to have more allies. But these hypotheticals are very dangerous because they open a great big hole in what should be an attitude that our country and our president takes toward the appropriate treatment of everyone. And I think it's dangerous to go down this path.

Q: The guest who laid out this scenario for me with that proposed solution was William Jefferson Clinton last year. So he disagrees with you.

A: Well, he's not standing here right now.

Q: So there is a disagreement?

A: Well, I'll talk to him later.

Source: Democratic primary debate at Dartmouth College, Sept. 6, 2007

FactCheck: Yes, in 2006 condoned exceptions on torture

Barack Obama accused Clinton of flip-flops on torture: Obama is right. In an interview with the New York Daily News in October 2006, Clinton condoned torture, saying, "In the event we were ever confronted with having to interrogate a detainee with knowledge of an imminent threat to millions of Americans, then the decision to depart from standard international practices must be made by the President. That very, very narrow exception within very, very limited circumstances is better than blasting a big hole in our entire law."

But in a debate in New Hampshire last month, Sen. Clinton shifted her position, when offered a similar ticking time bomb case, responding, "As a matter of policy, torture cannot be American policy, period." To our ears, that sounds like a reversal.

Source: FactCheck on debate at Drexel University, Oct. 30, 2007

Donald Trump on Torture

Bring back waterboarding and a hell of a lot worse

Q: Sen. Cruz, you have said, “torture is wrong, unambiguously, period. Civilized nations do not engage in torture.” Is waterboarding torture?

CRUZ: Well, under the definition of torture, no, it’s not.

Q: As president, would you bring it back?

CRUZ: I would not bring it back in any sort of widespread use.

Q: Mr. Trump, you said not only does torture work, but that you’d bring it back.

TRUMP: In the Middle East, we have people chopping the heads off Christians. We have things that we have never seen before. Not since medieval times have people seen what’s going on. I would bring back waterboarding and I’d bring back a hell of a lot worse than waterboarding.

Q: Gov. Bush, Congress has passed laws banning the use of waterboarding by the military and the CIA. Would you want Congress to change that if you’re elected president?

BUSH: No, I wouldn’t. I think where we stand is the appropriate place. But what we need to do is to make sure that we expand our intelligence capabilities.

Source: ABC Republican debate on eve of N.H. primary, Feb. 6, 2016

NOTES: *The US Constitution forbids torture, and the candidates argue about whether waterboarding constitutes torture, and whether torture is allowed in Guantanamo or other prisons outside the US. **Waterboarding** simulates drowning, and has been used since the Spanish Inquisition in the 15th century as a form of coercing prisoner testimony. A November 2007 investigation led to an official admission that the US had indeed used the method.*

Hillary Clinton on ISIL (Islamic State)

Not helping Free Syrian Army left vacuum for ISIS to fill

Q: You go out of your way in *Hard Choices* to praise the U.S. ambassador to Syria who quit in protest of the inadequacies of Obama administration policy. Are we at fault for not doing enough to build up a credible Syrian opposition when we could have?

A: I'm the one who convinced the administration to send an ambassador to Syria; and this is why I called the chapter on Syria "A Wicked Problem." I can't sit here today and say that if we had done what the Ambassador and I recommended, that we'd be in a demonstrably different place.

Q: That's the president's argument, that we wouldn't be in a different place.

A: Well, if we were to carefully vet, train, and equip early on a core group of the developing Free Syrian Army, we would, number one, have some better insight into what was going on on the ground. Two, we would have been helped in standing up a credible political opposition.

Q: Do you think we'd be where we are with ISIS right now if the U.S. had done more three years ago to build up a moderate Syrian opposition?

A: Well, I don't know the answer to that. I know that the failure to help build up a credible fighting force of the people who were the originators of the protests against Assad—there were Islamists, there were secularists, there was everything in the middle—the failure to do that left a big vacuum, which the jihadists have now filled.

Source: Jeffrey Goldberg in The Atlantic, Aug. 10, 2014

NOTES: *ISIS ("Islamic State in Iraq and Syria," next page) began taking territory from the Iraqi government control in early 2014. The United States sent 300 "advisers" to help the Iraqi army fight ISIS, in June 2014, after ISIS had captured substantial territory.*

ISIS is more accurately known as ISIL, "Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant"; the Levant is the Eastern Mediterranean area that includes Syria, Lebanon, Israel, and Palestine. ISIL had been fighting in Syria alongside Al-Qaeda, but broke ties with Al-Qaeda in Iraq.

Donald Trump on ISIL (Islamic State)

Get rid of ISIS, quickly: dry up their oil & their money

Q: You've said, "we've got to get rid of ISIS, quickly." How?

TRUMP: Well, four years ago, I said, bomb the oil and take the oil. And if we did that, they wouldn't have the wealth they have right now. Now, we're doing little pinpricks. If somebody's driving a truck, they give notice to the person driving the truck, "we're going to bomb." If they don't get out of the truck, the truck sails away with the oil. "We don't want to bomb the oil, because we don't want to pollute the atmosphere." Can you imagine General Douglas MacArthur or General Patton saying we can't bomb because we're gonna hurt the atmosphere? You have to knock the hell out of the oil. And you have also back channels of banking. You have people that you think are our great allies in the Middle East, that are paying tremendous amounts of money to ISIS. So we have to stop those circuits. So between the oil and the banking, you will dry them up. But it should have been done four years ago, not now.

Q: And what would you do in those cities, where there are people who we are trying to help, who ISIS is essentially holding hostage?

TRUMP: When you take away their wealth, they'll last for about a year, based on all of the wealth they've accumulated. But when you stop the banking channels and when you take the oil, they're going to become a very weakened power, quickly.

Source: ABC Republican debate on eve of N.H. primary, Feb. 6, 2016

NOTES: *The groups fighting in the Syrian civil war can be entirely divided along Shia-Sunni lines: Assad is supported by Iran (a Shi'ite country), and by Hezbollah (a Shi'ite terrorist group); the Syrian rebels are supported by the Saudi Arabia and the Emirates (Sunni countries), and by Al-Qaeda, a Sunni terrorist group. That list of groups is confusing, and President Obama had trouble figuring out in June 2013 which groups to help and which to attack. Or more specifically, how to explain to Americans that we should help some groups and attack others. Obama did try to enforce the "red line," by planning aid to some groups and attacks on others, but the American public soundly rejected any support for Obama's policy, and the policy was abandoned.*