

Was Trump Reasonable on Immigration?

Unsurprisingly, Donald Trump's speech on Monday following the Orlando massacre has made some waves. Whether or not you agree with Trump, some of his points on immigration are worth pondering.

The entire [transcript of his speech](#) is available from *Politico*. When Trump describes what he wants to do if he is elected, he stated:

The immigration laws of the United States give the President the power to suspend entry into the country of any class of persons that the President deems detrimental to the interests or security of the United States, as he deems appropriate.

I will use this power to protect the American people. When I am elected, I will suspend immigration from areas of the world when there is a proven history of terrorism against the United States, Europe or our allies, until we understand how to end these threats.

After a full, impartial and long overdue security assessment, we will develop a responsible immigration policy that serves the interests and values of America.

We cannot continue to allow thousands upon thousands of people to pour into our country, many of whom have the same thought process as this savage killer.

Many of the principles of Radical Islam are incompatible with Western values and institutions.

Perhaps the most salient point that raises reasonable questions is the following:

After a full, impartial and long overdue security assessment, we will develop a responsible immigration policy that serves the interests and values of America.

In the debates about immigration we rarely see any discussion about the purpose of immigration or what benefits America. Is it reasonable to have that discussion? It seems so.

Throughout this country's history, we have limited immigration in some fashion. In 1889, President Benjamin Harrison stated,

The privileges of American citizenship are so great and its duties so grave that we may well insist upon a good knowledge of every person applying for citizenship and a good knowledge by him of our institutions. We should not cease to be hospitable to immigration, but we should cease to be careless as to the character of it. There are men of all races, even the best, whose coming is necessarily a burden upon our public revenues or a threat to social order. These should be identified and excluded.

As America grew and spread across the continent, settling enormous tracts of land – yes, land that was once under the control of Native Americans – immigration was a benefit. But how much of a benefit is it today? Out of goodwill or altruism, do we simply take all those who desire to come here? Or do we consider what's in the best interest of Americans? And if the latter, what is in our best interest?