



Republican presidential candidate Donald Trump speaks at a campaign rally in Manchester, N.H., on Thursday. AP Photo/Gerald Herbert

Deportations just latest topic where Trump has wavered

WASHINGTON (AP) — As he powered through his rivals in the Republican primary, Donald Trump sold himself as the “tell-it-like-it-is” candidate, a brash truth-teller whose policy pronouncements wouldn’t be swayed by the polls.

“I’ve never wanted to learn the language of the insiders and I’ve never been politically correct,” he said recently. “But one thing I can promise you this: I will always tell you the truth.”

Yet again and again, Trump’s positions have swayed, as he has reversed his stances in the face of criticism and in front of different audiences. His rival, Hillary Clinton, has also wavered over the course of her career, including reversing her support for the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement.

But Trump’s pivots have often induced whiplash, with the nominee sometimes offering contradictory views within hours. On immigration, he seems to offer conflicting stances every day.

“The Trump campaign has been premised on a big lie,” charged Tim Miller, an anti-Trump Republican strategist. “And the big lie is that he says unpopular truths and tells people what he really thinks, when the truth is he’s just an extreme version of a pandering politician. He tells people what he thinks they want to hear.”

Here are some of the topics on which Trump has wavered:

MASS DEPORTATIONS

Trump had vowed during the GOP primary to deport all of the estimated 11 million people living in the country illegally with the help of a “deportation force.”

But in recent days, he has suggested he might be “softening.”

At a Fox town hall that aired Wednesday night, Trump suggested he might be open to allowing at least some immigrants in the country illegally to stay, as long as they pay taxes.

But by Thursday, he was ruling out any kind of legal status — “unless they leave the country and come back,” he told CNN.

And his new campaign manager, Kellyanne Conway, now describes his position on the issue as: “To be determined.”

MUSLIM BAN

In December, Trump called for “a total and complete shutdown of Muslims entering the United States until our country’s representatives can figure out what is going on.” It was a stunning proposal from a presidential candidate: a religion-based prohibition criticized as both unfeasible and un-American.

But following the Orlando night club shooting in June, Trump appeared to introduce a new standard: “When I am elected,

I will suspend immigration from areas of the world where there is a proven history of terrorism against the United States, Europe or our allies, until we fully understand how to end these threats,” he said.

Trump’s aides suggested the new standard has replaced the old. But Trump himself described it as an “expansion.”

“People were so upset when I used the word Muslim. ‘Oh, you can’t use the word Muslim,’” he told NBC last month.

The original position remains posted on his campaign website.

MINIMUM WAGE

Trump has taken numerous positions when it comes to the minimum wage. In a November GOP debate, Trump said wages were “too high” and warned that raising them higher would put the U.S. at a competitive disadvantage. “I hate to say it, but we have to leave it the way it is,” he said.

By May, Trump was suggesting that he might be open to a higher minimum wage, telling CNN that he’s “very different from most Republicans.”

“I mean you have to have something that you can live on,” he said.

By July, Trump had fully embraced the idea, telling Fox News Channel that he would support raising the federal minimum wage to \$10 an hour. Still, he stressed that he would like the decision to remain with the states.

And Clinton has always supported efforts to boost the minimum wage, but has shifted over time on what that wage level should be.

ABORTION

Trump was speaking at a town hall taping when he was asked whether women should be punished for having an abortion if the procedure were once again made illegal.

“There has to be some form of punishment,” Trump said.

Before the show had even aired, Trump’s campaign was pushing back with its first clarification.

“This issue is unclear and should be put back into the states for determination. Like Ronald Reagan, I am pro-life with exceptions, which I have outlined numerous times,” Trump said in a statement.

About an hour later, the campaign offered a new statement, saying the doctor, not the patient should be punished, putting him in line with anti-abortion activists.

“If Congress were to pass legislation making abortion illegal and the federal courts upheld this legislation, or any state were permitted to ban abortion under state and federal law, the doctor or any other person performing this illegal act upon a woman would be held legally responsible, not the woman,” it read.

BRIEFLY

U.S., Russia fall short on deal to restore Syria truce

GENEVA (AP) — The United States and Russia said Friday they had resolved a number of issues standing in the way of restoring a nationwide truce to Syria and opening up aid deliveries, but were unable once again to forge a comprehensive agreement on stepping up cooperation to end the brutal war that has killed hundreds of thousands.

After meeting off-and-on for nearly 10 hours in Geneva on Friday, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov could point to only incremental progress in filling in details of a broad understanding to boost joint efforts that was reached last month in Moscow.

Their failure to reach an overall deal highlighted the increasingly complex situation on the ground in Syria — including new Russian-backed Syrian government attacks on opposition forces, the intermingling of some of those opposition forces with an al-Qaida affiliate not covered by the truce and the surrender of a rebel-held suburb of Damascus — as

well as deep divisions and mistrust dividing Washington and Moscow.

The complexities have also grown with the increasing internationalization of what has largely become a proxy war between regional and world powers, highlighted by a move by Turkish troops across the Syrian border against Islamic State fighters this week.

Kerry said he and Lavrov had agreed on the “vast majority” of technical discussions on steps to reinstate a cease-fire and improve humanitarian access.

But critical sticking points remain unresolved and experts will remain in Geneva with an eye toward finalizing those in the coming days, he said.

“We are close,” Kerry said. “But we are not going to rush to an agreement until it satisfies fully the needs of the Syrian people.”

Lavrov echoed that, saying “we still need to finalize a few issues” and pointed to the need to separate fighters from the al-Nusra Front, which has ties to al-Qaida, from U.S.-backed fighters who hold parts of northwest Syria.

“We have continued our efforts to reduce the areas where we lack understanding and trust, which is an

achievement,” Lavrov said. “The mutual trust is growing with every meeting.”

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Clinton calendars won’t be released until after election

WASHINGTON (AP) — Seven months after a federal judge ordered the State Department to begin releasing monthly batches of the detailed daily schedules showing meetings by Hillary Clinton during her time as secretary of state, the government told The Associated Press it won’t finish the job before Election Day.

The department has so far released about half of the schedules. Its lawyers said in a phone conference with the AP’s lawyers that the department now expects to release the last of the detailed schedules around Dec. 30, weeks before the next president is inaugurated.

The AP’s lawyers late Friday formally asked the State Department to hasten that effort so that the department could provide all Clinton’s minute-by-minute schedules by Oct. 15. The agency did not immediately respond.

The schedules drew new attention this week after the AP analyzed the ones released so far. The news agency found that more than half the people outside the government who met or spoke by telephone with Clinton while she was secretary of state had given money — either personally or through companies or groups — to the Clinton Foundation. The AP’s analysis focused on people with private interests and excluded her meetings or calls with U.S. federal employees or foreign government representatives.

The AP’s reporting was based on official calendars covering Clinton’s entire term plus the more-detailed daily schedules covering roughly half her time as secretary of state. The AP first asked for Clinton’s calendars in 2010 and again in 2013. It then sued the State Department to obtain the schedules, and the department so far has provided about half of them under court order.

Clinton has said the AP’s analysis was flawed because it did not account fully for all meetings and phone calls during her entire term as secretary. She also said the analysis should have included meetings with federal employees and foreign diplomats. The AP said it focused on her meetings with outsiders because those were more discretionary, as Clinton would normally meet with federal and foreign officials as part of her job. Clinton said she met with people outside government regardless of whether they gave money or charitable commitments to her family’s charity.

“These are people I would be proud to meet with, as any secretary of state would have been proud to meet with, to hear about their work and their insights,” Clinton said this week on CNN.

With the foundation drawing continued attention, Clinton promised Friday to put

“This is a project where the State Department may be running out the clock.”

— Richard Leon, U.S. District Judge

in place additional safeguards to prevent conflicts of interest with the charity should she win the White House.

The foundation issue, along with continued focus on her use of a private email server, has dogged Clinton politically throughout the week, drawing strong criticism from opponent Donald Trump.

Former President Bill Clinton said last week that if she is elected president, the foundation will no longer accept foreign or corporate donations.

The State Department is now estimating there are about 2,700 pages of schedules left. Under its process, it is reviewing and censoring them page-by-page to remove personal details such as private phone numbers or email addresses. In some cases it has censored names of people who met with Clinton or the subjects they discussed.

In court, the AP in December had asked U.S. District Judge Richard Leon to order the State Department to produce specific percentages of the remaining schedules every 30 days under a formula so that all would be released before the presidential primary elections were complete.

Instead, because the State Department said it did not know how many pages were left, Leon ordered it in January to release at least 600 pages of schedules every 30 days. Each 600-page group covers about three months of Clinton’s tenure.

Under the present rate, a government attorney working on behalf of the State Department notified the AP’s lawyers, it will take about four and one-half months — or until Dec. 30 — to release all the remaining schedules through the end of Clinton’s term, in February 2013. The government’s notice late Thursday was the first time the State Department has provided the AP with a measure of how many pages were remaining and when it expected to complete the job.

It was unclear whether the judge will reconsider his earlier decision and order faster results. In the AP’s lawsuit over other Clinton-related files, Leon has said it would be “ridiculous” to allow the State Department to delay until even weeks before the election. He also cited “mounting frustration that this is a project where the State Department may be running out the clock.”

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