

Franklin Graham Has a Stern Message for 'War Hawk' Senator

U.S. Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.) is proudly one of the Senate's "War Hawks," and he let his military interventionist flag fly Sunday during an interview with NBC's "Meet the Press."

In that interview, he said:

I think ISIS should be Germany and Assad should be Japan, like World War II analogies here. Accelerate the demise of ISIL, they're a direct threat to the homeland, Assad's not. But I've never been more encouraged by the Trump administration than I am today.

Ambassador Haley just said on your program, "You'll never end the war with Assad in power." So that means regime change is now the policy of the Trump administration. That's at least what I've heard. So you need more American troops to accelerate the demise of ISIL. We're relying too much on the Kurds. More American forces, (5,000) or 6,000, would attract more regional fighters to destroy ISIL.

You need a safe haven quickly so people can regroup inside of Syria. Then you train the opposition to go after Assad. That's how he's taken out by his own people, with our efforts. And you tell the Russians, 'If you continue to bomb the people we train, we'll shoot you down' ...

[President Donald Trump] already has that authority. You've got some good people on this program. I differ with them in this regard. I think the president has authorization to use force. Assad signed the chemical weapons treaty ban. There's an agreement with him not to use chemical weapons.

What have we learned? That war criminals don't police each other very well. The Putin regime is a bunch of war criminals. And we expected them to police Assad. That didn't work out very well. So all these resolutions are limitations on using force, not authorizations to use force. So I don't intend to vote for anything that limits our ability to win the war against ISIL or replace Assad ...

We've already got troops on the ground. I don't see anybody saying, "Cut off funding." If you don't like the thousand American troops that are helping to destroy ISIL, cut off funding. Be consistent here. I want more American troops, () or 6,000, like we have in Iraq, to help destroy ISIL. That means it will accelerate the demise of ISIL.

I want to train opposition forces to take Assad down. He's a threat to the United States because he's a proxy of Iran. He used chemical weapons. He violated a treaty that he signed. I think it's up to us to enforce that treaty. We're on sound legal footing here. But our strategy is not yet developed. What comes next? I'm glad Trump did this. He is no longer Obama in the eyes of our enemies. But he needs to do more to close the deal. There's a new sheriff in town.

At times, during the interview, *Meet the Press* host Chuck Todd was visibly disturbed by what he was hearing from the senator. But he wasn't alone. The Rev. Franklin Graham didn't like what he was hearing, either, and he made that much abundantly clear Tuesday with the following commentary:

Senator Lindsey Graham said on *Meet the Press* Sunday that the U.S. military should send thousands more ground troops into Syria to fight ISIS. I strongly disagree, Senator Graham.

Why would we want to send more of our soldiers into Syria when there are national groups like the Kurds who are willing to take up the fight? They want to defeat ISIS; they

just need our support with more weapons.

The only reason we haven't armed groups like this already is because Turkey objects. And it's time we realize Turkey is not our nation's ally anymore. Pray for the people of Syria—and pray for our nation as these life-and-death decisions are made. {eoa}