

White House: 'We're in a Narrative Battle' With ISIS

Appearing on MSNBC's *Morning Joe* program Monday morning, White House Press Secretary Josh Earnest created a disturbing description of the United States' ongoing battle with ISIS.

In some ways, he said, it's "just a war of narratives."

"We know that a lot of this radical ideology that [ISIS] is trying to propagate is being spread online," he added. "And so we want to make sure that we're getting out our counter-narrative against [ISIS], and we're having some progress, we're making some progress."

The comments are disturbing when one considers there are still hundreds of American soldiers in harm's way in Iraq and Syria, directly confronting ISIS on the battlefield. According to the Pentagon's "force management level" statements in June, there are roughly 4,100 American service members in Iraq and another 300 in Syria.

However, temporarily deployed soldiers aren't counted in those numbers. Some military analysts suggest there could be as many as 10,000 Americans directly engaging ISIS in Iraq and Syria at this time.

It's doubtful any of them consider the war they're waging is "just a war of narratives."

Earnest also blamed Republican presidential nominee Donald Trump and other conservatives for advancing a "rhetoric that all Muslims are potential terrorists." He said that furthers ISIS's message that the U.S. is at war with Islam.

"We cannot allow that kind of rhetoric to be advanced," he said.