

Bush calls for U.S. ground forces to fight Islamic State

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Bush, who used to be governor of Florida, did not say how many more USA troops would be needed; he said he would defer to military commanders for precise numbers.

The comments are the first time Bush has called explicitly for a ground war against ISIS - he'd previously focused on ramping up airstrikes against the terrorist group.

"Their aim is our total destruction". This is an organized effort to destroy Western Civilization and we must defeat it. This can be a threat to Western civilization, a threat to our own country.

But the USA "should not delay in leading a global coalition to take out ISIS with overwhelming force", he said, using an acronym for Islamic State.

Bush's belief is that voters eventually will come around to a serious, policy-minded candidate like him but with the Iowa caucuses to kick off the 2016 election season on February 1, his plan has not helped him in polls.

"The USA should not be the world's policemen, but we should be the leader of the free world because, but for us, who?"

Bush's hawkish rhetoric about ISIS garnered him thunderous applause Tuesday night at a town hall in Conway, a small city not far from the Grand Strand coast.

Two Republican senators running for president, Sens.

Speaking in a state with a heavy military presence, Bush chastised lawmakers on Capitol Hill for the "irrational" military spending cuts imposed by sequestration and vowed to reinvigorate the US military.

Bush said he would increase the size of the Army by 40,000 active-duty soldiers and increase the size of the Marine Corps by 4,000. He later said he would back sending 10,000 troops to the region but did not give details about their role.

Bush suggested the military needs more funding and a more modernized strategy.

The speech came as European nations hunted for conspirators in the attack and amid a fierce political debate within the USA over whether to limit or halt the resettlement of refugees surging fleeing war-ravaged Syria.

Retired neurosurgeon Ben Carson, another Republican contender, said the right number of troops was "whatever the Pentagon says they need to accomplish that mission".

He was also asked how he would distinguish between Muslims and Christians.

"My only interest is to end suffering and to keep the American people safe", he added, saying that he was open to other ideas but the one thing he will rule out is adopting a tactic "because it is going to work politically, or it is going to somehow in the abstract going to make America look tough, or make me look tough".

On Monday, Bush said there should be a few restrictions as well as special protections for Christians.

"It's not really clear to me what he wants to do differently", said Benjamin Friedman, a defense research fellow with the Cato Institute.

"We must address the underlying conflicts in Syria and Iraq, which created this crisis - one that spiraled out of control as President Obama and Hillary Clinton failed to act - and today present a critical threat to worldwide security", he will say.

Bush, the brother and son of former presidents, denounced what he described as "careless, chronic neglect by the president and Congress" of the United States military.

BUSH: Our best presidents called that peace through strength.

"I believe we should take it to them there", Bush said.

"We can win. That's how I'll win", he said.