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<http://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2015/02/27/399476/US-military-soldiers-are-mercenaries>

US troops fight against ‘innocent nations’

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Many US troops who participate in armed conflicts around the world do so as “mercenaries” against “innocent” nations, a US veteran and journalist in Denmark says.

“People who are fighting other people who have done them no harm, are doing so for pay, so in that sense they’re mercenaries, they’re not real soldiers defending their own country,” said Ron Ridenour.

“They’re attacking totally innocent people and innocent countries and of course doing so against all the rules of the United Nations and creating more and more enemies,” Ridenour said during a phone interview with Press TV on Friday.

“If you’re a decent human being anywhere in the world, you’re not going to want to destroy other people in order to please some rich politicians who are doing so for oil,” he added.

Ridenour said many former soldiers have an extremely guilty conscience and commit suicide for “murdering people that had done nothing to them.”

The suicide crisis in the US military is an ongoing phenomenon since the Pentagon started to deploy troops to Iraq and Afghanistan more than a decade ago as part of the so-called war on terror.

Recent figures by the US Defense Department show suicides among active-duty military personnel rose slightly in 2014, remaining at historically high numbers for a fifth year.

Increases in suicides among American sailors and airmen last year raised total suicides among active-duty personnel to 288, up from 286 in 2013, according to preliminary Pentagon statistics.

According to a study published in March 2014 in JAMA Psychiatry, nearly 25 percent of US Army soldiers had a common mental illness.

“Many of these people [soldiers] feel like they saw things and did things themselves that they couldn’t live with,” Ridenour said. “I think they should feel guilty.”

The military veteran called on American soldiers returning home to get involved in anti-war activism and participate in peace movements. “They should try to help the people that they earlier destroyed or tried to destroy.”