

# U.S. Using ‘Beheadings to Sway Public Opinion’ in Favor of Another War

By [Press TV](#)

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A former US intelligence official says Washington is using the purported beheadings of two American journalists by ISIL to “sway public opinion” in favor of another war in the Middle East.

Scott Rickard, a former American intelligence linguist in Florida, made the remarks in a phone interview with Press TV on Thursday while commenting on top US officials’ push for a military onslaught in Iraq to destroy the terrorist group.

The statements were made in the wake of the killings of Steven Sotloff and James Foley.

“It’s very clear that these ‘beheadings’ of American ‘journalists’ is being used as a catalyst to sway public opinion. Now you have [President Barack] Obama, [Vice President Joe] Biden, [Defense Secretary] Chuck Hagel, [Secretary of State] John Kerry all in unison talking about an all-out offensive against ISIS,” Rickard said, using an alternate acronym for the terrorist group.

“Let’s be clear that ISIS has under 10,000 mercenaries from 80 different countries around the world. They have been recruited and trained and supplied and getting harbored in NATO countries, in Kurdistan [region], in Turkey obviously, in Jordan,” he added.

Click [here](#) to watch the interview on Press TV.

“These individuals have received incredibly advanced equipment from Qatar, and from Saudi Arabia, United Arab Emirates. This is not a group that is not unfamiliar with intelligence training and also intelligence assistance in the region,” he stated.

Rickard went on to say that “some of the individuals in the mercenary forces may have decided to do something that was not in the plan for the intelligence community” that controls them.

“They will not completely destroy ISIS; they will only destroy the individuals within the mercenary forces that are not cooperating with Western intelligence on their initiatives in the region because they still want to go after Syria, and they still want to create a Kurdish state, that has been an initiative since the Iran-Iraq war for the United States and West. And that is what’s going on now today,” he noted.

ISIL controls large parts of Syria’s northern territory. The group sent its fighters into neighboring Iraq in June, quickly seizing large swaths of land straddling the border between

the two countries.

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