

Fact Sheet on Private Military Firms

(Compiled by noprivatemilitaryfirms.org/Clearwater Project 2/16/2008)

1. Private Military Firms (PMFs) are private businesses who recruit and train individuals, known as private military security contractors, in the techniques of arms and armaments, both for foreign wars and domestic policing. Such a company trains its contractors to use a wide range of weapons from pistols to rocket launchers. They also teach techniques of attack, capture, and interrogation. These companies maintain databases of contractors that can be assembled at a moment's notice, like a small army. For example Blackwater Worldwide boasts their database is 21,000 contractors. These contractors are then deployed on assignments for governments and for corporations.
2. Between 1994 and 2002 US-based Private Military Security Companies received more than 3,000 contracts worth over \$300 billion from the U.S. Department of Defense.
3. Currently over 800,000 contractors have security clearances at 11,000 government facilities.
4. Blackwater's Federal Contracts from 2001 through 2006 totaled over \$1 billion.
5. Blackwater charges the U.S. government \$1,222 per day for services of a private military contractor. This is equivalent to \$445,000 per year, over six times more than the cost of an equivalent U.S. soldier.
6. 84% of the shooting incidents involving Blackwater personnel were occasions when the Blackwater contractors were the first to shoot. Blackwater engaged in more shooting incidents than DynCorp and Triple Canopy combined. Yet at the time of this writing not a single private contractor has been convicted nor charged for any of these shootings.
7. The creation of an industry of privatized military firms allows states, institutions, organizations, corporations, and even individuals to quickly lease military capabilities of the highest level off the global market.
8. There are several hundred private military security companies all around the world employing thousands according to the UN Working Group on Mercenaries established by the UN High Commissioner on Human Rights in 2005. The UN group on mercenaries reports that there are approximately 50,000 private military contractors working in Iraq. One of the largest and most powerful is Blackwater Worldwide which operates a training camp in Jo Daviess County Illinois.
9. Private military companies and their contractors operate in a legal gray zone that leaves the door for abuses wide open. A Government Accountability Office report released in December 2006 told of how the U.S. military had no effective system of oversight and that "officials were unable to determine how many contractors were deployed to bases in Iraq."
10. There are over 180,000 private contractors in Iraq under U.S. contracts according to State and Defense department figures.
11. Blackwater Worldwide claims to be training only law enforcement and military personnel at the Jo Daviess County Illinois site however a July 2007 Chicago Tribune article reports that they are also training private individuals who do not have connections to law enforcement nor the military.
12. The training courses offered at the Illinois training site by Blackwater are not certified by the State of Illinois.
13. On the Jo Daviess site there is possibly the largest stockpile of weapons and ammunition in private hands in the state of Illinois.
14. The privatized military industry is a reality in the 21st century. This opens a series of troubling questions for democracy, for states, for ethics, for management, for law, for human rights, and for national and international security.
15. Private Military Firms comprise the one remaining industry whose behavior is dictated not by the rule of law, but by simple economics.
16. Private Military Security Firms transform the role of the state in such a way that it loses its monopoly over the use of force.

17. Private Military Security firms turn security into a “good” that is unequally distributed so that security then becomes something enjoyed by only those who can afford it.
18. Privatization and outsourcing make it easier for political leaders to take their states to war. Also private military security companies only care about their profitability creating an incentive for conflict rather than peace.
19. Privatization of military services can harm the reliable delivery of essential services in conflict and war.
20. The use of private military companies and their contractors to perform functions that are normally performed by government officials is a danger to the Republic and to its states.

¹ Jeremy Scahill. Blackwater: The Rise of the World’s Most Powerful Mercenary Army Nation Books, New York 2007 p.xviii.

² International Consortium of Investigative Journalists, “The Business of War: Privatizing Combat, the New World Order” (Washington DC: The Center for Public Integrity, 2002), p.2. As cited in The Market of Force: The Consequences of Privatizing Security by Deborah D. Avant Cambridge University Press 2005 p.8.

³ Defense Security Service cited in Outsourcing Sovereignty: Why Privatization of Government Functions Threatens Democracy and What We Can Do About It Paul R. Verkuil Cambridge University Press 2007.

⁴ Memorandum dated October 1, 2007 from the Committee On Oversight and Government Reform Re: “Additional Information about Blackwater USA (Now known as Blackwater Worldwide)

⁵ Ibid.p3

⁶ Ibid. p7

⁷ P.W. Singer Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry Cornell University Press Ithaca New York 2003 p.18.

⁸ Jeremy Scahill Blackwater p. xxi

⁹ Ibid. p.xxii.

¹⁰ T. Christian Miller “Private Contractors Outnumber US Troops in Iraq” *Los Angeles Times* July 4, 2007.

¹¹ P.W. Singer “Banned In Baghdad: Reactions to the Blackwater License Being Pulled” Brookings Institute Article September 17, 2007.

¹² P.W. Singer “War, Profits and Vacuums of Law: Privatized Military Firms and International Law” *Columbia Journal of Transnational Law* Spring 2004 42:52 pgs.522-549.

¹³ Fred Schreier and Marina Caparini “Privatizing Security: Law, Practice and Governance of Private Military and Security Companies” Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF) Occasional Paper No. 6 Geneva March 2005.

¹⁴ Ibid. p.i.

¹⁵ Ibid p.i.

¹⁶ Ibid p.i. Also as detailed by Diana Rasor and Robert Bauman Betraying Our Troops: The Destructive Results of Privatizing War. Palgrave MacMillan New York 2007.

¹⁷ Paul R. Verkuil Outsourcing Sovereignty: Why Privatization of Government Functions Threatens Democracy and What We Can Do About It Cambridge University Press 2007 p.196.