

# British mercenary firm exposed in civilian shooting incident in Iraq

Indiscriminate Killings of Civilians

By [Wayne Madsen](#)

Global Research, December 01, 2005

[WayneMadsenReport.com](#) 1 December 2005

Region: [Middle East & North Africa](#)

Theme: [Crimes against Humanity](#)

In-depth Report: [IRAQ REPORT](#)

**A video has surfaced on the Internet showing private security contractors working for Aegis Defense Services “Victory” Group firing indiscriminately at Iraqi civilian motorists in Baghdad.**

Since the news has been released, acknowledged by the mainstream British press, including The Telegraph (see article below), the video has been removed from the Aegis co Iraq website

**TO VIEW THE ORIGINAL VIDEO CLIP CLICK HERE**

[WMV \(Windows\)](#)

**or**

[QT\(quick time\)](#)

**we bring to the attention of Global Research readers the following documents:**

1. A statement by the Aegis Iraq Co following the removal of the video clip
2. A prior statement of Lieutenant Colonel Tim Spicer, OBE, CEO of Aegis
3. Review article by Wayne Madsen
4. The text of the article in London Daily Telegraph.

**Global Research Editor, 1 December 2005**

Following the removal of the Video clip, The following message was posted on the MESSAGE BOARD of Aegis Co Iraq at:

[http://www.aegisiraq.co.uk/Message\\_Board.htm](http://www.aegisiraq.co.uk/Message_Board.htm)

To all the media contacting this site requesting copies of the other nine Video Clips you have been miss informed. [sic]

To Aegis I mailed one man and one man only within your company to mention nine more clips.

The Victory Director

Strange that the media should be asking for the same figure

AEGIS IRAQ PSD TEAMS

**From:** Andrew Joscelyne

**Sent:** 12 October 2005 17:08

**To:** All Baghdad; All Basrah; All Diwaniyah; All Fallujah; All Mosul; All Tikrit; All Victory

**Subject:** BLOGSITES

I have today seen the new website - "Aegis Iraq PSD Teams", I have a number of points I wish to make:

- I am fully in favour of good natured banter and a light hearted view of life and its difficulties in Iraq .
- I encourage anything that takes the pressure off and improves motivation.
- I would not be in favour of a site if it was in any way libellous to anyone, down right nasty or detrimental to anyone's morale.
- My major concern is one of OPSEC - either that of our clients or our own individuals - posting unblanked photos may not be so clever. Anything that is of use to AIF should not be allowed to flourish.
- I am also concerned about media interest in this site and I remind everyone of their contractual obligation not to speak to or assist the media without clearing it with the project management or Aegis London. This site could be construed in this way.
- I remind everyone that there is a proper chain of command for airing concerns, grievances etc.
- Please think twice about posting your happy snaps and whilst I am not concerned about this site as yet, if it develops into something other than a light hearted pressure valve I will take a much greater interest.
- Remember that your job and those of your colleagues indirectly relies on the maintenance of our contract. Refrain from posting anything which is detrimental to the company since this could result in the loss or curtailment of our contract with resultant loss for everybody.

Lieutenant Colonel Tim Spicer, OBE

## **British mercenary firm exposed in civilian shooting incident in Iraq**

### **Indiscriminate Killings of Civilians**

**By Wayne Madsen**

A [souvenir video](#) has surfaced on the Internet showing private security contractors working for Aegis Defense Services "Victory" Group firing indiscriminately at Iraqi civilian motorists in Baghdad. The video was reportedly taken by an Aegis employee and posted on a [web site](#) run by an ex-Aegis employee. The video has since been removed from the site. The video contains four clips showing Aegis mercenaries firing at civilian automobiles. The video's soundtrack includes Elvis Presley's "Train I Ride." Aegis is run by former British Scots Guard officer Lt. Col. Tim Spicer, an international mercenary who has been involved in UN sanctions busting in Sierra Leone and Bougainville invasion planning in Papua New Guinea.

Spicer's firm, Aegis, was awarded a \$293 million security contract in Iraq. Spicer's men also stand accused of shooting teenager Peter McBride in the back in Belfast in 1992. That has prompted a number of members of the Irish Caucus in the Congress to demand the Pentagon withdraw its contract to Aegis. The Pentagon has rejected such action.

Aegis maintains its head office in London's Picadilly. It is also reported to have an office on K Street in Washington, DC.

The Pentagon has had a longstanding relationship with Spicer. The Pentagon's love affair with mercenary firms began in the 1990s when they were viewed with favor for their military activities, including sanctions busting, in Africa. Under the Clinton administration, mercenary firms blossomed. Under George W. Bush, they have flourished. On June 24, 1997, the Defense Intelligence Agency sponsored a seminar titled "The Privatization of National Security Functions in Sub-Saharan Africa." This conference ushered in the present cooperation between mercenaries, oil companies, diamond and other mineral companies, U.S. intelligence agencies, the military, and non-government organizations (NGOs), including the always suspect Human Rights Watch, an NGO that often obscures and obfuscates important facts, as it did with the causality of the Rwandan genocide and as it is currently doing with regard to offering an incomplete list of CIA prisoner aircraft in Europe.

WMR has obtained the attendee list [[Page One](#) [Page Two](#)] for the 1997 Pentagon mercenary seminar. Spicer attended along with two colleagues from Sandline International (for which Spicer served as CEO), a mercenary firm that had already been implicated in illegal Sierra Leone and Papua New Guinea operations.

Newspeak" are referred to as "Private Military Contractors," "Private Security Contractors (PSCs), and Personal Security Details/Detachments (PSDs), are viewed by informed observers as the future military forces that will continue to protect US business interests in Iraq after the planned withdrawal of a large number of U.S. troops next year. These companies are not governed by any military regulations or international legal constraints. According to informed sources within the security contractor community, three U.S. firms, Phoenix, Anteon, and Sytex, should be looked at closely by U.S. authorities for their interrogation operations in Iraq. Sytex is currently advertising for interrogators for the US Central Command's Area of Responsibility (AOR), which includes Iraq and Afghanistan. Military interrogators who were charged with sexually humiliating prisoners at Guantanamo and Iraq are now working for firms like Anteon and Phoenix Consulting Group.

### **'Trophy' video exposes private security contractors shooting up Iraqi drivers**

By Sean Rayment, Defence Correspondent,

27/11/2005

#### **The Telegraph**

A "trophy" video appearing to show security guards in Baghdad randomly shooting Iraqi civilians has sparked two investigations after it was posted on the internet, the Sunday Telegraph can reveal.

The video has sparked concern that private security companies, which are not subject to any form of regulation either in Britain or in Iraq, could be responsible for the deaths of

hundreds of innocent Iraqis.

Lt Col Tim Spicer is investigating the incident. The video, which first appeared on a website that has been linked unofficially to Aegis Defence Services, contained four separate clips, in which security guards open fire with automatic rifles at civilian cars. All of the shooting incidents apparently took place on "route Irish", a road that links the airport to Baghdad.

The road has acquired the dubious distinction of being the most dangerous in the world because of the number of suicide attacks and ambushes carried out by insurgents against coalition troops. In one four-month period earlier this year it was the scene of 150 attacks.

In one of the videoed attacks, a Mercedes is fired on at a distance of several hundred yards before it crashes in to a civilian taxi. In the last clip, a white civilian car is raked with machine gun fire as it approaches an unidentified security company vehicle. Bullets can be seen hitting the vehicle before it comes to a slow stop.

There are no clues as to the shooter but either a Scottish or Irish accent can be heard in at least one of the clips above Elvis Presley's Mystery Train, the music which accompanies the video.

Last night a spokesman for defence firm Aegis Defence Services – set up in 2002 by Lt Col Tim Spicer, a former Scots Guards officer – confirmed that the company was carrying out an internal investigation to see if any of their employees were involved.

The Foreign Office has also confirmed that it is investigating the contents of the video in conjunction with Aegis, one of the biggest security companies operating in Iraq. The company was recently awarded a £220 million security contract in Iraq by the United States government. Aegis conducts a number of security duties and helped with the collection of ballot papers in the country's recent referendum.

Lt Col Spicer, 53, rose to public prominence in 1998 when his private military company Sandlines International was accused of breaking United Nations sanctions by selling arms to Sierra Leone.

The video first appeared on the website [www.aegisiraq.co.uk](http://www.aegisiraq.co.uk). The website states: "This site does not belong to Aegis Defence Ltd, it belongs to the men on the ground who are the heart and soul of the company." The clips have been removed.

The website also contains a message from Lt Col Spicer, which reads: "I am concerned about media interest in this site and I remind everyone of their contractual obligation not to speak to or assist the media without clearing it with the project management or Aegis London.

"Refrain from posting anything which is detrimental to the company since this could result in the loss or curtailment of our contract with resultant loss for everybody."

Security companies awarded contracts by the US administration in Iraq adopt the same rules for opening fire as the American military. US military vehicles carry a sign warning drivers to keep their distance from the vehicle. The warning which appears in both Arabic and English reads "Danger. Keep back. Authorised to use lethal force." A similar warning is also displayed on the rear of vehicles belonging to Aegis.

Capt Adnan Tawfiq of the Iraqi Interior Ministry which deals with compensation issues, has told the Sunday Telegraph that he has received numerous claims from families who allege that their relatives have been shot by private security contractors travelling in road convoys.

He said: "When the security companies kill people they just drive away and nothing is done. Sometimes we ring the companies concerned and they deny everything. The families don't get any money or compensation. I would say we have had about 50-60 incidents of this kind."

A spokesman for Aegis Defence Services, said: "There is nothing to indicate that these film clips are in any way connected to Aegis."

Last night a spokesman for the Foreign Office said: "Aegis have assured us that there is nothing on the video to suggest that it has anything to do with their company. This is now a matter for the American authorities because Aegis is under contract to the United States."

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