

How Come Military Contractors Are Doing The Pentagon's Dirty Work?

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It is no secret that the last couple decades saw an abrupt increase in the number of private military companies or private security contractors (PMCs), the overall budgets of some easily [surpass](#) the military budgets of certain sovereign states. The turning point in the creation of such companies occurred in 1995 during military operations conducted by the Armed Forces of Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina against Serbian troops, when hostilities were outsourced to a number of security contractor firms.

There can be no second opinion about Washington being the most faithful adept of the PMC concept, since the number of wars the US has been waging against other states requires the Pentagon to find extra hands to do its dirty work for it. American intelligence agencies were quick to comprehend in mid 90s that they would need a lot of private contractors if they were to carry on their dubious operations across the globe over the next several decades. Therefore, the Pentagon began encouraging various companies to handle a wide range of outsourced military tasks. As a result, over the last decade alone the US military has signed more than 3,0 00 contracts with PMCs.

Today PMCs are operating more than 90% of all drones than US Air Force and Navy have together, they are also engaged in reconnaissance missions, data analysis, along with developing promising technologies and materials, on top of providing routine military training, convoy escorts, and air cargo support. In May 2007, the US government disclosed for the first time the total amount of funds allocated on the PMCs by American intelligence agencies, with the total amount reaching 33.6 billion dollars. In January 2015, the US Central Command published statistics on contract employees of PMCs, specifying that CENTCOM alone employs more than 43,0 00 individuals that fulfill all sorts of contracts, of which no more than 17,0 00 are American citizens, with the rest being natives of the UK and Australia.

According to rough estimates, the PMC market exceeds 150 billion dollars. As for the continuous increase in the actual of number and their value it can be attributed to an ever expanding share of "secret operations" deals signed off on by Washington.

Although existing US legislation has set in stone the principle that "the most complex and sensitive tasks shouldn't be fulfilled by private organizations", when it comes to the situation on the ground we witness quite the opposite.

This notion has recently been confirmed by the Daily Mail as it reported on the activities of one particularly notorious PMC, Academi, formerly known as Blackwater. According to these revelations Academi contractors were engaged in torturing and physically abusing members

of the Saudi royal family and those businessmen that were detained along with them in Saudi Arabia in early November. According to the publication, the **Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman** personally participated in the said interrogations thanks to the dubious services provided to him by Academi. As a result of these interrogations, the Crown Prince received a total of 194 billion dollars in “voluntary donations” from those that he was questioning.

One can recall that Saudi law enforcement agencies arrested a total of 11 princes, four ministers and several dozen former ministers and prominent businessmen on charges of corruption. Among those arrested one could find one of the richest men on the planet - **Al-Waleed bin Talal**. Earlier, Middle Eastern and Western media leaked details about the harsh treatment that the detainees were exposed to, regardless of their social status or previous achievements. The New York Times has already reported that at least 17 prisoners among those arrested on suspicion of participating in corrupt schemes were brutally beaten.

Another example of Washington’s privatization of global war and brutality is the delivery of lethal weapons to areas of armed conflict prohibited by international law, including to regions where extremist and terrorist groups have yet to start violence.

Thus, in spite of Washington’s continuous claims that there has been no instance of American weapons being delivered to Ukraine, Western PMCs have been delivering those to Ukraine for over two years now. For instance, AirTronic has been delivering American-made grenade launchers to Kiev, confirmed by its CEO, Richard Wendiver in his interview with Voice of America. In particular, he specified that the company initiated such deliveries last year and has continued them since. He added that such deliveries have been coordinated by the US Embassy in Kiev, in close cooperation with the State Department, the Pentagon and the Ukrainian government.

Since other American PMCs have been fulfilling similar contracts in other regions of the world, one shouldn’t be surprised when one sees a picture of a radical terrorist armed with top-notch US weapons systems, especially when those operate in Syria and Iraq. Almost one and a half thousand fully loaded trucks worth of weapons were delivered to the terrorists of ISIS, as it’s been announced by the Syrian Defense Ministry earlier this year. Automatic weapons and grenade launchers produced in America are fairly common among militants that the Pentagon has been unofficially supporting. All this has already been proven true, as tons of units of such weapons have already been confiscated from these militants amid ongoing security operations.

Despite the presence of a wide range of international actors, modern geopolitics is far from being public. A significant role in it is played by behind-the-scenes actors and secret deals, which are then fulfilled by all sorts of PMCs. Thus, we have found ourselves in an age when private companies are capable of influencing individual countries and even whole regions. This, in particular, confirms the involvement of American PMCs in the torture of representatives of the Saudi elite and the ongoing US-made arms deliveries to the Middle East, Ukraine, Afghanistan.

In 2008, the status of PMCs was clarified in the so-called Montreux Document, signed by a total of 17 nations. This document contains rules of engagement for those companies and regulates their operations in conflict zones. According to this document, the state that hosts a private military company bears full responsibility for its actions in various regions of the world.

What this basically means is that Washington will not be able to escape responsibility for the crimes committed by its contractors somewhere behind-the-scenes.

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