

Private Security and Mercenary Companies Patrol New Orleans

Reaping the Profits of a Humanitarian Disaster

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The [Wednesday, September 7, 2005 broadcast of KPFA's "Flashpoints"](#) featured a telephone interview with Malik Rahim, who gave a gut-wrenching and shocking firsthand account of the staggering horror of still-neglected New Orleans that he and other survivors are facing. In stark contrast to increasingly optimistic mainstream media coverage (cover-up) about "improving relief efforts" and "rebuilding", Rahim exposed the fact that *there is no relief*. No Red Cross, no food, no emergency medical care under a [FEMA](#) lockdown that has kept any relief from getting into New Orleans.

Meanwhile, as the Bush administration's [combat operations](#) ramp up, and troops prowl the streets, no help whatsoever has been offered to residents, according to Rahim. Rotting corpses litter the streets, still not moved. People, heroically fending for themselves and their own, are being left in shocking conditions to suffer and die. *"Between these disturbing [independent firsthand] reports, and accounts such as ["The People of the Dome"](#), New Orleans is being reduced to another Fallujah."* (see L Chin at http://onlinejournal.com/Special_Reports/090505Chin/090505chin.html)

Rahim's account confirms this—literally. According to Rahim, mercenaries from [Blackwater USA](#) are rumbling through the New Orleans streets, armed to the teeth and in full battle gear.

Blackwater USA is a private mercenary firm, one of many "war outsourcing" outfits working for the Pentagon. In the spring 2004 Fallujah assault, Blackwater was involved with combat as well as logistics (food shipments, etc.). Four Blackwater USA mercenaries were killed in Fallujah, raising worldwide attention. In February 2005, the former Director of the CIA's Counterterrorism Center, and the Bush State Department's former Coordinator for Counterterrorism, Cofer Black, [became Blackwater USA's Vice Chairman](#).

In ["The Mercenary Variable: Outsourced combat in Iraq"](#), US Army Special Forces Master Sergeant Stan Goff describes Blackwater as follows:

"Blackwater USA is a guns-for-hire training-and-recruitment outfit on a 6,000 acre military training compound on the northern coastal plain of Moyock, North Carolina, a stone's throw from the Virginia border."

"What differentiates them from the crazed, ex-military flotsam that rampaged

through Congo in the 1960's is that they are (1) incorporated, (2) they use legally recognized financial/contract instruments, and (3), they work for recognized governments. The latter is a very finely drawn point, because governments frequently hire these legalized mercenaries at the insistence, and with the support, of multinational corporations who just happen - as it turns out - to be in the same place these outfits are doing their security.

"On the combat end, Blackwater USA is mostly ex-SEALs with a few former SWAT cops thrown in, run by a blustering hyper-macho ex-SEAL named Gary Jackson. One of the victims of the Fallujah ambush - a WWF-looking body-builder-type - had boasted to a reporter staying in his hotel in Baghdad that he preferred hand-to-hand combat so he could see his quarry eye to eye. When I was running a Special Forces A-Detachment, this kind of talk would have sent me seeking a way to reassign you out of my team."

The infamous [Halliburton-KBR \(Kellogg Brown & Root\)](#), the "classic" private military firm connected to Dick Cheney, is [already in the area](#) as well. Where there is oil, war, destruction and "rebuilding", there is KBR.

What are they doing in New Orleans? What is the Bush administration and FEMA up to, that the world is being kept from seeing? How many more Americans in New Orleans will die?

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