



Military Contractors & the American Way of War

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Abstract: Contractors are deeply intertwined with the American military and U.S. foreign policy. Over half of the personnel the United States has deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2003 have been contractors. Their relationship with the U.S. government, the public, and domestic and international law differs from that of military personnel, and these differences pose both benefits and risks. America's use of private military and security companies (PMSCs) can provide or enhance forces for global governance. Yet PMSCs can also be used to pursue agendas that do not have the support of American, international, or local publics. Thus far, the use of PMSCs has proved a mixed bag in terms of effectiveness, accountability, and American values. Moving forward in a way that maximizes the benefits of contractors and minimizes their risks will require careful management of the uncomfortable trade-offs these forces present.

More than one-half of the personnel the United States has deployed in Iraq and Afghanistan since 2003 have been contractors. Part of the global private military and security industry, contractors are deeply intertwined with the American military and U.S. foreign policy.¹ Whatever one chooses to call them – mercenaries, contractors, or private military and security companies (PMSCs) – they have a different relationship to the U.S. government, the American public, and domestic and international law than do military personnel. These differences pose both benefits and risks to the effectiveness, accountability, and values represented in American actions abroad.

In the best case, American use of PMSCs can provide or enhance forces for global governance. PMSCs can recruit from around the world to quickly mobilize expertise as needed. If their employees are instilled with professional values and skills and engaged in a way that is responsive to the demands of the U.S. public, the international community, and local concerns, these forces could contribute to

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managing a global demand for security that U.S. forces alone cannot meet. In the worst case, PMSCs can provide a means for pursuing agendas that do not have the support of American, international, or local publics. They may siphon off U.S. dollars for practices that are wasteful, are antithetical to U.S. interests, or undermine global stability. Thus far, the use of PMSCs has produced mixed results: it has increased effectiveness somewhat, but often at the expense of accountability and with dubious attention to the values the United States and the international community hold dear. Moving forward in a way that maximizes the benefits of contractors and minimizes their risks will require careful management of the uncomfortable trade-offs these forces pose.

The degree to which the United States relies on private security vendors has become clear during the hostilities in Iraq and Afghanistan, as contractors have provided logistical support for U.S. and coalition troops. Less well known is that as U.S. forces were stretched thin by the lawlessness resulting from the fall of Saddam Hussein in 2003, the first “surge” involved private personnel mobilized to protect expatriates working in the country and train the Iraqi police force and army; and a private Iraqi force was hired to guard government facilities and oil fields.² Retired military or police from all over the world, employed by a wide array of PMSCs, worked for the U.S. government (and others) throughout the country.

Although precise figures are difficult to determine, by 2008, the number of personnel in Iraq under contract with the U.S. government roughly equaled or was greater than the number of U.S. troops on the ground.³ In September 2009, two months prior to the Obama administra-

tion’s announcement of the troop surge in Afghanistan, contractors made up an estimated 62 percent of the U.S. presence in that country.⁴ The use of contractors in these conflicts represents a dramatic expansion in the U.S. military’s reliance on PMSCs. During the 1991 Gulf conflict, the ratio of troops to contractors was roughly ten to one; in 2007, the ratio of troops to contractors in Iraq was roughly one to one.⁵ In Afghanistan in 2010, there were roughly 1.43 contractors for every American soldier.⁶ The Commission on Wartime Contracting (CWC), established by Congress in 2008, estimates conservatively that at least \$177 billion has been obligated in contracts and grants to support U.S. operations in Afghanistan and Iraq since 2001.⁷

PMSCs offer a wide range of services, including tasks associated with military operations, policing, and the gray area between the two that is an increasingly large part of twenty-first-century conflict. Common services include support for weapons systems and equipment, military advice and training, logistical support, site security (armed and unarmed), crime prevention, police training, and intelligence.⁸ While some firms specialize in a specific area, others provide an array of services, and a few offer the entire range. The CWC divides the services provided by contractors into three categories: logistics, security, and reconstruction.⁹

Logistics services include the supply of food, laundry, fuel, and base facility construction. Kellogg Brown and Root (KBR) held the U.S. Army’s logistics civil augmentation contract (LOGCAP) in the early years of the Iraq and Afghanistan conflicts. In June 2007, the new contract (LOGCAP IV) was awarded to three companies: DynCorp International LLC, Fluor Intercontinental, Inc., and KBR. In



Iraq alone, the LOGCAP contract paid out \$22 billion between 2003 and 2007.¹⁰

Security services include guarding people, buildings, and convoys. Many security contractors are armed; in carrying out their duties, they routinely shoot and are shot at.¹¹ The Congressional Budget Office estimated that in 2008, 30,000 to 35,000 of the contractors working in Iraq were armed; in early 2010, private security contractors numbered roughly 11,000.¹² Blackwater (now Xe) employees, recruited to support both the military and the U.S. State Department, have received the most notoriety for their security work in Iraq and, more recently, in Afghanistan. Working under the State Department's Worldwide Personal Protective Services (WPPS) contract in Iraq, Blackwater personnel carried weapons, had their own helicopters, and defended against insurgents in ways hard to distinguish from military actions.¹³ They were later joined by newer companies such as Triple Canopy, Crescent Security Group, and Custer Battles.¹⁴

Reconstruction services incorporate everything from building physical infrastructure (for roads, communication, water, and power) to strengthening institutions (for example, by training government employees, including military, police, and justice personnel at the national, provincial, and local levels; supporting civil society groups; and promoting rule of law and democratization). A wide range of PMSCs, along with other contractors, have delivered these services. DynCorp, an old company with roots in technical support and an increasing presence in policing and police training, has trained Iraqi police, constructed police and prison facilities, and built capacity for a justice system.¹⁵ Three companies that provided training for the new Iraqi Army early in the conflict are Vinnell Corporation, a company with a long his-

tory of providing military training in Saudi Arabia; MPRI, a firm that gained prominence by training Croatian and then Bosnian troops in the 1990s; and USIS, which was established as the result of an Office of Management Personnel privatization effort in 1994.¹⁶ Parsons Corporation, another older firm with a long record in the building of infrastructure, has worked on many large infrastructure projects. Myriad others have delivered various capacity-building services.¹⁷

Though their use in Iraq and Afghanistan dominates the discussion of contractors in the U.S. context, PMSCs are important players in all aspects of the U.S. military and U.S. foreign policy.¹⁸ Contractors working for the Departments of Defense (DOD) and State contribute significantly to U.S. foreign policy projects aimed at enhancing development and security in a number of states; they also support U.S. troops and diplomats. Their tasks cover all three categories noted above. Consider, for instance, the contractor support for U.S. foreign assistance policies in Africa and Latin America.

In Africa, the United States has relied on the private sector to support missions such as military training and peacekeeping operations. These programs fall within AFRICOM, the U.S. military command for Africa established in 2007, and the State Department's Africa Peacekeeping program (AFRICAP), which is similar in structure to the army's LOGCAP contract. In 2008, AFRICAP's stated objectives were to enhance regional peace and stability in Africa through training programs in peacekeeping and conflict management and prevention for African armed forces, as well as through logistics and construction activities in support of peacekeeping and training missions.¹⁹ AFRICOM's stated purposes are "to build

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strong military-to-military partnerships,” to help African countries better address the threats they face by improving African military capacity, and to bolster peace and security there.²⁰ Since its inception, AFRICOM has awarded contracts for training, air transport, information technology, and public diplomacy to companies such as DynCorp, which is training Liberia’s armed forces, and PAE, a company specializing in infrastructure, mission support, and disaster relief.²¹

U.S. foreign policy in Latin America, dominated since at least 2000 by anti-narcotics and counterterrorism efforts, also relies heavily on contractors.²² Plan Colombia, the central element of a counterdrug initiative focused on the Andean region, has sought to reduce drug production in Colombia and strengthen Colombian security forces to better secure the state against threats posed by terrorists, drug traffickers, and paramilitary groups. The program has failed to slow drug production there, but military and police training conducted by both U.S. troops and civilian contractors has led to security improvements.²³ Roughly half of the military aid to Colombia is spent on private contractors funded by the DOD and the State Department. Like Plan Colombia, the 2007 Mérida Initiative, a U.S.-Mexico assistance agreement, seeks to disrupt drug-trafficking activities by providing equipment and training to Mexican security forces.²⁴

PMSCs are incorporated in many countries and employ a mix of U.S. citizens, local citizens, and “third country nationals” (recruits from neither the United States nor the host state). That combination changes over time and from contingency to contingency. For example, an April 30, 2008, census by the U.S. Army Central Command found that the 190,200 contractors in Iraq includ-

ed about 20 percent (38,700) U.S. citizens, 37 percent (70,500) Iraqis, and 43 percent (81,006) third country nationals.²⁵ In March 2010, the total number of contractors had dropped to 95,461, 26 percent of which were U.S. citizens, 56 percent third country nationals, and 18 percent Iraqis.²⁶ The number of locals working as private security contractors (as opposed to logistics or reconstruction contractors) in Iraq has been relatively low: about 10 percent of private security contractors in 2010 were Iraqi. In Afghanistan, the DOD has relied more heavily on locals. The total number of contractors in March 2010 was 112,092, 14 percent of which were U.S. citizens, 16 percent third country nationals, and 70 percent Afghans. Also, the numbers of locals who work in private security are higher than those who provide other services. About 93 percent of the private security contractors in 2010 were Afghans.²⁷

When the United States hires PMSCs to train militaries abroad, the contractor may take a small team of U.S. personnel (as MPRI did in Croatia), or it may recruit an international team (as DynCorp did in Liberia). Companies providing logistics support abroad often rely on locals or third country nationals to cut costs. Hiring locals or third country nationals can also avoid a variety of political restrictions and diminish visibility when the United States is undertaking more controversial missions. For instance, Congress restricted the number of American contractors the United States could use under Plan Colombia to three hundred (raised to four hundred in 2001); PMSCs bypassed this restriction by hiring personnel from Peru, Guatemala, and other Latin American countries.²⁸

In addition to nationality, personnel hired by PMSCs vary in their employment backgrounds. PMSCs that offer



military training primarily hire former military officers. Those that offer armed security services hire a broader range of military veterans. Those that offer police training often hire former police officers. As the number of companies and the range of services they offer have expanded to meet market demand, companies have hired employees with more diverse experience.

Contracting for military and security services has raised questions about the effectiveness of using force, political accountability for the use of force, and the social values to which force adheres. Some concerns vary according to which service is provided, while others apply more generally across different tasks.

Military *effectiveness* rests on a range of components, including skill of personnel, quality of materiel, and military responsiveness to contextual or external constraints. A critical component noted in recent research is integration: that is, the degree to which military plans follow from overarching state goals and to which activities are internally consistent and mutually reinforcing.²⁹

Contracting can influence both the military's effectiveness and its broader mission. For example, when U.S. goals change, as they did after the Cold War's end, contracting enhances the military's ability to integrate forces with (new) political goals. Speed and flexibility are the hallmark benefits of contracting, and contractors can quickly provide tools or skills for new missions that regular military forces may lack – or cannot identify rapidly within their ranks. Using a contract with MPRI, for instance, the Africa Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) military training courses for French-speaking African countries were staffed with employees who spoke French. The U.S. military was also able to mobi-

lize civilian police forces, first for Haiti in 1994, and then for contingencies in the Balkans, via contracts with DynCorp.

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Different concerns regarding effectiveness emerge with contracting for logistics, security, and reconstruction services. Logistics services are fundamental to the military's ability to operate. Without personnel to provide logistics services, the U.S. military simply cannot go to war. Contracting for logistics also requires strong oversight. Early in the Iraq conflict, serious concerns were raised about adequate staffing for logistics contracts. General Charles S. Mahan, Jr., then the Army's top logistics officer, complained of troops receiving inadequate support because of problems deploying contractors.³⁰ After the Coalition Provisional Authority appointed him the new Head of Contracting Authority in February 2004, Brigadier General Stephen Seay hired more acquisition staff, enabling overburdened contracting officers to do their jobs more effectively.³¹ More recently, military personnel have expressed general satisfaction with the quality of logistics services.³² Many worries over logistics contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan have focused on lack of oversight (particularly inadequate numbers of contract officers), along with waste and fraud.³³ But logistics contracts require fewer skills specific to military personnel, and logistics contractors do not need to work as closely with military personnel on the ground as do security and reconstruction contractors.

The activities of contractors who provide security services are most similar to those performed by soldiers. Many are armed and, in carrying out their duties, pose deadly risks to those working around them. Periodic tensions between contractors and regular forces – aggravated by disparities in pay and responsibilities – have raised the issue



of whether these two types of forces can work together effectively. A recent survey of DOD personnel and their perceptions of private security contractors suggests that combining these forces in conflict zones is problematic. Lower-ranking and younger personnel in particular claim that pay disparities between military personnel and contractors are detrimental to the morale of their units in Iraq.³⁴ However, many security services tasks do not require close interaction with military personnel. Roughly one-third of military personnel surveyed in Iraq, for example, had no firsthand experience with private security contractors.³⁵ These tasks are also frequently less crucial to the performance of military units than are logistics services.

Nonetheless, the behavior of contracted security personnel matters to the overall U.S. mission. The hazards of questionable behavior were demonstrated most vividly in the September 2007 Blackwater shoot-out in Nisoor Square. Both Iraqis and Americans, however, had consistently reported this type of behavior long before that dramatic incident. Private forces have tended to focus on the strict terms of their contracts (protecting particular people or facilities) rather than on the overarching goals of the United States (effectively countering the insurgency). Some of the tactics developed to protect clients, such as driving fast through intersections and rapid resort to force, alienated the local population in ways that undermined the broader counterinsurgency strategy. Similar problems persist in Afghanistan. Among military personnel who had experience with security contractors, approximately 20 percent reported firsthand knowledge of PMSC failure to coordinate with military forces “sometimes”; another 15 percent of this population witnessed such coordination problems “often.”³⁶

In today’s conflicts, reconstruction tasks – particularly training – are often more crucial for achieving the goals of the war effort than either logistics or security services. Often, reconstruction tasks must be coordinated so that police training and justice reform, for instance, complement one another, and so that civilian leaders understand the military they are expected to oversee. Contractors who provide reconstruction services must not only deliver quality work but coordinate that delivery with other contractors, the U.S. military, and other government agencies. Thus, these services are among the most crucial for U.S. goals *and* the most challenging to coordinate. Moreover, concerns have been raised about the military’s ability to ensure that these tasks are carried out effectively when they have been outsourced. Notably, DynCorp’s training of the Afghan National Police and Army is widely regarded as a failure, but the DOD has been unable to move the training contract to a different company because of DynCorp’s legal protest regarding contract competition.³⁷ Yet these jobs are less important to the functioning of military units than logistics support, and they pose less deadly risk than security operations do. Problems with integration of activities – or unity of effort – were among the most significant challenges to reconstruction, as noted by the CWC’s 2009 interim report.³⁸

Thus, the overall picture of how contractors shape effectiveness is complicated. Clearly, contractors can quickly deploy skilled personnel, and the majority of contractors are good at what they do. But the United States does not have the capacity to oversee these contracts successfully, and this failure has led to waste, fraud, and particularly with regard to security contracts, abuse. Furthermore, the level of integration needed for



the most effective delivery of services has lagged in Iraq and Afghanistan.

How does contracting for military and security services affect the United States' capacity to take political *accountability* for forces? Mobilization via contract operates differently than military enlistment, with consequences for the relationship between the force and civilians—the political elite and the public included. The U.S. experience in Iraq suggests that forces raised via contract operate much more opaquely than military forces. Largely because of this reduced transparency, Congress has struggled to exercise constitutional authorization and oversight. Furthermore, the public has less information about the deployment of contractors. Though evidence suggests that the public is just as concerned about the deaths of contractors as it is about military deaths, statistics on the former are much less likely to be known.³⁹

Using contractors speeds policy response but limits input into the policy process. As the insurgency grew in Iraq, for example, the United States mobilized 150,000 to 170,000 private forces to support the mission there, all with little or no congressional or public knowledge—let alone consent. President Bush was not required to appeal to Congress or the public for these additional forces, which doubled the U.S. presence in Iraq. As evidence from the reaction to the request for a mere twenty thousand troops for the 2007 surge suggests, the president may well not have been allowed to deploy additional personnel if he had been required to obtain permission. Because the use of PMSCs garners little attention, their employment reduces public arousal, debate, commitment, and response to the use of force.

How contracted forces relate to civilian leaders is an important question. Some

claim contracted forces can be more responsive (given the potential for losing their contracts) than the military bureaucracy. Flexibility in how contracts are written can accelerate mobilization in ways that military organizations often cannot deliver. Certainly, contractors are designed to deliver whatever the client wants. They are thus much less prone to standard operating procedures or organizational bias that can inhibit responsiveness in military organizations.

Not at all apparent, however, is the U.S. government's capacity to oversee contracts in a manner sufficient to generate responsiveness. Even as DOD contract transactions *increased* by 328 percent between 2000 and 2009, the staff responsible for reviewing contractor purchasing at the Defense Contract Management Agency *declined* from seventy in 2002 to fourteen in 2009.⁴⁰ Contracting in individual service branches faced similar problems. The dearth of contract officers makes it difficult to effectively oversee contracts at home, but concerns about adequate oversight are even more pressing when PMSCs are operating abroad. The relevant contracting officer is often not even in theater. Inadequate contract staffing and oversight have been important complaints in both Iraq and Afghanistan and have been tied to numerous problems—from poor performance to waste, fraud, and abuse. Though the risks of poor oversight vary according to task, difficulties in overseeing contractors have been common to all three areas of contract services. The challenge of overseeing expeditionary operations may undermine companies' responsiveness to contractual obligations.

Overall, then, the use of contractors has skirted accountability, making half of U.S. mobilization largely invisible to Congress and the public; as a result, it has masked the number of conflict-relat-

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ed casualties.⁴¹ Though one could argue that contractors are more responsive to political leaders, this likelihood can only be the case once political leaders know what contractors are doing – and evidence shows that this has not been the case in Iraq and Afghanistan.

A final point of evaluation is to look at whether contractors allow the exercise of force in a way that is consistent with the larger *values*, culture, and expectations of the society they represent. Over the course of the Cold War and in its aftermath, military professionalism within advanced industrial states increasingly enshrined principles drawn from theories of democracy (civilian control of the military and abidance by the rule of law), liberalism (respect for human rights), and the laws of war.⁴² Though marginal differences exist, the values that govern U.S. military personnel are largely shared with their Western partners. The ease of mobilization that contracting offers is viewed by some as consistent with the United States' evolving concerns with global security and global governance. But in practice, the use of PMSCs has not fit well within the normative and legal frameworks that underpin global security.

Two factors strain the impact of contracting on the values represented by military forces. First, precisely which professional norms inform the PMSC industry remains unclear. Americans employed by PMSCs have a range of military and law enforcement backgrounds – some distinguished and others less so. However, the industry increasingly recruits from a global market. As recruiting and subcontracting have become more transnational, personnel are from countries as diverse as the United Kingdom, Nepal, Fiji, South Africa, El Salvador, Colombia, and India. These geographic differences

bring an even more diverse array of professional norms. Concerns about lax industry vetting of employees have raised the question of whether PMSCs are increasingly hiring employees with less distinguished service records.⁴³ Finally, many PMSCs also hire local personnel. In addition to lower costs, these forces bring many benefits: local knowledge and ties that can aid companies' effectiveness. However, they also bring local values that may not be consistent with democracy, liberalism, or the laws of war. For instance, evidence suggests that local companies hired by the United States to provide convoy security in Afghanistan funneled money to Taliban forces or were otherwise engaged in corrupt practices that promise to undermine U.S. goals and the values it seeks to support in Afghanistan.⁴⁴

Even if all contractors were well-socialized military or police professionals, they nonetheless operate in a different environment – vis-à-vis both the law and command and control – than troops do. Commanders are less likely to notice or to punish offenses committed by contractors than offenses committed by troops. Over time, a lack of punishment can be expected to lead to more lax behavior; indeed, many have claimed that this outcome is the case in Iraq and Afghanistan. Though reliable, systematic evidence is not yet available, a wealth of anecdotal evidence lends credibility to this conclusion.⁴⁵ Military officers have expressed their concern that the “culture of impunity” surrounding PMSCs has become a real problem.⁴⁶

The increasing U.S. reliance on contractors suggests that national military forces are unsuited to meet the foreign policy goals that U.S. leaders consider vital to national security. It may also reflect the degree to which leaders believe



public support does not exist for the kind of foreign policy they deem necessary. The fact that leaders can turn to contractors has allowed them to pursue their goals nonetheless.

While potentially beneficial to effectiveness, the availability of contractors has also permitted leaders to avoid reconciling foreign policy with national values and institutions. Enhancing effectiveness in this way has undermined the accountability of U.S. forces. Even as the United States works to make the use of contractors more efficient and effective, part of the attraction is that private forces are accountable to leaders, not publics or their representatives, thereby allowing elected representatives to pursue a global mission without first convincing the electorate to make the sacrifices required.

Efforts to make contractors more broadly accountable, though, can undermine the flexibility that makes them effective. For instance, spelling out more clearly in each contract the limits of action can address congressional concerns and enhance accountability, but it diminishes the flexibility that PMSC personnel can deliver on the ground. Furthermore, contractors are even more important to the State Department than they are to the DOD. Attempts to rein in contractor numbers, then, would further fuel questions about the appropriate balance between civilian and military activities in U.S. foreign policy initiatives. Although interagency efforts have sought to ensure that U.S. assistance in Africa, for example, extends beyond military training, the budgetary and personnel imbalance between the DOD and the State Department makes such a realignment of programs unlikely to occur in the near future.⁴⁷

Finally, efforts to implement professional and legal standards for contractors

promise to improve behavior but may also limit reliance on local residents in a way that could increase costs and inhibit the input of local knowledge. To the extent that U.S. standards are perceived as national rather than global, they may omit a large portion of the global industry. The effort now under way to coordinate regulatory and legal mechanisms and create global standards of behavior for personnel and companies in the PMSC industry is a promising development, but its implementation will require a good deal of cooperation between the United States, other governments, NGOs, journalists, industry groups, and additional stakeholders.⁴⁸

Reliance on contractors has generated tensions between the effectiveness of forces, their accountability, and the degree to which they represent U.S. values. These tensions, though not insurmountable, are not easily resolved. They require persistent management by U.S. leaders in cooperation not only with the American public but also with other governments and the variety of additional stakeholders that have an interest in how contractors behave. Thus, while contracting is likely to remain, it is also likely to continue to generate unease in U.S. foreign policy.

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¹ The contemporary “total force concept” explicitly includes contractor personnel. For general overviews of the private military and security industry, see Peter Singer, *Corporate Warriors: The Rise of the Privatized Military Industry* (Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press, 2003); Deborah D. Avant, *The Market for Force: The Consequences of Privatizing Security* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005). For a discussion of the role of contractors in U.S. foreign policy more generally, see Allison Stanger, *One Nation Under Contract: The Outsourcing of American Power and the Future of Foreign Policy* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 2009).

² David Isenberg, “A Government in Search of Cover: Private Military Companies in Iraq,” in *From Mercenaries to Market: The Rise and Regulation of Private Military Companies*, ed. Simon Chesterman and Chia Lehnardt (New York: Oxford University Press, 2007), 83.

³ Determining exact numbers is difficult because the Department of Defense (DOD) did not begin to collect reliable information on the contractors it employed until 2007. Furthermore, contractors were hired by many other government agencies in addition to the DOD; Moshe Schwartz, “Department of Defense Contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan: Background and Analysis” (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, December 14, 2009), 4.

⁴ In Afghanistan’s case, this percentage represents a drop in the ratio of contractors to uniformed personnel, from a high of 69 percent contractors in December 2008; *Ibid.*, 5–13.

⁵ This ratio was at least 2.5 times higher than the ratio during any other major U.S. conflict; Congressional Budget Office, “Contractors’ Support of U.S. Operations in Iraq” (Washington, D.C.: CBO, August 2008).

⁶ T. X. Hammes, “Private Contractors in Conflict Zones: The Good, the Bad, and the Strategic Impact,” *Strategic Forum* no. 260 (Washington, D.C.: Institute for National Strategic Studies, October 2010).

⁷ Commission on Wartime Contracting, “At What Risk? Correcting Over-reliance on Contracting in Contingency Operations” (Washington, D.C.: CWC, February 2011), 1.

⁸ Avant, *The Market for Force*.

⁹ Commission on Wartime Contracting, “At What Cost? Contingency Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan” (Washington, D.C.: CWC, June 2009).

¹⁰ Congressional Budget Office, “Contractors’ Support of U.S. Operations in Iraq.”

¹¹ *Ibid.*

¹² Schwartz, “Department of Defense Contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan,” 6.

¹³ Dana Priest, “Private Guards Repel Attack on U.S. Headquarters,” *The Washington Post*, April 6, 2004.

¹⁴ See descriptions of these companies in Steve Fainaru, *Big Boy Rules: America’s Mercenaries Fighting in Iraq* (Philadelphia: Da Capo Press, 2008); T. Christian Miller, *Blood Money: Wasted Billions, Lost Lives, and Corporate Greed in Iraq* (New York: Little, Brown, 2006); and Tom Ricks, *Fiasco: The American Military Adventure in Iraq* (New York: Penguin Press, 2006).



- ¹⁵ See <http://www.dyn-intl.com/history.aspx>.
- ¹⁶ See the discussion of Vinnell Corporation in Avant, *The Market for Force*, 18, 114, and 148. MPRI stands for Military Professional Resources Incorporated; the company is now a part of L-3 Communications. For a discussion of its role in the Balkans, see *The Market for Force*, chap. 3. For the history of USIS (US Investigations Services), see <http://www.usis.com/Fact-Sheet.aspx>.
- ¹⁷ See <http://www.parsons.com/pages/default.aspx>.
- ¹⁸ Stanger, *One Nation Under Contract*.
- ¹⁹ Office of Logistics Management, *AFRICAP Program Re-Compete* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of State, February 6, 2008), https://www.fbo.gov/index?s=opportunity&mode=form&tab=core&id=4fbad7bde428a5595aca7bfe3cdbc02d&_cview=1 (accessed May 6, 2010).
- ²⁰ Government Accountability Office, "Actions Needed to Address Stakeholder Concerns, Improve Interagency Collaboration, and Determine Full Costs Associated with the U.S. Africa Command," GAO Report #GAO-09-181 (Washington, D.C.: GAO, February 2009).
- ²¹ See <http://www.paegroup.com>.
- ²² Connie Veillette, Clare Ribando, and Mark Sullivan, "U.S. Foreign Assistance to Latin America and the Caribbean," Congressional Research Service Report #RL32487 (Washington, D.C.: CRS, January 3, 2006), 2.
- ²³ Government Accountability Office, "Plan Colombia: Drug Reduction Goals Were Not Fully Met, but Security Has Improved," GAO Report #GAO-09-71 (Washington, D.C.: GAO, October 2008), 15.
- ²⁴ Clare Ribando, "Mérida Initiative for Mexico and Central America: Funding and Policy Issues" (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, April 19, 2010), 1–3.
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- ²⁶ Moshe Schwartz, "Department of Defense Contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan: Background and Analysis" (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, July 10, 2010), 9.
- ²⁷ *Ibid.*, 12; Moshe Schwartz, "The Department of Defense's Use of Private Security Contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan: Background, Analysis, and Options for Congress" (Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service, February 21, 2011), 10.
- ²⁸ Lora Lumpe, "U.S. Foreign Military Training: Global Reach, Global Power, and Oversight Issues," *Foreign Policy In Focus* Special Report, May 2002, 11–12.
- ²⁹ Risa Brooks and Elizabeth Stanley-Mitchell, eds., *Creating Military Power: The Sources of Military Effectiveness* (Stanford, Calif.: Stanford University Press, 2007).
- ³⁰ This complaint was aired in a draft of what became Gregory Fontenot, E. J. Degen, and David Tohn, *On Point: The United States Army in Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Fort Leavenworth, Tex.: Combat Institute Press, 2004). In the final version of the document, however, the discussion of the difficulty with logistics did not mention contractors. General Mahan's complaints were also reported by Anthony Bianco and Stephanie Anderson Forest, "Outsourcing War," *Business Week*, September 15, 2003; and David Wood, "Some of Army's Civilian Contractors are No-Shows in Iraq," *Newhouse News Service*, July 31, 2003.
- ³¹ Office of the Special Inspector General for Iraq Reconstruction, *Hard Lessons: The Iraq Reconstruction Experience* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 2009), 172–173. Another example of the negative consequences of poor oversight is seen in the contractor abuses at Abu Ghraib prison; see Steve Schooner, "Contractor Atrocities at Abu Ghraib: Compromised Accountability in a Streamlined, Outsourced Government," *Stanford Law and Policy Review* 16 (2005): 549–572.

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- ³² On troop satisfaction, see Commission on Wartime Contracting, “At What Cost?” 45.
- ³³ *Ibid.*, 39 – 59.
- ³⁴ Sarah Cotton, Ulrich Petersohn, Molly Dunigan, Q. Burkhart, Meghan Zander-Cotugno, Edward O’Connell, and Michael Webber, *Hired Guns: Views About Armed Contractors in Operation Iraqi Freedom* (Santa Monica, Calif.: RAND Corporation, 2010), Figure S1.
- ³⁵ *Ibid.*
- ³⁶ *Ibid.*
- ³⁷ Christine Spolar, “Military Training of Afghan National Police Mired in Contract Dispute,” The Huffington Post Investigative Fund, February 22, 2010, <http://huffpostfund.org/stories/2010/02/military-training-afghan-national-police-mired-contract-dispute> (accessed February 23, 2010).
- ³⁸ Commission on Wartime Contracting, “At What Cost?” 3.
- ³⁹ Deborah D. Avant and Lee Sigelman, “Private Security and Democracy: Lessons from the US in Iraq,” *Security Studies* 19 (2) (2010).
- ⁴⁰ Commission on Wartime Contracting in Iraq and Afghanistan, “Defense Agencies Must Improve Their Oversight of Contractor Business Systems to Reduce Waste, Fraud, and Abuse,” CWC Special Report 1, September 21, 2009, <http://www.wartimecontracting.gov/index.php/reports>. See also, Jacques S. Gansler et al., *Urgent Reform Required: Army Expeditionary Contracting* (Washington, D.C.: Commission on Army Acquisition and Program Management in Expeditionary Operations, October 31, 2007), 4.
- ⁴¹ T. Christian Miller, “Contractors in Iraq are Hidden Casualties of War,” ProPublica, October 6, 2009, <http://www.propublica.org/feature/kbr-contractor-struggles-after-iraq-injuries-1006> (accessed December 31, 2009).
- ⁴² See Charles Moskos, John Allen Williams, and David R. Segal, *The Postmodern Military* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- ⁴³ Senate Committee on Armed Services, *Inquiry into the Role and Oversight of Private Security Contractors in Afghanistan*, 111th Cong., 2nd sess., September 28, 2010, <http://info.publicintelligence.net/SASC-PSC-Report.pdf> (accessed October 15, 2010).
- ⁴⁴ Dexter Filkins, “Convoy Guards in Afghanistan Face an Inquiry: U.S. Suspects Bribes to Taliban Forces,” *The New York Times*, June 7, 2010.
- ⁴⁵ See, for instance, Fainaru, *Big Boy Rules*.
- ⁴⁶ Schwartz, “The Department of Defense’s Use of Private Security Contractors in Iraq and Afghanistan,” 19. There are international efforts to establish standards for PMSCs, codes of conduct for personnel, and standards for the legal responsibilities of companies and individuals that may begin to address some of these concerns. See International Committee of the Red Cross and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, “The Montreux Document on Private Military and Security Companies” (Montreux, Switzerland: ICRC, September 17, 2008); Swiss Directorate of Political Affairs, “International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers” (Bern, Switzerland: Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, November 9, 2010).
- ⁴⁷ Government Accountability Office, “Actions Needed to Address Stakeholder Concerns, Improve Interagency Collaboration, and Determine Full Costs Associated with the U.S. Africa Command.”
- ⁴⁸ See International Commission of the Red Cross and the Swiss Federal Department of Foreign Affairs, “The Montreux Document on Private Military and Security Companies”; Swiss Directorate of Political Affairs, “International Code of Conduct for Private Security Service Providers.”