

The Expansion of Private Security Firms

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Over the past few months private military firms, such as Blackwater and DynCorp, have “been under intense scrutiny over their operations in Iraq.”¹ The scrutiny given to the private military firms has cast a new light on “the use of civilians for what appears to be combat or near-combat missions in Iraq.”² However, some people say that the use of private military firms is the only way for the United States to be able to fight wars successfully in today's time. The privatization of the military services of the United States: is this carrying the private business sector too far into our internal workings of our government or is this the next obvious step for the private military firms to expand their business?

The debate over the use of private military firms started around the time President Dwight D. Eisenhower was leaving office. President Eisenhower used the term military-industrial complex to describe “the entire network of contracts and flows of money and resources among individuals as well as institutions of the defense contractors, The Pentagon and Congress.”³ In other words, President Eisenhower was talking about private military firms and other private corporations that were working on behalf of the government. In 1961 President Eisenhower stated in his farewell address that:

“A vital element in keeping the peace is our military establishment. Our arms must be mighty, ready for instant action, so that no potential aggressor may be tempted to risk his own destruction... This conjunction of an immense military establishment and a large arms industry is new in the American experience. The total influence — economic, political, even spiritual — is felt in every city, every statehouse, and every office of the federal government. We recognize the imperative need for this development. Yet we must not fail to comprehend its grave implications. Our toil, resources and livelihood are all involved; so is the very structure of our society. In the councils of government, we must guard against the acquisition of unwarranted influence, whether sought or unsought, by the military-industrial complex. The potential for the disastrous rise of misplaced power exists and will persist. We must never let the weight of this combination endanger our liberties or democratic processes. We should take nothing for granted. Only an alert and knowledgeable citizenry can compel the proper meshing of the huge industrial

¹Friedman, George. “The Geopolitical Foundations of Blackwater. *Stratfor*, 10 Oct. 2007. 9 Oct. 2007.
<https://www.stratfor.com/products/premium/barrier.php?err=3&prodid=&subid=&url=/products/premium/read_article.php?id=296525&id=296525&camp=>

²Id

³ “Military-industrial complex.” *Wikipedia.com*. 6 Nov. 2007. 5 Nov. 2007.
<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Military-industrial_complex>

and military machinery of defense with our peaceful methods and goals so that security and liberty may prosper together.”⁴

Although, President Eisenhower warned the nation about the problems that private security firms could cause, it seems that the nation pretty much ignored his opinions about the private military firms. One can conclude that the nation ignored President Eisenhower’s opinion because “private companies are becoming significant players in conflicts around the world, supplying not merely the goods but also the services of war. Although recent well-publicized incidents from Abu Ghraib to Zimbabwe have shone unaccustomed light onto this new force in warfare, private military firms remain a poorly understood and often unacknowledged phenomenon.”⁵ In order to understand what the private military firms (PMFs) are, we need to understand what they do for the United States during the time of war. “PMFs are businesses that provide governments with professional services intricately linked to warfare; they represent, in other words, the corporate evolution of the age-old profession of mercenaries. Unlike the individual dogs of war of the past however, PMFs are corporate bodies that offer a wide range of services, from tactical combat operations and strategic planning to logistical support and technical assistance.”⁶

PMFs are not new to the war scene. Ever since the first wars were fought, there have been PMFs operating. “Indeed, the history of [PMFs] can be traced back at least 3,000 years, when Numidian mercenaries played a large role in Ramses II’s attack on Kadesh (1294 B.C.), and biblical King David’s mercenaries drove the Philistines from Israel (1000 B.C.).”⁷ “The ancient Greeks and Romans also relied heavily upon mercenaries, as did Emperor Justinian and William the Conqueror.”⁸ Once again, the thought that PMFs are new to the war scene is not true. The trend of using hired private soldiers “continued unabated up through the modern era.”⁹ “In the Middle Ages, companies of fighting men offered their collective skills to whomever would hire them.”¹⁰ “During the Renaissance, Italy’s city-states contracted with freelance military commanders so as to deny military power to potential domestic rivals and to avoid disrupting the productive economy by forcing normal citizens

⁴ Id

⁵ Singer, P. W. “Outsourcing War.” *Foreign Affairs*, 30 Oct. 2007. 1 April 2005.
<<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20050301faessay84211/p-w-singer/outsourcing-war.html?mode=print>>

⁶ Id

⁷ Stinnett, Nathaniel. “Regulating the Privatization of War: How to stop private military firms from committing human rights abuses.” *Boston College*. 19 Oct. 2007. <http://www.bc.edu/schools/law/lawreviews/meta-elements/journals/bciclr/28_1/07_TXT.htm>

⁸ Id

⁹ Id

into military service.”¹¹ Then in the Thirty Years War “most of the forces were privately contracted, and the British Crown famously hired Hessian soldiers to fight against George Washington's troops in the American Revolutionary War.”¹²

The thought of PMFs, mercenaries, and private security contractors are not new to countries that are at war. “The United States has a long tradition of using private contractors in times of war.”¹³ “For example, it augmented its naval power in the early 19th century by contracting with privateers, non-governmental ships, to carry out missions at sea.”¹⁴ During the battle of Wake Island in 1941, U.S. contractors building an airstrip there were trapped by the Japanese fleet, and many fought alongside Marines and naval personnel.”¹⁵ Even “during the Civil War, civilians who accompanied the Union and Confederate armies carried out many of the supply functions.”¹⁶

“The modern private military industry emerged at the start of the 1990s, driven by three dynamics: the end of the Cold War, transformations in the nature of warfare that blurred the lines between soldiers and civilians, and a general trend toward privatization and outsourcing of government functions around the world.”¹⁷ These three events all helped lead up to what we have today. After the fall of the Soviet Union, the United States and many other countries decided to downsize their country’s armies. Even as the Cold War ended, and nations moved to reduce their military, “increasing global instability created a demand for more troops.”¹⁸ “Warfare in the developing world also became messier, more chaotic and less professional, involving forces ranging from warlords to child soldiers, while Western powers became more reluctant to intervene.”¹⁹

First, in response to the threat of Communism, the United States built up its military during the Cold War. However, after the Cold War ended the United States decided that it would be in our best interest to downsize our armed forces. Since the United States decided to downsize the armed forces after the fall of the Soviet Union, it had an effect on the marketplace. “In a volunteer army, the troops are expected to remain in the

¹⁰ Id

¹¹ Id

¹² Id

¹³ Friedman, George

¹⁴ Id

¹⁵ Id

¹⁶ Id

¹⁷ Singer, P. W. “Outsourcing War.”

¹⁸ Id

¹⁹ Id

military much longer.”²⁰ In other words, “their training is more expensive, thus their value is higher.”²¹ The United States decided that “taking trained specialists who are serving at their own pleasures and forcing them to do menial labor over an extended period of time makes little sense either from a utilization or morale point of view.”²² “The concept emerged that the military’s maintenance work should shift to civilians, and that in many cases the work should be outsourced to contractors.”²³ The privatization of various military jobs “was reinforced during the Reagan administration, which given its ideology, supported privatization as a way to make the volunteer army work.”²⁴

The “core argument was that it was irrational to maintain a standing military as large as had existed during the Cold War,” and therefore, downsizing the armed services made sense.²⁵ In the early 1990’s, then Secretary of Defense Les Aspin argued for a “a more intensely technological military, one that would be less dependent on ground troops.”²⁶ Aspin’s recommendation to downsize the armed forces was “built around certain geopolitical assumptions.”²⁷ The first assumption “was that the United States would not be fighting peer powers.”²⁸ Aspin’s second assumption “was that [the United States] had learned from Vietnam not to get involved in open-ended counterinsurgency operations, to focus, as it did in Kuwait, on missions that were clearly defined and executable with a main force.”²⁹ Therefore, the hypothesis was the United States was only going to get involved in wars of a short duration with definable performance objectives. Dovetailing onto this hypothesis, was the assumption that armed conflict involving the United States would “be carried out in conjunction with allies.”³⁰ “From this it followed that regular forces, augmented by Reserve/National Guard specialists called up for short terms, could carry out national strategic requirements.”³¹ In other words, the United States thought if we went to war, our allies would back us, and we would go in and get out after the mission was accomplished. One can conclude that Aspin thought that downsizing the military would be a success because the United States would not get involved in another so called Vietnam.

²⁰ Friedman, George

²¹ Id

²² Id

²³ Id

²⁴ Id

²⁵ Id

²⁶ Id

²⁷ Id

²⁸ Id

²⁹ Id

³⁰ Id

As a result of the downsizing, the United States had no other option but to hire more PMFs when we went to war with Afghanistan and Iraq. However, the United States did have one other option it could have taken before hiring more PMFs to do tasks across the world. First, President Bush could have taken highly trained soldiers “who are serving at their own pleasure and forcing them to do menial labor over an extended period of time.”³² Doing this made “little sense either from a utilization or morale point of view.”³³ One has to realize that Bush was not the one that put these plans in motion to downsize the armed forces. “This tendency was reinforced during the Reagan administration, which, given its ideology, supported privatization as a way to make the volunteer army work.”³⁴ The second option that President Bush had before going to war with Afghanistan and Iraq was to try to persuade Congress to call for a draft. However, this scenario was very unlikely, and it would have caused President Bush a lot of negative criticism. One can conclude that President Bush would not want to take such a drastic measure of trying to get Congress to implement this because it would hurt his chances of getting reelected in 2004. Basically, President Bush had no other choice but to hire more PMFs for the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq. “PMFs, in other words, have been essential to the United State’s efforts in Iraq, helping Washington make up for its troop shortage and doing jobs that United States forces would prefer not to.”³⁵

Second, near the end of the Cold War the United State’s armed forces rethought their stance and they redefined “the term noncombatant following the decision to include women in the military, but bar them from direct combat roles.”³⁶ For example, “Intelligence officers called to interrogate a prisoner on the battlefield were thought not to be in a combat position.”³⁷ With the push to make some jobs that the armed forces used to be in charge of, the use of PMFs sky rocketed. “Under the privatization concept, civilians could be hired to carry out non-combat functions, [and] under the redefinition of non-combat, the area open to contractors covered a lot of territory.”³⁸ With the push to downsizing and the new definition of a noncombatant role, the use of PMFs expanded. “Moreover, under the redefinition of the military in the 1990s, the size and structure of the Army in

³¹ Id

³² Id

³³ Id

³⁴ Id

³⁵ Singer, P. W. “Outsourcing War.”

³⁶ Friedman, George

³⁷ Id

³⁸ Id

particular was changed so dramatically that it could not carry out most of its functions without the Reserve/Guard component, [however,] even with that component, the Army was not large enough.”³⁹ The United States had no other choice but to rely heavily on private military firms. Now, let us look at PMFs in today's time. In today's time, PMFs such as “Blackwater work for the State Department in a capacity defined as non-combat, protecting diplomats and other high-value personnel from assassination, [because] the Army, bogged down in its own operations, lacks the manpower to perform this obviously valuable work.”⁴⁰ “That means that Blackwater and other contract workers are charged with carrying weapons and moving around the battlefield, which is everywhere” in Iraq.⁴¹ The advantage of using PMFs is that the contractors are outside the chain of command. If the diplomats that were being guarded by members of the armed forces were attacked, the soldiers involved would have to answer to the chain of command. In other words, “contractors are not quite civilians, given that they often carry and use weapons, interrogate prisoners, load bombs, and fulfill other critical military roles, [however,] they are not quite soldiers,” because they don't have to answer to the chain of command.⁴²

Third, after the Cold War, many governments around the world decided that they could achieve the best results by moving a lot of the operations into the private sector. As a result, parts of the armed force's previous jobs were moved to the private sectors. With this push and the new definition of a noncombatant role, the PMFs grew to new limits. “Not only did the world's armies shrink by more than six million people during the 1990s, but many developed world governments also announced policies of non-intervention except in areas of vital national interest.”⁴³ Because of this push to make many jobs that the government used to do controlled by private firms, it lead directly into the downsizing of the armed forces and the growth of PMFs. With the six million extra men on the market and the need for more PMFs, they did what they knew, because they joined the new PMFs and did the roles that were now in the private realm. “Indeed, PMFs have performed specialized tasks in every major post-Cold War American military operation; they have served as American proxies in places like Colombia and Liberia, and they even operate the computer and communications systems for the United States

³⁹ Id

⁴⁰ Id

⁴¹ Id

⁴² Singer, P. W. “Outsourcing War.”

⁴³ Stinnett, Nathaniel.

nuclear response at NORAD's Cheyenne Mountain base.”⁴⁴ Another area that has been contracted out to PMFs, is that they have been given contracts “to run ROTC recruiting stations on over 200 US college campuses.”⁴⁵

Although there has been a huge push to make a lot of jobs in the private realm that were previously done by members of the armed forces, there have been some huge disadvantages to moving a lot of these jobs into the private sector. The biggest problem that has risen for the armed forces is “the military's ability to retain talented soldiers.”⁴⁶ Meaning that after the soldiers are trained and have finished serving their required term, they will get jobs with PMFs instead of re-enlisting in the armed forces. People are worrying about this because “contractors in the PMFs industry can make anywhere from two to ten times what they make in the military. In Iraq, former Special Forces troops can earn as much as \$1,000 a day.”⁴⁷ Meaning that the PMFs are in direct competition with the United States government. “Not only do they draw their employees from the military, they do so to play military roles, thus shrinking the military's purview.”⁴⁸ The armed forces are losing highly trained individuals to the private sector, because PMFs can pay more than the military can pay. However, other country's armed forces “now allow their soldiers to take a year's leave of absence, in the hope that they will make their money quickly and then return, rather than be lost to the service forever.”⁴⁹ So, some countries are trying to fight the loss of soldiers to PMFs, “but Washington, has failed to take even this step.”⁵⁰

One other problem that is becoming known to the public today is that “private contracts like Blackwater work outside the military's chain of command and can literally do whatever they please without any liability or accountability from the US government.”⁵¹ If a PMF's contractor breaks a law while in another country, they normally don't get any sort of punishment for breaking that law. “As a result of these gaps [in the law], not one private military contractor has been prosecuted or punished for a crime in Iraq.”⁵² Even just recently, Blackwater guards were involved in a deadly shooting of 17 civilians and the contractors are going to be getting off free without having to face a court of law. The contractors are getting off free because “the State Department

⁴⁴ Id

⁴⁵ “History of private military companies.” [SourceWatch.com](http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=History_of_private_military_companies). 21 Oct. 2007. 18 Nov. 2006.
<http://www.sourcewatch.org/index.php?title=History_of_private_military_companies

⁴⁶ Singer, P. W. “Outsourcing War.”

⁴⁷ Id

⁴⁸ Id

⁴⁹ Id

⁵⁰ Id

⁵¹ Seahill, Jeremy. “Bush's Shadow Army.” [The Nation](http://www.thenation.com/doc/20070402/seahill). 17 Sept. 2007. 15 March 2007.

<<http://www.thenation.com/doc/20070402/seahill>>

⁵² Singer, P. W. “Outsourcing War.”

promised Blackwater USA's bodyguards immunity from prosecution in its investigation of last month's deadly shooting of 17 Iraqi civilians."⁵³ Cases like this show that companies like "Blackwater can continue accepting hundreds of millions of dollars in taxpayer money from the government without having to answer to a single question about its security operators."⁵⁴ "Critics have long complained that, unlike soldiers, contractors are rarely prosecuted for their actions, even after evidence surfaced that contractors mistreated prisoners or fired on US troops."⁵⁵

The problem of a PMF contractor getting away with a crime in another country is in the process of being corrected. In the past few months, Congress has passed a law that could possibly affect PMFs and the contractors that work for the PMFs. "Private contractors and other civilians serving with U.S. troops in Iraq and Afghanistan could be subject for the first time to military courts-martial under a new federal provision."⁵⁶ The law that was changed was the uniform code of military justice (UCMJ). "With the addition of just five words in the law, contractors now can fall under the purview of the military justice system."⁵⁷ However, there is a huge mess that could come out of this law that was passed by Congress earlier this year. "Civilian contractors now might be punished for disrespecting an officer, disregarding an order or committing adultery, [which are] actions that are not prosecutable under United States law."⁵⁸ For example, "if a general or colonel directs a contractor or government civilian to do something that is outside [the] terms of [the] contract, under United States procurement law, the contractor does not do it without authority from the contracting officer."⁵⁹ However, "under the UCMJ, that might [now be considered] failure to follow an order."⁶⁰ With this new law put into place, a contractor's "conduct can now be checked by military investigation and court system, which unlike civilian courts, is actually ready and able both to understand the peculiarities of life and work in a warzone and kick into action when things go wrong."⁶¹ Now that this law is passed, it means that contractors should not be

⁵³ "Blackwater Bodyguards Promised Immunity," MSNBC, 1 Nov. 2007, 29 Oct. 2007.

<<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/21533017/>>

⁵⁴ Scahill, Jeremy.

⁵⁵ Witte, Griff. "New Law Could Subject Civilians to Military Trial." *Washington Post*, 26 Oct. 2007, 15 Jan. 2007. <http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2007/01/14/AR2007011400906_pf.html>

⁵⁶ Witte, Griff.

⁵⁷ Singer, P.W. "The Law Catches Up To Private Militaries, Embeds." *DefenseTech.org*, 20 Oct. 2007, 3 Jan. 2007. <<http://www.defensetech.org/archives/003123.html>>

⁵⁸ "Contractors Squirm Under Soldiers' Justice?" *DefenseTech.org*, 19 Oct. 2007, 8 Jan. 2007.

<<http://www.defensetech.org/archives/003134.html>>

⁵⁹Id

⁶⁰Id

⁶¹ Singer, P.W. "The Law Catches Up To Private Militaries, Embeds."

able to kill or commit crimes and get away with them. "Soldiers subject themselves to a different system of criminal justice, [but] that's a decision that's made by everyone who enlists."⁶² Which, "there may be some logic in applying military standards to civilian military contractors who are taking up arms."⁶³ "If private individuals want to do military jobs for profit in a war zone on behalf of the United States government, then they should agree to fall under the same laws as United States soldiers."⁶⁴ In other words, "if a contractor doesn't agree to [the UCMJ] regulations, that's fine, don't contract."⁶⁵ Making PMF's contractors accountable for their actions under military law makes sense. Without this law being passed then "you have two different standards for people doing the same job, [and now with this law passed it] will bring uniformity to the commander's ability to control the behavior of people representing our country."⁶⁶

The third problem that has been created during the expansion of PMFs is that any time you move to privatize something then the end result is that it will save you money. However, this has not been the result of the recent use of PMFs. For example, the Defense Department has awarded over "\$300 billion in contracts over the last five years."⁶⁷ If you look at the previous wars that the United States has been involved then \$300 billion dollars is quite a bit of money. "Yale University economist William D. Nordhaus estimated that in inflation-adjusted terms, the Vietnam War cost about \$500 billion from 1964 to 1972."⁶⁸ "The final cost [of the first Persian Gulf War] was about \$60 billion."⁶⁹ The notion that privatizing the armed forces in order to cut cost is absolutely false, because it has actually raised the cost of war.

The fourth problem that has been created by the expansion of the PMFs industry is who can actually work for the PMFs. "There are insufficient controls over who can work for these firms and for whom these firms can work."⁷⁰ Anyone can work for PMFs; as long as the PMF is willing to hire the person then they can work for a PMF. "The recruiting, screening, and hiring of individuals for public military roles are left in private

⁶² Witte, Griff.

⁶³ Id

⁶⁴ Matthews, William. "Military Rules Extended to U.S. Contractors." *DefenseNews.com*. 5 Jan. 2007. 27 Oct. 2007. <<http://www.defensenews.com/story.php?F=2464128&C=america>>

⁶⁵ Id

⁶⁶ Witte, Griff.

⁶⁷ Singer, P. W. "Outsourcing War."

⁶⁸ Weismann, Jonathan, and Thomas E. Ricks. "Increase in War Funding Sought." *Washington Post*. 20 Oct. 2007. 26 Oct. 2004. <<http://www.washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/articles/A62554-2004Oct.25.html?referrer=emailarticle>>

⁶⁹ McQuillan, Laurence. "How much will new Gulf war cost?" *USA Today*. 25 Oct. 2007. 15 Jan. 2003. <http://www.usatoday.com/news/washington/2003-01-15-war-cost-usat_x.htm>

⁷⁰ Singer, P. W. "Outsourcing War."

hands.”⁷¹ The majority of the workers for the PMFs are highly trained and are ideal workers for the companies, “but the rush for profits has led some corporations to cut corners in their screening procedures.”⁷² For example, “investigations of contractors serving in Iraq revealed the hiring of a former British Army soldier who had been jailed for working with Irish terrorists and a former South African soldier who had admitted to firebombing the houses of more than 60 political activists during the apartheid era.”⁷³ The rise of PMFs during the Iraq and Afghanistan wars has caused many PMFs to cut corners in order to try and cash in on the money that can be made in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The fifth problem with PMFs is that they are blamed for trying to profit from war. Indeed, these companies are making millions of dollars off of the contracts that they have entered into. Without the wars that are going on, companies like “Lockheed Martin, Northrop Grumman, Vinnell and Blackwater, such companies would not exist.”⁷⁴ As a private company, their goal is to try and make as much money as possible. Doing this is known “as basic corporate law.”⁷⁵ The responsibility to make the money for the PMFs falls on “the directors and managers who run the company for the owners, [who] have a legal duty to maximize profits.”⁷⁶ The thought that these companies are in the wrong for trying to profit from war is just wrong. Ever since the beginning of time, a company has done everything they could to make a profit. The thought of trying to make money off of a war is not a new one. In the past, other private companies have sold stuff to the military during times of war for a profit. One example is when the car companies in WWII stopped producing cars and started producing tanks, so they could sell them to the government and make a huge profit. A second example is clothing companies during the time of war would also “start making uniforms and sell them to the army and make them as cheaply as possible and sell for the highest price possible.”⁷⁷ The thought that these companies are a first to try and make money off of war is just bogus. Private companies do everything they can to maximize profits and if this means by profiting off of war then they will do it. The reason is because “the owners can sue the directors and

⁷¹ Id

⁷² Id

⁷³ Id

⁷⁴ Foley, Brian J. “The Profit-Driven War.” CounterPunch.org. 25 Oct. 2007. 15 Sept. 2005.
<<http://www.counterpunch.org/foley09152005.html>>

⁷⁵ Id

⁷⁶ Id

⁷⁷ Id

managers if these employees don't maximize profits in any given situation.”⁷⁸ In other words, the directors and managers will do whatever they can to make a profit for the company that they are working for. The thought that the PMFs are profiting off of war is actually not new to private companies because every time America is involved in a war, private companies start making uniforms, tanks, and even guns and selling them to the armed forces. “This is [only] basic corporate law.”⁷⁹ “These companies are not breaking the law by serving the US military and government.”⁸⁰ They are only doing what they see as a smart business decision to make money, although they are making the money by providing services during war.

Now, there are some advantages to the acting president if they use PMFs. In this case, the president that is taking advantage of using PMFs is President Bush. “In other words, they allow governments to carry out actions that would not otherwise be possible, such as those that would not gain legislative or public approval.”⁸¹ If you actually think about it for a few minutes, then you can actually associate the use of PMFs by the president of the United States as being a new twist to bypassing the Congress and being a new twist to the imperial presidency. The definition of an imperial presidency is “a United State’s presidency that is characterized by greater power than the Constitution allows.”⁸² By using PMFs, President Bush does not have to say how he is going to use them, how much he is going to give them and he does not have to release any information about the deaths of private contractors if they are killed in another country. “The practice, known as outsourcing, is intended to bypass congressional oversight and provide political cover to the White House if something goes wrong.”⁸³ By using PMFs for wars and other activities, President Bush can bypass the Congress and order a new contract through the Department of Defense. One good example of how the United States did not do anything after some private contractors were kidnapped was a few years ago in Columbia. The United States has not done anything for “three American employees of California Microwave Systems whose plane crashed in rebel-held territory in Colombia in 2003.”⁸⁴ As a result of the United States getting involved is that “the three have been

⁷⁸ Id

⁷⁹ Id

⁸⁰ Id

⁸¹ Singer, P. W. “Outsourcing War.”

⁸² “Imperial Presidency.” [FactMonster.com](http://www.factmonster.com/ipd/A0487173.html). 27 Oct. 2007. <<http://www.factmonster.com/ipd/A0487173.html>>

⁸³ Garza, Paul DE LA, and David Adams. “Military aid...from the private sector.” [St. Petersburg Times](http://www.sptimes.com/News/120300/Worldandnation/Military_aid_from_.shtml). 25 Oct. 2007. 3 Dec. 2000. <http://www.sptimes.com/News/120300/Worldandnation/Military_aid_from_.shtml>

⁸⁴ Singer, P. W. “Outsourcing War.”

held prisoner ever since, afforded none of the protections of the Geneva Conventions.”⁸⁵ “Meanwhile, their corporate bosses and U.S. government clients seem to have washed their hands of the matter.”⁸⁶ President Bush does not have to get involved in these three contractor’s kidnapping because they are not members of the armed forces and he does not have to worry about them ever again. The increased use of PMFs in Colombia is one example of how “the Bush administration has circumvented congressional limits on the size and scope of the United States military’s involvement in Colombia’s civil war.”⁸⁷ By using PMFs, President Bush has been able to overstep the limits that were placed on him by the Constitution because President Bush is not required to get authority from Congress to use PMFs. However, “were it not for the more than 20,000 contractors currently operating in the country [of Iraq,] the United State’s government would have to either deploy more of its own troops there or persuade other countries to increase their commitments.”⁸⁸ If President Bush had to do either, then it “would require [him to make some] painful [and] political compromises.”⁸⁹ In other words, President Bush is able to bypass these two painful decisions by using more PMFs in the wars that the United States is involved in. Since Bush is using more and more PMFs to fight the wars around the world, he is expanding his powers to wage wars because he does not have to get approval from Congress to use these PMFs to fight the wars around the world.

In the past few years, the President of the United States has used PMFs in order to bypass Congress. So, it seems that the president is able to use PMFs without having to answer to Congress. As of right now, that is indeed true. President Bush is not required to get Congress’s approval before he uses PMFs, so it seems that he is able to bypass the legislative branch. So, he is overstepping his power as a president and this is considered a new way for the imperial president to get stuff done that Congress would not approve him. However, Congress has the power to pass new laws that would regulate the use of PMFs. So, that means that Congress would have the power to have a voice when the President would be able to use PMFs and when not to use PMFs. Since Congress has the power to pass new laws regulating PMFs and when they can be used, then it is not the president’s fault that he is just taking advantage of something that has not been fixed as of yet. In other words, it

⁸⁵ Id

⁸⁶ Id

⁸⁷ Id

⁸⁸ Id

⁸⁹ Id

is Congress's fault that President Bush and even previous presidents have used PMFs without having to answer to Congress about how the PMFs are being used.

While some people try and say that since we are relying on PMFs, then it raises the possibility of a PMF trying to overthrow the United States government. "It is indeed true that mercenaries have sometimes launched coups against the governments that hire them, though most of the cases date back to Renaissance Italy or even earlier."⁹⁰ One has to remember though that in order to be able to achieve and be successful in a coup; the public would have to support the PMFs before they could be successful in taking over the government. There is a bigger threat that the members of the armed forces "are actually more likely to launch a successful coup than private ones, [because the members of the armed forces] have a greater perceived legitimacy with the public than mercenaries and can more easily portray themselves as representing the true will of the nation against a supposedly corrupt civilian political establishment."⁹¹ The threat that a PMF will try and overthrow the United State's government is just a bogus argument because the public would not view the PMF as a valid authority to be leading them. The people in the United States would support the armed forces overthrowing the government before they supported a PMF overthrowing the government.

"Private military companies can be effective tools of foreign policy, if they are intelligently and thoughtfully used."⁹² They can be effective to the way that foreign policy is carried out only if they are used in the right ways. President Bush can use PMFs to help another country that he normally would not be able to help because he would not gain the public and the legislative's approval to use a branch of the armed forces for a certain event. For example, presidents have used PMFs for Colombia's civil war, and even humanitarian efforts in South Africa. Depending on how PMFs are used PMFs can be effective tools, because it can cause other countries to look at us in a positive way.

Although PMFs might look bad from one standpoint, one has to remember that the government has a weapon that it can use if a certain PMF starts doing bad or work that will give Americans a bad name. "If

⁹⁰ Somin, Ilya. "Military Privatization and the Danger of Coups." [Volokh.com](http://volokh.com). 17 Oct. 2007. 4 Oct. 2007. <<http://volokh.com/posts/1191523062.shtml>>

⁹¹ Id

⁹² Armstrong, Matt. "Congress continues to screw up its priorities and we still don't get privatization issue." [Mountainrunner.us](http://mountainrunner.us). 24 Oct. 2007. 11 Oct. 2007. <http://mountainrunner.us/2007/10/congress_continues_to_screw_up.html>

Blackwater or some other private contractor performs badly, it can be fired and replaced with one of its competitors.”⁹³ One has to remember that since PMFs are working in the private sector, they could be fired at any time for doing bad work or work that could damage the image of the United States. “This is an important incentive for contractors to do a good job.”⁹⁴ Remembering the power of competition in the private sector is the one motive that the United State’s government can use in order to keep PMFs in order. The reasoning that the United State’s government needs to keep in mind is that PMFs are under contract is if they provide sorry service or service that could damage the image of the United State then they could fire the PMFs. If he United States kept this weapon in its pocket, we would be able to regulate the way that PMFs allow their workers to work.

On one hand, it might seem that PMFs are overstepping into the internal workings of the government, but on the other hand it clearly shows that the PMFs are only doing what any private business is going to do. The PMFs saw an opening that allowed them to make money and they jumped at the idea of making a lot of money. The PMFs expanding into what it has come to today is the only path for a PMF to take because it was only expanding to what was allowed by the president of the United States.

⁹³ Somin, Ilya. “Blackwater and the Debate over Privatization.” [Volokh.com](http://volokh.com). 17 Oct. 2007. 4 Oct. 2007
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