TOPICS
Baghdad Journal
Casualties/Iraqi
Casualties/U.S.
Children
Coalition
Contest
Contractors
Corruption
Good News
Heroes
Humor
IEDs
Insurgents
Intelligence
Iran
Iraq Black Market
Iraq Economy
Iraq Study Group
Iraqi Army
Iraqi Government
Iraqi Police
Journalists
Kidnapping
Kirkuk Police Blotter
Kurdistan
Maps
Militias
Oil
Quote of the Day
Reconstruction
Refugees
Safety
Sectarianism
Shia
Sunnis
Terrorism
Transcripts
U.S. Government
U.S. Military
U.S. Policy
Viral Video
Women

IraqSide:Buzz

BLUNDERS

Blackwater Contractor Kills Vice President's Guard

Green Zone Shooting Just One of Many Industry "Dirty Secrets"

By ROBERT Y. PELTON 02/08/2007 10:18 PM ET

There have been rumors buzzing around the contractor community about murder. It started when a Blackwater employee drunk and fresh from a Christmas party in the Green Zone got into an argument with an Iraqi security contractor. The Iraqi worked for the Vice President as a security guard. It is not cleared what transpired but the Blackwater employee emptied the entire magazine of his pistol into the Iraqi.

Under normal circumstances the contractor would have been arrested (the Green Zone is in effect a U.S. base) under the Patriot Act, MEJA, the military code or Iraqi law but he wasn't.

He was dealt with just like any other contractor who commits a crime in Iraq. He was bundled into an aircraft, returned to the US and dropped from the payroll. According to Blackwater's lawyer, he was "off duty" returned to the US and is being "investigated" by the FBI.

The yet to be identified contractor is a perfect example of how and why contractors are accountable to no one.

The recent jailbreak of the former Electricity Minister by DynCorp contractors is yet another example (this was the second time Ayman Alshammarae was sprung from jail) and the most egregious example. The recent Triple Canopy lawsuit brought by two former employers (one I met during a training program detailed in my book). The two Triple Canopy employees filed a lawsuit because they say they were fired for reporting that another employee wanted to "kill an Iraqi" on the way to the airport. The Triple Canopy employee tried twice to kill Iraqi civilians with his M4 and then his pistol.

I personally interviewed three Iraqis who had family members killed by PSDs in Baghdad. There are many more that have been either shot, run over or wounded.

The famous Aegis Trophy Video sat on a site run by a disgruntled employee until it was put into circulation by people who knew exactly what they were looking at. Aegis went after the video owner by suing for copyright infringement of all things. The DoD (their client) said there was nothing to investigate.

Those in the industry remain tight lipped about these dirty secrets. The Blackwater Christmas party shooting also started as an dirty secret. The most famous "dirty secret' was the Custer Battles shoot out in which a entire hotel of drunken contractors fired thousands of rounds into the streets of Baghdad after an Iraqi policeman had fired his Ak at someone who ran a check point.

None of these events have ever been made public and they will continue to be dirty secrets until the courts or congress brings them to light.

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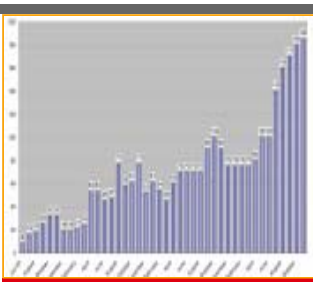

a high-brow paratrooper (AFP via Yahoo! News)

› New US general in Iraq hotseat (AFP via Yahoo! News)