

[PDF] Blackwater: The Rise Of The World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army [Revised And Updated]

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Description:

From Publishers Weekly Scahill, a regular contributor to the *Nation*, offers a hard-left perspective on Blackwater USA, the self-described private military contractor and security firm. It owes its existence, he shows, to the post-Cold War drawdown of U.S. armed forces, its prosperity to the post-9/11 overextension of those forces and its notoriety to a growing reputation as a mercenary outfit, willing to break the constraints on military systems responsible to state authority. Scahill describes Blackwater's expansion, from an early emphasis on administrative and training functions to what amounts to a combat role as an internal security force in Iraq. He cites company

representatives who say Blackwater's capacities can readily be expanded to supplying brigade-sized forces for humanitarian purposes, peacekeeping and low-level conflict. While emphasizing the possibility of an "adventurous President" employing Blackwater's mercenaries covertly, Scahill underestimates the effect of publicity on the deniability he sees as central to such scenarios. Arguably, he also dismisses too lightly Blackwater's growing self-image as the respectable heir to a long and honorable tradition of contract soldiering. Ultimately, Blackwater and its less familiar counterparts thrive not because of a neoconservative conspiracy against democracy, as Scahill claims, but because they provide relatively low-cost alternatives in high-budget environments and flexibility at a time when war is increasingly protean. (*Apr. 10*)

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Review "Virginian-Pilot""At Blackwater USA, Jeremy Scahill's is the face they love to hate... [He is] perhaps the private military company's most dogged critic."Bill Maher, host of HBO's "Real Time""[Scahill's] book is so scary and so illuminating.""The Guardian" (London)"Blackwater being rarely out of the news lately, this is a very useful survey of modern mercenaries - or, as they prefer to be called, 'private security contractors' in the 'peace and stability industry'...Scahill is a sharp investigative writer."Scarlett Johansson, actor"It should be mandatory reading. It's very interesting - and scary."

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