

SECURITY FOR HIRE: PRIVATE CONTRACTORS

WORLD NEWS TONIGHT WITH PETER JENNINGS

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PETER JENNINGS, ABC NEWS

The three Americans killed in the territories were actually private contractors working, as we said, for a Fortune 500 company called DynCorp, that has about \$2 billion in government contracts. There are several companies with similar relationships, and ABC's Jake Tapper reports tonight on the role they play, and it is a large one.

JAKE TAPPER, ABC NEWS

(Voice Over) The DynCorp employees killed today were just three of the thousands on the job around the world, in Iraq, training the new police force, in Colombia, operating a fleet of Pentagon-owned Bronco jets to defoliate coca plantations, where nine employees have been killed, in Afghanistan, providing security for President Karzai, and doing the maintenance on US military aircraft in Bosnia, Kosovo, and elsewhere. Defense Secretary Rumsfeld wants more of this outsourcing, as he calls it, because the military is stretched thin, both in terms of manpower and skills.

DONALD RUMSFELD, SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

There's some studies have been conducted that show that there are something like 300,000

military people doing tasks that could be as easily done by civilians.

JAKE TAPPER

(Off Camera) The biggest ally the US military currently has in Iraq is not Great Britain. It's private military contractors, many of whom are former soldiers themselves, and usually just as qualified. It is a big business, and getting bigger.

PW SINGER, AUTHOR, CORPORATE WARRIORS

It's boomed in the last decade. It's gone from almost zero in revenue to about \$100 billion in annual revenue.

JAKE TAPPER

(Voice Over) It's a huge expense for the Federal government, and not without its critics.

REPRESENTATIVE JANICE SCHAKOWSKY,

DEMOCRAT, ILLINOIS

They are unproven cost-effectiveness. In fact, DynCorp lobbied against legislation that would require agencies to justify private contracts.

JAKE TAPPER

Issues of accounting and accountability. In 1999, accusations surfaced about DynCorp employees in Bosnia participating in a sex slave ring. No one was ever prosecuted.

PW SINGER

How do you control entities that are now outside of the government, but are representing us on the ground?

JAKE TAPPER

And, as private contractors increasingly do the work of soldiers, they unfortunately die like soldiers as well. Jake Tapper, ABC News, Washington.