

Terrorist Bush War-Crimes Saga Continues!



history, according to a new congressional report that may be the most thorough official account yet of the practice. As of early 2008, at least 190,000 private personnel were working on US-funded projects in the Iraq theater, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) survey found. That means that for each uniformed member of the US military in the region, there was also a contract

employee – a ratio of 1 to 1.

A \$100 billion bill 15 Aug 2008 Washington is headed toward another dismal milestone in Iraq. With more than 4,000 U.S. soldiers dead and a conflict that's outlasted World War II, now add a \$100 billion bill for private CONtractors by year's end. The sum pays for a shadow military that provides security, builds bases and runs the chow line in mess halls. The 180,000 private employees, based in or around

Iraq, match the number of American troops. The figure is a high-water mark in the annals of privatized fighting.

Journalist says U.S. target was Al-Jazeera

After more than six years as a prisoner of the United States, former TV cameraman Sami al-Hajj is back at work with Al-Jazeera, the largest broadcaster in the Arab world... and, by most indications, a target of deep hostility from the Bush regime. Al-Jazeera has also been hit twice by U.S. artillery fire. One shelling destroyed its Kabul bureau in November 2001. The second struck a Baghdad office in April 2003, killing correspondent Tareq Ayoub. Reuters chief has accused the Pentagon of murdering many of its reporters.

Pentagon Plans to Send More Than 12,000 More Troops To Afghanistan Where \$2 Billion In Daily Opium Trade Profits Drug Lords In Cabinet

The U.S. commander there, in an exclusive interview, calls for a further buildup to counter the Taliban

By Anna Mulrine

The Pentagon will be sending 12,000 to 15,000 additional U.S. troops to Afghanistan, possibly as soon as the end of this year, with planning underway for a further

force buildup in 2009.

A request by Gen. David McKiernan, the commander of NATO forces in Afghanistan, for three U.S. brigades with support staff has been approved. "Now that means we just need to figure out a way to get them there," adds a senior defense official.

Video: U.S. Marines Take On the Taliban

A U.S. Marine from C company 1/6 24 MEU patrols a poppy field in Garmser, southern Helmand, Afghanistan.

A U.S. Marine patrols a poppy field in the southern Helmand, Afghanistan.

(Massoud Hossaini/AFP/Getty Images)

U.S. Marines stand alert as they prepare to leave Camp Dwyer in Garmser in the southern province of Helmand, Afghanistan.

U.S. Marines stand alert in the southern province of Helmand, Afghanistan.

(Massoud Hossaini/AFP/Getty Images)

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The troops are slated to arrive earlier than has been previously discussed, on the heels of the deadliest months for American forces in Afghanistan since the war began.

The first wave of soldiers will be a U.S. Army brigade from the 10th Mountain Division, according to a senior military official. This brigade is scheduled to ship out between November and January, while two other brigades are likely to arrive "sometime in the spring or summer of next year," the official adds.

And there may be even more to come. "I've also asked for some additional forces on top of that for the current fight," says McKiernan, who wants to bolster the 101st Airborne Division in Regional Command East, which has been rocked by recent insurgent attacks. In July, nine U.S. troops were killed by insurgents who overran a combat outpost on the Kunar border of eastern Afghanistan. This week, militants tried but failed to overrun a base in Khost, just a few miles from the border, launching waves of attacks just before midnight on Monday.

Finding those particular troops to supplement the 101st, however, depends on conditions and troop levels in Iraq, adds McKiernan, who took over the NATO command in June. "That's really a zero-sum decision."

He disputes the notion that the three brigades on the way represent a troop "surge" for Afghanistan, predicting the need for an extended involvement of a larger force. "I've certainly said that we need more security capabilities," he says. "But I would not

use the term 'surge,' because I think we need a sustained presence."

Both major U.S. presidential candidates have called for putting a greater military emphasis on Afghanistan, and it now appears that whoever wins the election will inherit a growing war already underway.

In March, 3,500 troops from the 24th Marine Expeditionary Unit arrived to bolster NATO forces. Originally slated to return to the U.S. in October, they have seen their tour extended by one month.

The three additional brigades would considerably increase the U.S. force presence in Afghanistan, which currently stands at 34,000. Of these, 15,000 U.S. troops are under NATO command, while an additional 19,000 operate independently, primarily in the volatile eastern border region.

There has been growing concern that there are too few NATO troops to take on an emboldened Taliban. In some cases, the warlords directing attacks on American forces are the same ones the CIA backed in the 1980s when they fought Soviet troops occupying Afghanistan.

Some U.S. military officials express skepticism, however, about the impact more U.S. troops can make seven years into the war, in a large country that has grown increasingly violent—with citizens, they add, who are increasingly disillusioned. "I don't know if it's too late," says a senior military official. "But it's going to be much, much harder to turn things around at this point."

U.S. military officials are particularly concerned about the sharp spike in roadside bombs, up "30 to 40 percent" over last year, says McKiernan. "It's the largest casualty-producing event in Afghanistan."

Causing that spike is what McKiernan describes as the "deteriorating condition" of the ungoverned tribal areas of Pakistan, with a porous border that facilitates the planting of such bombs.

Clearing up ungoverned lands rife with insurgents in Pakistan, McKiernan says, is pivotal to improving security in Afghanistan. "We have a cross-border firing incident out of Pakistan almost daily, and unfortunately those aren't diminishing," he adds. "There are militant sanctuaries in Pakistan, and they operate at will."

Record Number Of U.S. Contractors In Iraq

Roughly \$12 billion of the \$100 billion total paid for mercenaries – the gun-toting guards of Blackwater and other paramilitary personnel providers. The scale of the use of contractors in Iraq is unprecedented in US

Sydney White Lectures resume

Sydney's popularity increases with every appearance she makes on radio, as a speaker at Canadian rights demonstrations

and other personal appearances. She grew up in Toronto's Beaches and worked as an investigative reporter at the United Nations for decades. Her articles appear in monetary and academic publications across Canada including *Toronto Street News*

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