

# IRAQ WILL REVIEW ALL CONTRACTORS

Following on yesterday's announcement that it was withdrawing the license of Blackwater, Iraq's government has announced it will review all the security contractors doing business in Iraq.

The Iraqi government said today that it would review the status of all foreign and local security companies working in Iraq after a shooting that left eight Iraqis dead.

I'm as skeptical as I was yesterday that this is going to achieve anything. Larry Johnson lays out the reasons why:

First problem. Blackwater does not have a license to operate in Iraq and does not need one. They have a U.S. State Department contract through Diplomatic Security. Instead of using Diplomatic Security officers or hiring new Security officers or relying on U.S. military personnel, the Bush Administration has contracted with firms like Blackwater, Triple Canopy, and others for people capable of conducting personnel security details. State Department is not about to curtail the contract with Blackwater, who is tightly wired into Washington. Plus, State Department simply does not have the bodies available to carry out the security mission.

Second problem. The Iraqi government has zero power to enforce a decision to oust a firm like Blackwater. For starters, Blackwater has a bigger air force and more armored vehicles than the Iraqi Army and police put together.

Nevertheless, this is going to make for some interesting jousting between the Bush Administration and its puppet.