

Blackwater Founder Erik Prince Implicated in Murder

Sworn statements filed in Federal Court allege that Blackwater founder Erik Prince launched a “crusade” to eliminate Muslims and Islam.

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Global Research, August 30, 2017

[The Nation](#) 4 August 2009

Region: [Middle East & North Africa, USA](#)

Theme: [Intelligence](#), [Law and Justice](#),
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Featured image: Erik Prince

A former Blackwater employee and an ex-US Marine who has worked as a security operative for the company have made a series of explosive allegations in sworn statements filed on August 3 in federal court in Virginia. The two men claim that the company's owner, Erik Prince, may have murdered or facilitated the murder of individuals who were cooperating with federal authorities investigating the company. The former employee also alleges that Prince “views himself as a Christian crusader tasked with eliminating Muslims and the Islamic faith from the globe,” and that Prince's companies “encouraged and rewarded the destruction of Iraqi life.”

In their testimony, both men also allege that Blackwater was smuggling weapons into Iraq. One of the men alleges that Prince turned a profit by transporting “illegal” or “unlawful” weapons into the country on Prince's private planes. They also charge that Prince and other Blackwater executives destroyed incriminating videos, emails and other documents and have intentionally deceived the US State Department and other federal agencies. The identities of the two individuals were sealed out of concerns for their safety.

These allegations, and a series of other charges, are contained in sworn affidavits, given under penalty of perjury, filed late at night on August 3 in the Eastern District of Virginia as part of a seventy-page motion by lawyers for Iraqi civilians suing Blackwater for alleged war crimes and other misconduct. Susan Burke, a private attorney working in conjunction with the Center for Constitutional Rights, is suing Blackwater in five separate civil cases filed in the Washington, DC, area. They were recently consolidated before Judge T.S. Ellis III of the Eastern District of Virginia for pretrial motions. Burke filed the August 3 motion in response to Blackwater's motion to dismiss the case. Blackwater asserts that Prince and the company are innocent of any wrongdoing and that they were professionally performing their duties on behalf of their employer, the US State Department.

The former employee, identified in the court documents as “John Doe #2,” is a former member of Blackwater's management team, according to a source close to the case. Doe #2 [alleges in a sworn declaration](#) that, based on information provided to him by former colleagues,

“it appears that Mr. Prince and his employees murdered, or had murdered, one or more persons who have provided information, or who were planning to provide information, to the federal authorities about the ongoing criminal conduct.”

John Doe #2 says he worked at Blackwater for four years; his identity is concealed in the sworn declaration because he “fear[s] violence against me in retaliation for submitting this Declaration.” He also alleges,

“On several occasions after my departure from Mr. Prince’s employ, Mr. Prince’s management has personally threatened me with death and violence.”

[In a separate sworn statement](#), the former US marine who worked for Blackwater in Iraq alleges that he has “learned from my Blackwater colleagues and former colleagues that one or more persons who have provided information, or who were planning to provide information about Erik Prince and Blackwater have been killed in suspicious circumstances.” Identified as “John Doe #1,” he says

he “joined Blackwater and deployed to Iraq to guard State Department and other American government personnel.”

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Jeremy Scahill, a [Puffin Foundation Writing Fellow at The Nation Institute](#), is the author of the bestselling [Blackwater: The Rise of the World’s Most Powerful Mercenary Army](#), published by Nation Books. Nation Books will release Scahill’s second book, [Dirty Wars: The World Is a Battlefield](#), in April 2013. He is the writer, with David Riker, and a producer of the documentary feature film, [Dirty Wars](#), which will be released by IFC Films throughout North America in June 2013. You can read his blog on TheNation.com [here](#).

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