

WAR AGAINST PROFITS, NOT PEOPLE

Support the call for the
disarmament of SA's
private armies on the

**International day of
mobilisation against
WAR**



March 19

10 a.m.

Constitutional Hill, JHB

ANTI WAR COALITION

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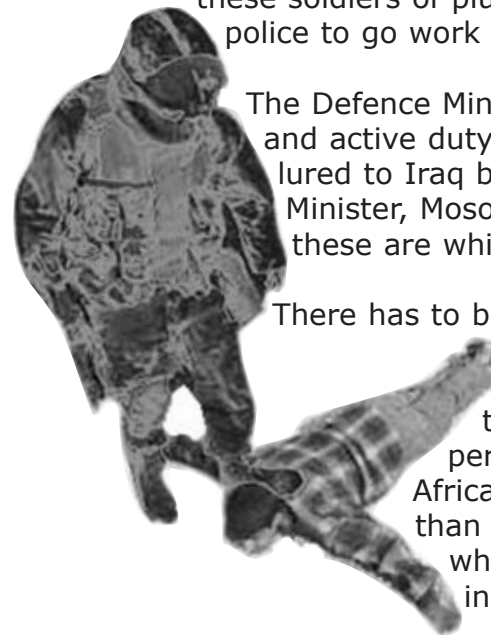
SA Mercenaries in Iraq

South Africa has been exposed as one of the world's top exporters of military personnel. 65 South Africans have been jailed in Zimbabwe on charges relating to a foiled coup plot in the oil-rich Equatorial Guinea. Even earlier, in 2002, Executive Outcomes was investigated for contravening the Foreign Military Assistance Act in its activities in Sudan. Executive Outcomes members had formed a company called NFD that was contracted by the Sudanese government to help it protect oil fields in southern Sudan.

Just how many South Africans are currently supporting the occupation of Iraq is estimated to be about 4,000. Most have been recruited as bodyguards, security consultants or security guards at salaries ranging up to \$12,000 a month. Compared to the R4,500 to R10,000 they would earn in the SAPS, many of these soldiers of plunder have taken leave from the police to go work in Iraq.

The Defence Ministry has estimated that 100 former and active duty soldiers from the SANDF have been lured to Iraq by such lucrative rewards. Defence Minister, Mosouia Lekota, said that all but one of these are white men.

There has to be many thousands more than 100 SANDF soldiers in Iraq. A recent UN report said South Africa provided the third largest number of security personnel to Iraq. The report says South Africans are willing to work for less money than their British or US counterparts, which makes them cheaper fodder for international companies.



The Mercenaries

Many of the SA mercenaries in Iraq are veterans of the Apartheid military machine. Frans Strydom was a counter-insurgency unit operative with Koevoet during the 80s in Namibia, where it committed atrocities against SWAPO liberation fighters. He was killed in a bomb blast in Baghdad last year. Another mercenary, Deon Gouws, was seriously injured in the same blast. He was a member of apartheid's notorious Vlakplaas death squad and given amnesty by the TRC for 15 murders and the petrol bombings of the homes of between 40 and 60 anti-apartheid activists..

Another death squad hitman, Gray Branfield, was killed in Iraq. Branfield admitted to taking part in the assassination of Umkhonto we Sizwe's operational head in Harare in 1981 and was in charge of counterinsurgency operations in neighbouring states. The SADF's 1985 raid in Gaborone, Botswana, in which 14 people were killed was planned by Branfield.

In October 2004, former soldier Johan Botha and former policeman Louis Campher died in an attack outside Baghdad. Both were working for **Omega Risk Solutions**, a security company protecting construction workers in Iraq.

The Private Military Companies

Erinys, headed by Sean Cleary who worked for Apartheid military intelligence and now claims to be an expert on conflict resolution. On its website Erinys describes itself as "an international business intelligence and security risk consultancy focused on Africa and the Middle East", adding that it has "an established in-country capability, under expatriate (UK) management, to provide security services within Iraq". The company recruits apartheid's enforcers, police and military personnel from its office in Johannesburg.

With an estimated 1000 employees in Iraq, Erinys was awarded an \$80 million contract to provide security for Iraq's oil

infrastructure. The contract was secured after a business associate of US puppet Ahmed Chalabi bankrolled the incorporation of Erinys Iraq. Though he has denied the claim, Chalabi is reported to have received a \$2-million fee for helping arrange the contract.

Even the South African Police Services's (SAPS) elite Special Task Force, responsible for the highest security details like guarding the president, has seen 28 members siphoned off by the attractions of Iraqi loot.

South African-owned firm, **Meteoric Tactical Solutions**, has a R3,1-million contract with the British government which involves providing bodyguards and drivers for its most senior official in Iraq and his small personal staff.

SA Law

Foreign Military Assistance Act outlaws the recruitment of mercenaries in SA. According to the act, all security companies working outside the country must register with the National Conventional Arms Control Committee (NCACC). Just two companies, Meteoric Tactical Solutions and Grand Lake Trading 46 (Pty) Ltd, have submitted applications to operate in Iraq.



Koevoet personnel dumping the bodies of the unit's counterinsurgency operations during Namibia's war of liberation. Koevoet veterans are now working in Iraq