

[letter submitted to Cleveland Plain Dealer 9/21/07]

***Controlling Blackwater and other Corporations***

The latest Iraqi killings by Blackwater USA corporation employees have led to confusion about the power possessed by the Iraqi government to respond. The government initially announced the corporation's license to operate would be revoked. It appears now a law enacted by the occupying regime of Paul Bremer gives security corporations immunity from Iraqi law. The corporation may also be operating without a license at all, similar to dozens of other companies.

If the US turned over real governing power to Iraqis, as they claim they have, then the government has the authority to define what Blackwater or any other corporation can and cannot do to protect the health, safety and well-being of its people.

The same goes for our own government. Corporations receive permission to exist and operate by governments. The public through local, state and federal government has the legal power to enact binding ordinances and change or revoke corporate charters to protect people, communities and the planet. Too often, however, we limit ourselves by merely calling for stiffer fines, increased regulations, or temporary suspension of contracts toward corporations causing harm.

Shouldn't we use the powers we have to profoundly define and control corporations?

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