

# Bussiness ethics



To Hire or Not To Hire: Private Military Contractors' Assistance in National Defense

There is no contest on the legitimacy of hiring private military contractors like Blackwater Worldwide; after all, the Federal government would not involve itself into a contract if it is not governed by the law. But the question still stands—should the government even allow this private army to assist in national defense? Though the answer for this question is debatable and far from reaching a conclusion, from my perspective, there is no reason why we should not make the most out of the resources that is available to us. Speaking more plainly, I think that it is in the best interest of the people that the government hires private military contractors to provide assistance in national defense. Though Sandel did not position himself—directly, on any particular side of the debate, he effectively raise and postulates two critical issues regarding the hiring of private military contractors—using, in particular, the case of Blackwater Worldwide as an example; one is regarding fairness and freedom and the other with regards to civic virtue and common good (81). Blackwater Worldwide which now renamed its company Xe Services was founded by former Navy Seals including its former president and founder Erik Prince. Blackwater trains its own personnel to carry out high-risk operations around the world and had successfully secure contract with the US government under President George Bush. Since 2007, the company has been involved in a string of lawsuits, investigations, and intense public scrutiny with their involvement in the war in Iraq and Afghanistan (“Blackwater Worldwide”). With the questionable conduct of Blackwater Worldwide, why would I still think that private military contractors should assist in national defense? Well, compared to the many utilitarian advantages, I believe that the pros far outweigh the cons. In terms

of fairness and freedom, I believe that freedom comes at a high cost, and sometimes, the government has to exploit all other options to ensure that losses are minimized—private military contractors are force multipliers no matter which angle you look at it: in combat support, intelligence gathering, service support, engineering, etc. In the aspect of freedom, there is still the element of personal choice: ‘ Do I choose to enlist given the hazards of the work or do I choose to remain unemployed now and wait for a better opportunity?’ With regards to fairness, it is something that I believe, personally, is irrelevant to this argument. Life is not fair—that is a fact, and it will never be fair because if it is, then there would be no need for the justice system. The other contention is about civic virtue/ common good. “ This objection says that military service is not just another job; it’s a civic obligation...All citizens have a duty to serve their country” (Sandel 84). But what this argument failed to address is that civic obligation is not only limited to serving in the military. Serving the country could be expressed in little ways that could create astounding impacts. For instance, paying taxes promptly and correctly is a civic duty too that is commendable but is often times undermined. In a way this argument has a very myopic view of how civic virtue could be expressed. The military service is a noble profession and it is not called as such for nothing—there are many sacrifices and rights that men and women in uniform has to give up in order to serve their country. For some, the strict standards of the military hinders them from joining the force, private military contractors is another avenue for these people to be able to serve their country, but with better pay. Works Cited Sandel, Michael J. Justice: What’s the Right Thing to Do? New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux,

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