

Copyright is owned by the Author of the thesis. Permission is given for a copy to be downloaded by an individual for the purpose of research and private study only. The thesis may not be reproduced elsewhere without the permission of the Author.

Public Control of Private Military

A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the
degree of
Master of Arts (Defence and Strategic Studies)

By

Marcel Curley

Massey University
Palmerston North
New Zealand.

February 28, 2011

Acknowledgements

I wish to convey my immense gratitude to Kayrn, whose unconditional support and understanding greatly assisted in the expeditious completion of this work. Warm appreciation is also given to my thesis supervisor Dr. John Moremon, for steadying academic direction and sage influence. Many thanks go to Professor Emeritus Graeme Fraser for precise methodological instruction. Thanks also to the Director, Professor Glyn Harper, the Administrator Pam Dolman, and the staff of Massey University's Centre for Defence and Security Studies for rendering numerous services. The Massey University Library also deserves substantial recognition for consistently delivering products of premium quality.

Contents

Abstract	1
Introduction	2
Chapter 1: Underlying Issues	9
Chapter 2: The Ancient Greeks <i>ca.</i> 700-400 B.C.E	24
Chapter 3: <i>Condottieri</i> in Italy <i>ca.</i> 1250-1500	43
Chapter 4: Privateers <i>ca.</i> 1400-1813	65
Chapter 5: West Africa <i>ca.</i> 1960-1999	85
Chapter 6: Iraq and Beyond <i>ca.</i> 2003-	107
Conclusion	127
Bibliography	133

Abstract

Private military force must have a fully informed regulatory and legislative oversight if it is to be a useful and controllable tool for states' management of their political affairs. Today, this requires citizens to be fully aware of and engaged in their state's military arrangements. Contemporary concerns that animate debates surrounding the prodigious employment of private military contractors by certain modern liberal democracies largely reflect the lessons of history. Private force has not been a consistently contentious issue throughout much of Western history and a periodic assessment of their exploits can productively instruct citizens in their current use. History suggests that control of private military force is maximised by an informed coalition of cooperative and engaged participants that includes public citizens, their principals, and the private agents. Given incentive and oversight, they can be shown to have advantage in achieving certain security and defence objectives. Lack of competent citizen-control mechanisms often results in disorder as public and private motivations and objectives compete. Scrutiny of selected private-military histories can assist in informing what will constitute effective control over private military force in a contemporary paradigm. Refusal to recognise the exemplars offers the potential to see past mistakes repeated, to the peril of existing citizen rights and duties. As the proliferation of private military actors is unlikely to recede, given their persistent attendance alongside various human endeavours, identifying and leveraging the successes and failures of control from historical examples is prudent in order to further inform contemporary citizen's democratic decisions about their state's military affairs.