

Blackwater Said to Approve Iraqi Payoffs After Shootings

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Top executives at Blackwater Worldwide authorized secret payments of about \$1 million to Iraqi officials that were intended to silence their criticism and buy their support after a September 2007 episode in which Blackwater security guards fatally shot 17 Iraqi civilians in Baghdad, according to former company officials.

Blackwater approved the cash payments in December 2007, the officials said, as protests over the deadly shootings in Nisour Square stoked long-simmering anger inside Iraq about reckless practices by the security company's employees.

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