

*Founder of U.S. mercenary group
Blackwater charges \$6,500 to
escape capital of Afghanistan*

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?U.S. Marines with Special Purpose Marine Air-Ground Task Force - Crisis Response - Central Command, provide assistance during an evacuation at Hamid Karzai International Airport, Kabul, Afghanistan?

Washington, August 26 (RHC)-- The notorious U.S. mercenary firm Blackwater has prompted public outrage after reports said its head, Erik Prince, is charging \$6,500 per person to fly people out of Afghanistan as the evacuation deadline looms amid the Taliban control.

Erik Prince, former U.S. Navy SEAL, informed The Wall Street Journal that he was offering plane tickets a charter flight out of Afghanistan for a hefty \$6,500, and a higher sum could be charged if distressed individuals required additional assistance.

The U.S. and its allies have been scrambling to coordinate evacuation flights for Americans and Afghan nationals who have been cleared to depart from Afghanistan following the Taliban's takeover. The notorious private security firm has now found new income stream in flying Americans out of Kabul amid the chaos.

White House Press Secretary Jen Psaki on Wednesday slammed the Blackwater's efforts to maximize financial gains, calling to the contractor "soulless." "I don't think any human being who has a heart and soul would support efforts to profit off of people's agony and pain," Psaki told reporters, especially "as they're trying to depart a country and fearing for their lives."

"We are evacuating people free of cost because that is the right step to take, and certainly we wouldn't be supportive of profiting off people who are desperate to get out of a country," she said.

Aid organizations have been told that evacuation flights by western governments won't continue as of Friday due to the need for the U.S. military to remove its own troops and equipment from Kabul.

Speaking to the WSJ, University of Colorado law professor Warren Binford likened the "total chaos" to "a massive underground railroad operation where, instead of running for decades, it's literally running for a matter of hours, or days."

The Blackwater head, under former president Donald Trump, sought to have the U.S.-led war in Afghanistan privatized, offering to take over the job being done by the U.S. military with his own mercenaries, who were then operating under the name Academi.

Erik Prince, in 2019, offered 6,000 of his mercenaries to replace the majority of the American troops, saying they could train Afghan security forces for a fraction of the cost being spent by the Pentagon.

Prince is most known as the founder of Blackwater USA, whose four contractors were convicted in 2014 of killing Iraqi civilians in 2007 while providing "additional security" for Americans during the Iraq war.

The notorious U.S. mercenary force has also worked in "private security" for the Crown Prince of Abu Dhabi and has been linked to military operations in Libya.

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