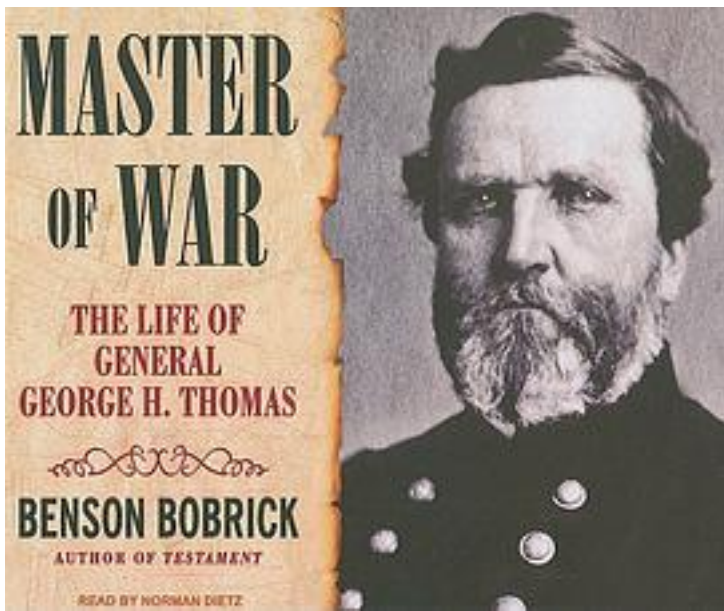


# Master of War



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The name Blackwater, the world's largest private military contractor, became infamous early in the Iraq War, when four of its men were seized by a mob in Fallujah, murdered, and hung from a bridge for the world to see. Since then, Blackwater has expanded dramatically; its men have been involved in major scandals, including a shooting spree in Iraq that has now caused the Iraqi government to blacklist the company. As Suzanne Simons reveals in this first-ever inside look, based on extraordinary access to Blackwater founder Erik Prince, and dozens of his key employees, Blackwater is just the tip of Erik Prince's empire. He publicly reassures everyone that Blackwater only works for the U.S., and would never become a mercenary organization for other governments, yet he has another entire company dedicated to doing just that, hiring foreign nationals, working for well over a dozen different governments, and overlapping in crucial ways with Blackwater. In addition, he has a private spying

company, run by former top CIA men, employing extraordinarily sensitive methods and technical sophistication, for rent by any interested party, from companies to governments. Finally, he is amassing an air fleet that is large enough to serve as a miniature air force, not just by purchasing planes and helicopters, but also by building his own unmanned drones. In short, the full story of Erik Prince and his now-crumbling empire is a story of one of the modern world's most influential military figures, and it has never been told. Prince is a man who shuns publicity except when absolutely necessary, to tamp down a scandal; even when he has wanted to tell his story, he has been shut down by his clients in Washington who won't stand for it. Instead, he has given Suzanne Simons hours of interviews; access to his staff; invitations to join him on trips to Afghanistan; and more. He is a fascinating figure, part deeply conservative, evangelical patriot; part rebellious, go-it-alone kingpin. He is worth hundreds of millions of dollars, and his companies are worth billions. His empire dwarfs all of its competitors, to such a degree that even if the military wanted to wash its hands of him, they wouldn't be able to replace him.

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