

Iraq: No threat in Blackwater shooting

by UPI

BAGHDAD -- Iraqi officials said guards from Blackwater USA were in no way provoked into opening fire on a crowd of civilians and want the company prosecuted. A government spokesman said the investigation into the Sept. 16 incident revealed that there was no ambush and no immediate threat to the Blackwater convoy, which contradicts the company's stance that its men began shooting in response to an ambush. "It was not even hit by a stone," Ali al-Dabagh, the government spokesman declared in a statement Sunday. Baghdad said 17 civilians were killed in the gunfire and that the convoy violated Iraqi laws on the use of force by private security employees. The U.S. Embassy told The Times of London that the U.S.-Iraqi investigation was continuing. Questions of who will have jurisdiction in the matter were still being sorted out.

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