

If Obama wants to find out why KBR civilian workers can be found in every nook and cranny of US bases in Iraq and Afghanistan, he might be better off visiting the Rock Island Arsenal in western Illinois. It's located on the biggest island in the Mississippi River, the place where Chief Black Hawk of the Sauk nation was once born. The arsenal's modern stone buildings house the offices of the US Army Materiel Command from which KBR's multibillion dollar Logistics Civilian Augmentation Program contract (LOGCAP) have been managed for the last seven years. This is the mega-contract that has, since September 11, 2001, generated more than \$25 billion for KBR to set up and manage military bases overseas (and resulted, of course, in thousands of pages of controversial news stories about the company's war profiteering).

Even more conveniently, Obama could pop over to KBR's Crystal City government operations headquarters in Arlington, Virginia, just a mile south of the Pentagon and five miles from the White House. On Crystal City Drive just before Ronald Reagan National airport, it's hard to miss the KBR corporate logo, those gigantic red letters on the 11-story building at the far corner of Crystal Park.

Many people who know something about KBR's role in Iraq and Afghanistan might want Obama to question the military commanders at Rock Island and the corporate executives in Arlington about the shoddy electrical work, unchlorinated shower water, overcharges for trucks sitting idle in the desert, deaths of KBR employees and affiliated soldiers in Iraq, million-dollar alleged bribes accepted by KBR managers, and billions of dollars in missing receipts, among a slew of other complaints that have received wide publicity over the last five years.

But those would be the wrong questions.

Obama needs to ask his Pentagon commanders this: Can the US military he has now inherited do anything without KBR?

And the answer will certainly be a resounding no.

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