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655,000 Dead in Iraq since Invasion

Anarcho

October 13, 2006

According to a new study published by a medical journal between 420,000 and 790,000 Iraqis have died as a result of war and political violence since the beginning of the US-UK invasion in March, 2003, with 655,000 considered the most likely figure.

Back in October 2004, the Lancet medical journal published research by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore which estimated that around 100,000 Iraqis had died as a result of the war. This month, that journal has published a new study by the same researchers which, they say, reaffirms the accuracy of the previous survey and moves it on.

The figures are grim. Between 420,000 and 790,000 Iraqis have died as a result of war and political violence since the beginning of the US-UK invasion in March, 2003, with 655,000 considered the most likely figure. Of the violent deaths that occurred after the invasion, 31% were caused by coalition forces (i.e. coalition forces have killed 186,000 Iraqis in the 39 months after the invasion, about 4,700 per month).

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This means an additional 2.5% of Iraq's population have died above what would have occurred without the invasion. In other words, Bush and Blair are responsible for setting off a process which has killed as many civilians as they claimed Saddam did in 25 years.

We can expect this survey to be described as “controversial” and similarly dismissed out of hand by many supporters of the US-UK invasion as the earlier one. Somewhat ironically, they may point to the Iraq Body Count (IBC) figure of 44–49,000 civilian deaths. This is like comparing apples to kangaroos, as the IBC is based on English language media reports of deaths and so cannot be considered as anything but a (very low, i.e. extremely unlikely) minimum. But such attacks on methodology ring hollow as the Iraqi estimates are based on the same (standard) methods used to estimate deaths in Darfur and in eastern Congo, both of which were accepted without query. Why? Because it served imperial interests just as denying the Iraq surveys does now.

How do the American and British people feel that their tax money is being used to help destroy so many lives? And how would they feel knowing the profits that corporations are making on all of this? Which is why the supporters of this slaughter will try to undermine this report: they do not want people to know the truth about Iraq and what has been done in their name. How will history judge a system which uses “freedom” simply as (yet another) a cover to advance imperial interests over the bodies of others?