

March 20,
2012

CASUALTIES OF IRAQ, NINE YEARS LATER



BACKGROUND:

Nine years ago, on March 19, 2003, the US invasion of Iraq began with a bombing campaign nicknamed “Shock and Awe.” In December, 2011, US combat troops withdrew from Iraq in what was highly publicized as “the end of the war.” But ever since the Iraqi government fell in April, 2003, the “war” has been an occupation, which continues today with an ongoing US presence, including the world’s largest embassy.

What were the costs of the war and occupation? What lies ahead for the Iraqi people? Why would peace groups call for the US to get out of Iraq if the military has already withdrawn? Here are some facts to help explain.

LIVES LOST

3/19/03-12/31/11 (when US formally left):

US troops:

4,486 US military personnel dead
32,226 US military wounded in “hostile” situations
43,638 US military wounded in “non-hostile” situations (US Dept of Defense, 1/3/12)

US contractors:

1,560 contractors dead
(US Dept of Labor, 1/5/12)

Iraqi civilians:

114,212 deaths
14,702 caused by US-led coalition
1,201 of those killed by coalition forces whose age were known (4,140) were children (29%)

Iraqis including “insurgents” and military:

162,333 deaths (Iraq Body Count, 1/2/12)

Note that Iraq Body count only counted individual deaths that could be confirmed by two sources, so the true total could be much higher. (For example, the *Lancet* on 10/11/06 estimated 654,965.)



MONEY SPENT:

\$800 billion on the war/occupation (ABC news 12/17/11)
\$4 trillion estimated long term cost including caring for veterans (Market Watch, 12/15/11)
[\$15 trillion current total US debt (*USA Today*, 1/8/12)]

REFUGEES:

3 million Iraqis displaced from their homes:
1.7 million abroad
1.3 million internally
(Associated Press/United Nations 2/26/12)
[4.7 million in 2009 at the height:
2 million abroad, 2.7 million internal
(Associated Press 12/1/09)]

INFRASTRUCTURE:

Electricity:

6990 megawatts in 2011,
3958 megawatts in 2003 (pre-invasion), 4-8 hours a day, but
9000 megawatts in 1991 before Gulf War part 1
(Deltoid Science Blog, 5/25/05)

Water:

77% of the population (24 million) in 2011
52% of the population (12.9 million) in 2003
(Associated Press, 12/15/11), but
85% of the population in 1991
(UN Food and Agriculture Organization, 2008)

Doctors:

34,000 in 2003 (pre-invasion); but only
16,000 in 2008 (estimated, Brookings Institution 1/31/12)

US STILL IN IRAQ:

16,000 personnel at US embassy, mainly “contractors” (mostly former military-NBC, 12/12/11)
—just 2000 diplomats (some cutbacks expected)
55 number of people in embassy for Turkey, Iraq’s largest trading partner
(*New York Times*, 2/7/12)
763 defense contractors “showing the Iraqi army how to operate more than \$11 billion in weapons and equipment purchased from American companies” at a cost of \$524 million (*Stars & Stripes*, 12/14/11)
\$4.8 billion Overall “mission in Iraq” cost estimate for 2013 (Associated Press, 2/15/12)
104 acres US Embassy size (Al Jazeera ,12/16/11); largest in the world, size of the Vatican (NBC’s Rock Center, 12/12/11)
“Small fleet” Number of US drone aircraft Iraqi government protested being in its airspace (Agence France Presse, 1/30/12)
1 Helicopter forced to crash land on the Tigris River, causing Iraqis to question if the US is really out (*New York Times*, 2/7/12)

In addition, ExxonMobil made a deal to work on oil fields in Kurdish northern Iraq (CNN, 2/13/12), while General Electric is among other US corporations setting up shop as the troops have come home (Reuters, 11/21/11).

(more, over)

