

LETTER

CIVILIAN DEATHS IN IRAQ

According to a new study, this is how many have died, between the U.S. invasion in March 2003 and July 2006.

The study, released October 11 by the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health and published in *The Lancet*, a British medical journal (see www.thelancet.com) identifies these deaths as “in excess” of the number of civilian deaths that could have been expected based on pre-war mortality rates. And it is three times the number of deaths that the same researchers estimated in a 2004 study they did which covered Iraqi deaths from 2002-2004.

These deaths are a direct consequence of the US. war and occupation which has brought bombings, shootings, torture and roundups plus all the massive destruction of infrastructure and the accompanying disintegration of the health, sanitation, housing, and food systems.

The figures compiled in this study also include people killed in the sectarian violence that has erupted since the war began. This factional fighting is also a result of the U.S. invasion and occupation, which has fostered and unleashed, then alternately backed and raided, various competing militias, death squads, and warlords that target rival groups as well as innocent civilians.

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