

Now that Bush is gone, perhaps we can honestly face the damage we have wrought and the responsibilities we must accept from it.

This gruesome figure makes sense when reading of claims by Iraqi officials that there are 1-2 million war widows and 5 million orphans. This constitutes direct empirical evidence of total excess mortality and indirect, though confirming, evidence of the displaced and the bereaved and of general insecurity. The overall figures are stunning: 4.5 million displaced, 1-2 million widows, 5 million orphans, about 1 million dead -- in one way or another, affecting nearly one in two Iraqis.

By any sensible measure, it would be difficult to describe this as a victory of any kind. It speaks volumes about the repair work we must do for Iraqis, and it should caution us against the savage wars we are prone to. Now that Bush is gone, perhaps the United States can honestly face the damage we have wrought and the responsibilities we must accept from it.

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