COSTS OF WAR

The Costs of War Project

Overview

The *Costs of War* Project, housed at Brown University, was launched by a group of scholars from around the US to document the hidden or unacknowledged costs of the post-9/11 wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and related violence elsewhere in the "war on terror." The project has issued, among other reports, the most comprehensive recent estimates of the human toll and US budgetary costs of these wars.

Human Toll

- **Direct Violence:** Over **370,000 people** – including US soldiers, contractors, allied security forces, and civilian bystanders – have died due to direct war violence in Iraq, Afghanistan, and Pakistan.
- **Indirect Violence:** At least **800,000 additional people** have died indirectly as a result of the wars, including through such phenomena as dislocation and loss of livelihood and the destruction of health care and sanitation systems, each of which have led to higher rates of disease, malnutrition, and resulting higher mortality rates.

Budgetary Costs

- **Direct Costs:** Through 2018, the US federal government has spent or been obligated to spend **$5.6 trillion** on the post-9/11 wars, including medical and disability payments to veterans over the next forty years.
- **Massive Debt:** This spending has largely been financed by borrowing. Unless the US changes the way it pays for the wars, future interest will **exceed $8 trillion** by the 2050s.

Additional Costs

There are many other unacknowledged consequences of the choice for war, including **environmental damage**, fueling **sectarianism** across the Middle East, **strengthening authoritarian forces** and leading to **historically high levels of corruption** in Iraq, Afghanistan, Pakistan, and Syria. You can find this information and more on our site, www.costsofwar.org.

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