



*Less the irony of this Doonesbury cartoon, published on December 25, 2011, is overlooked, here is a brief recap:*

*Iraq, "cradle of civilization," land of the biblical Tigris and Euphrates rivers; country of highest educational attainment in the Arab world; the most women professors and PhDs, no al Qaeda insurgents, no threat of any kind to the US -- for no reason whatsoever, was decimated a second time by Bush Jr.-Cheney. Now after 8 more years of US blanket bombing; brutal devastation of Iraq's infrastructure; over 100,000 civilians killed; 1 million+ displaced refugees, 4500 US troops dead; over 33,000 US troops severely injured; a completely gutted one-of-a-kind antiquities museum, supposed reconstruction by 1000s of highly paid US contractors, and total cost of \$1-3 Trillion (yes, 1000 to 3000 Billion dollars, or 1-3 million million dollars -- unfathomable and unpaid for ... mostly in loans from China & Japan), as of Obama's Dec 20 withdrawal of US forces, the country still has no adequately functioning electrical grid, domestic water system, sewerage and sanitation services, communications systems, nor completely reconstructed elementary schools & classrooms.*

***The height of irony: Just six months after Bush Sr.'s similarly invalid war against Iraq ended in 1995, President Saddam Hussein had water, power, sewers, and infrastructure systems all restored to normal operation.***

*Six years & 1 month after Bush Sr.'s withdrawal, Bush Jr. re-invaded Iraq and again devastated the country's infrastructure. Presently, US troops and reconstruction forces (under US supervision) have again departed Iraq leaving the country's infrastructure systems still dysfunctional or only partially restored -- except that this time there is no governmental structure in place that can properly rebuild the country . . .*

**Cartoon by Gary Trudeau, December 25, 2011; commentary by James E. Vann; distributed on Sunday, January 1, 2012. Join our weekly vigil for peace and justice, every Sunday, 12-1 p.m., Broadway, Park and Elm Streets, New Haven: [ctpcnh@gmail.com](mailto:ctpcnh@gmail.com); [http:// newhavensundayvigil.wordpress.com](http://newhavensundayvigil.wordpress.com)**