

War and peace in Iraq

“Iraq: peace is in the balance as U.S. troops leave” (CR, Aug. 26) addresses the question of our responsibilities to the Iraqi people. Bishop Shlemon Warduni states that very clearly: “If foreign troops leave, they have the duty to leave peace and security behind them.” Indeed, wasn’t that our purpose in invading in the first place, to create a free, peaceful and secure country?

If you judge by our actions, first the sanctions that killed hundreds of thousands and left Iraq a Third World country, and secondly the invasion, which killed hundreds of thousands, displaced millions and of special concern to the bishop, decimated the Iraqi Christian community, you see the overwhelming evidence that what the bishop is concerned with and what our leaders are concerned with are very different, indeed.

Was it really our actions that caused the Christian community in Iraq to be devastated? Wasn’t it, instead, the radical Islamic fundamentalists? That is the answer we most often hear and it is undeniable that the Islamic fundamentalists were doing the killing and forcing Christians to flee. But it is also undeniable that the vicious actions on the scale they did occur would not have happened if we did not invade and occupy Iraq. War and its chaos unleashed those forces.