

A wide-angle painting of a historical battle scene, likely the Battle of Borodino. The foreground shows a vast expanse of smoke and debris, with soldiers in blue uniforms scattered across the ground. In the background, a large stone fortification is engulfed in flames, sending thick smoke into the sky. The overall atmosphere is one of intense conflict and destruction.

How are wars fought? COIN

POL 126

Prof. Juan Tellez
Spring 2022

TODAY

Counterinsurgency

Approaches to counterinsurgency

Challenges and tensions

A lesson from WW1

Western front in WWI

Germany wants to go
thru Belgium to get to France



An unfair fight

Germany: world power,
biggest army yet

Belgium: very weak military,
“Chocolate soldiers”



Belgium sets up defenses



Mechanized warfare

WW1: first major use
of mechanized warfare

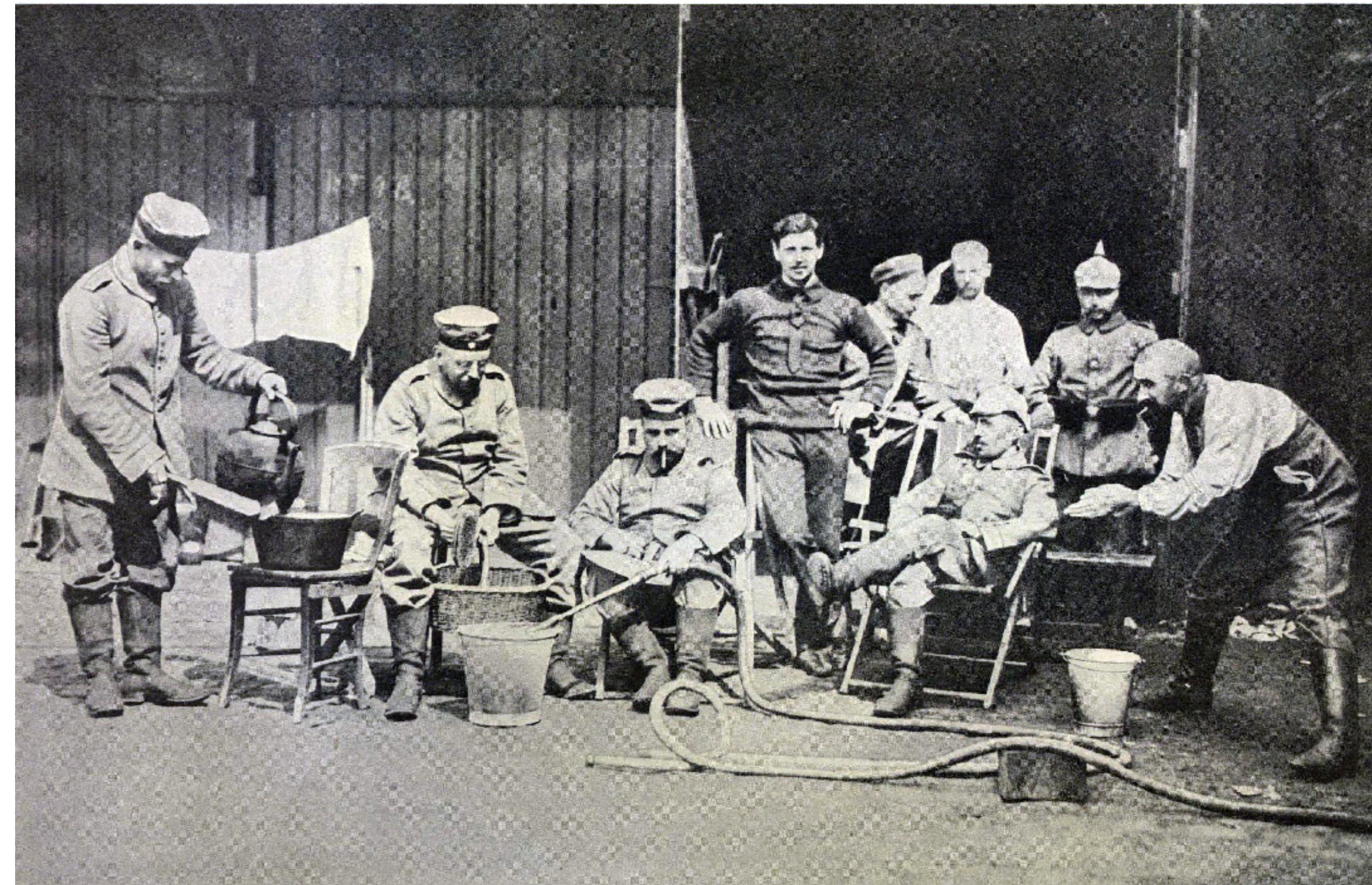
Not **totally** new
(Russia - Japan war,
American Civil War),
but **scale**



Technology during WWI

German invasion begins

Germans charge
fortified Belgian positions



Hardcore History

<https://www.podgist.com/dan-carlins-hardcore-history/show-50-blueprint-for-armageddon-i/index.html#2:16:48>

Inability to adapt



French cavalry under
Napoleon



French cavalry during WW1



German soldier, WW1

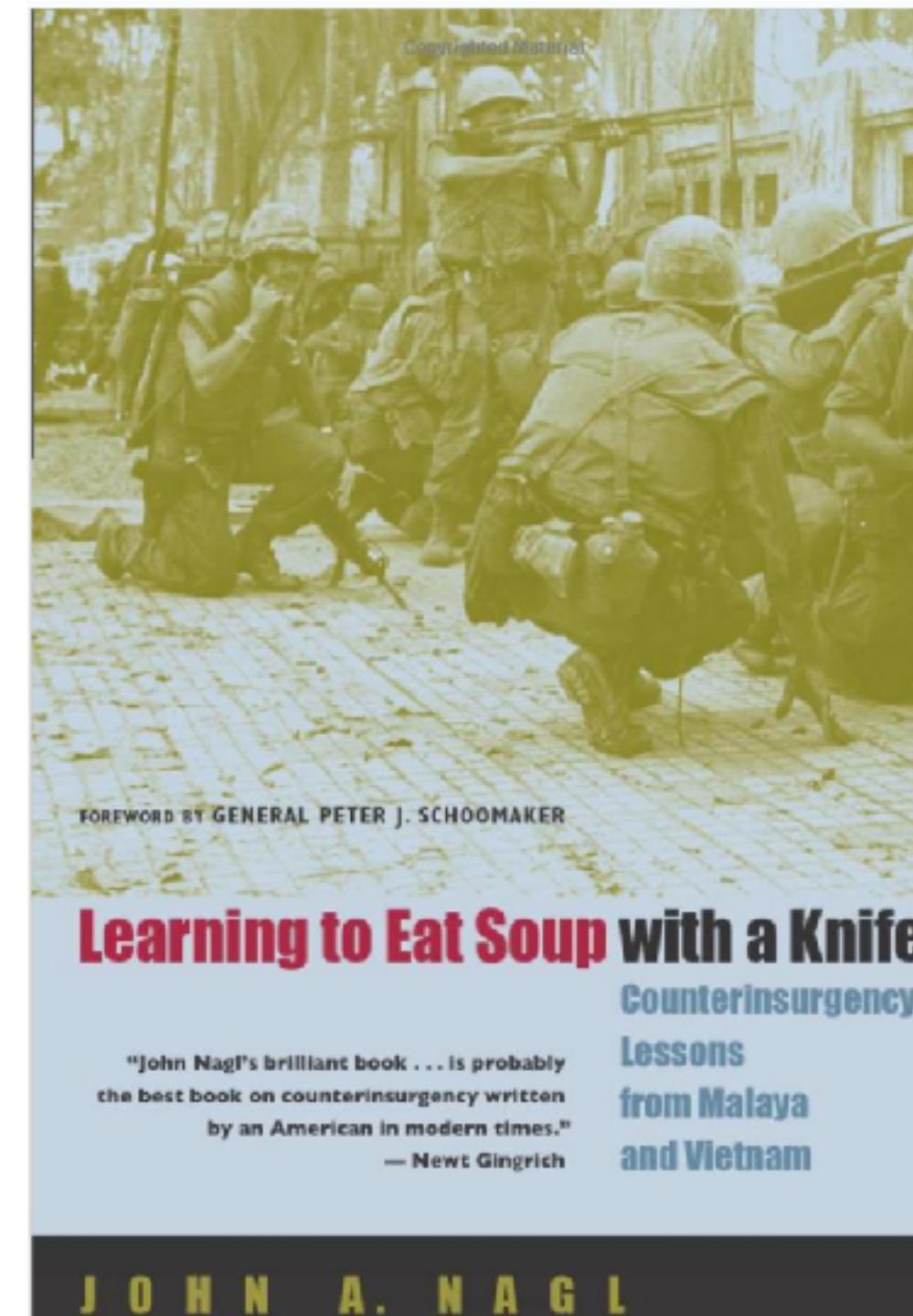
What does this have to do with COIN?

Irregular warfare not quite new

But it redefined war in 20th century

Big, powerful countries struggled to adapt

COIN is very difficult



US experience in Vietnam (1970s)

MODERN WARFARE

A French View of Counterinsurgency
by
Roger Trinquier



The views expressed in Modern Warfare are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Department of the Army or the Department of Defense.

U.S. ARMY COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF COLLEGE
FORT LEAVENWORTH, KANSAS
January 1985

French experience in Algeria (1960s)

What is COIN?

COIN = counter-insurgency

The approach a **state** takes to
battle an **insurgency** (irregular war)

Two relevant characteristics of insurgency:

Identification problem

War of attrition
("The war of the flea")

The war of the flea

Insurgent often can't
beat states outright

Small, persistent attacks until state:
Collapses or makes concessions

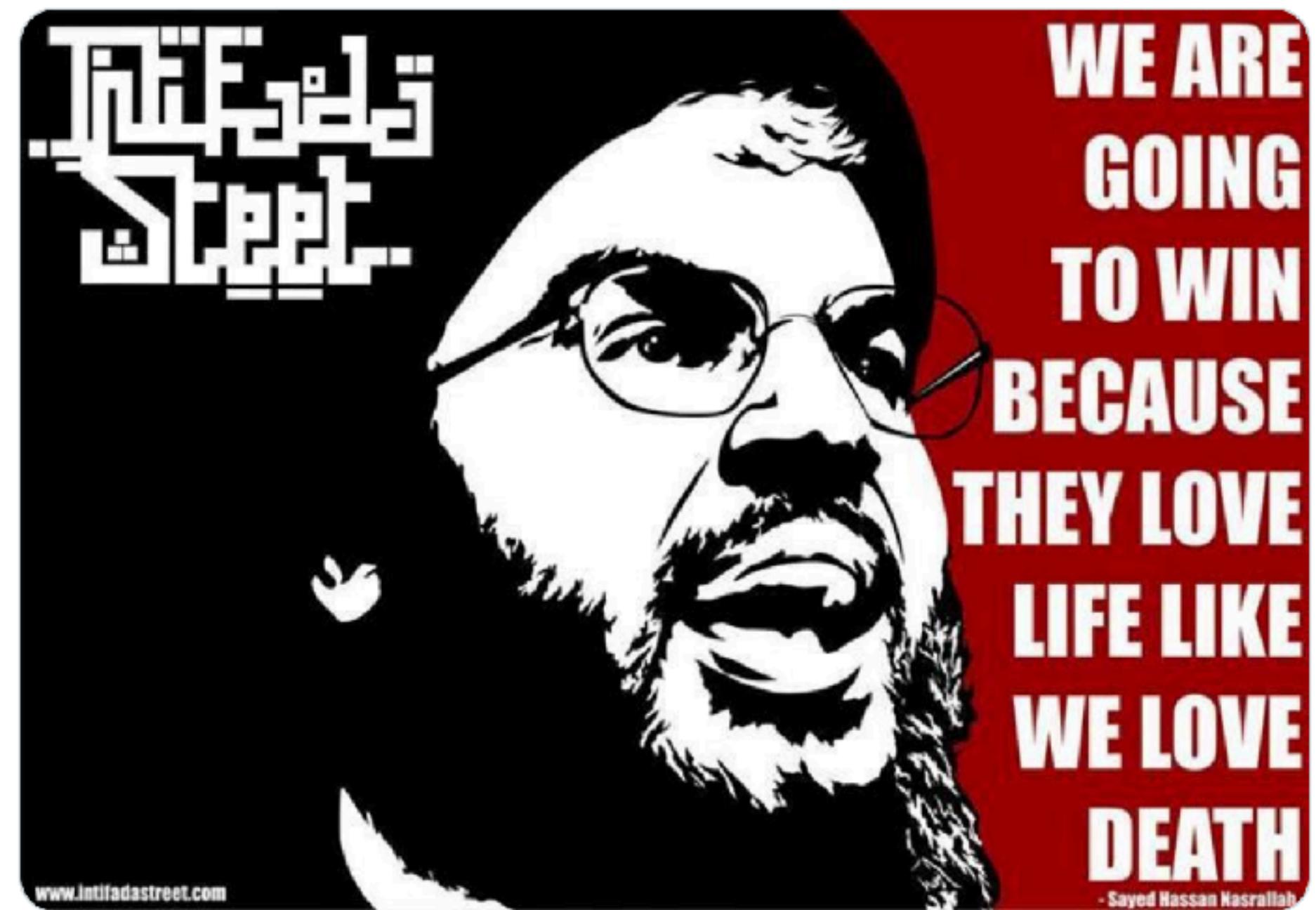


Shia@Ali&
@kassamally

...

We are going to win because they love LIFE like we love
DEATH.

#Nasrallah #Hezbollah



8:48 AM · Dec 21, 2013 · Tweetbot for iOS

Extremely metal quote

Approaches to COIN

“Enemy-oriented”

“People-oriented”



People-oriented, or “COIN”

Enemy can't be defeated militarily

Popular support is crucial

Actions → reactions
(presence alone! Think of doc)

“Hearts and minds” strategy

Clear, hold, build; maintain active presence

Enemy-oriented, or the anti-COIN

Enemy will only be defeated in battle

State cannot win the popularity battle
(Retaliation inevitable)

Hearts and minds doesn't work; very costly

More operations / less presence

The manual

What perspective does the manual we read follow?

The COIN debate

People-centered



General David Patreus +
biographer/lover
(Commanding general in Iraq)

Enemy-centered

*“The typical 21-year-old Marine
is hard-pressed to win the heart
and mind of his mother-in-law...
can he really be expected to do
the same with an ethnocentric
Pashtun tribal elder?”*

Karl Eikenberry
(former chief of Combined Forces Afghanistan)

The challenge of COIN

Goals

Eliminate insurgents

Win over locals
(or at least don't piss off)

Don't take (too many)
casualties

Approaches

Gather intelligence; presence

Minimize civilian harm/abuse
Hearts and minds

Reduce troop exposure

These goals and approaches are in tension!

Who does this sound like?

Country feels threatened by developments in Afghanistan,
decides to invade

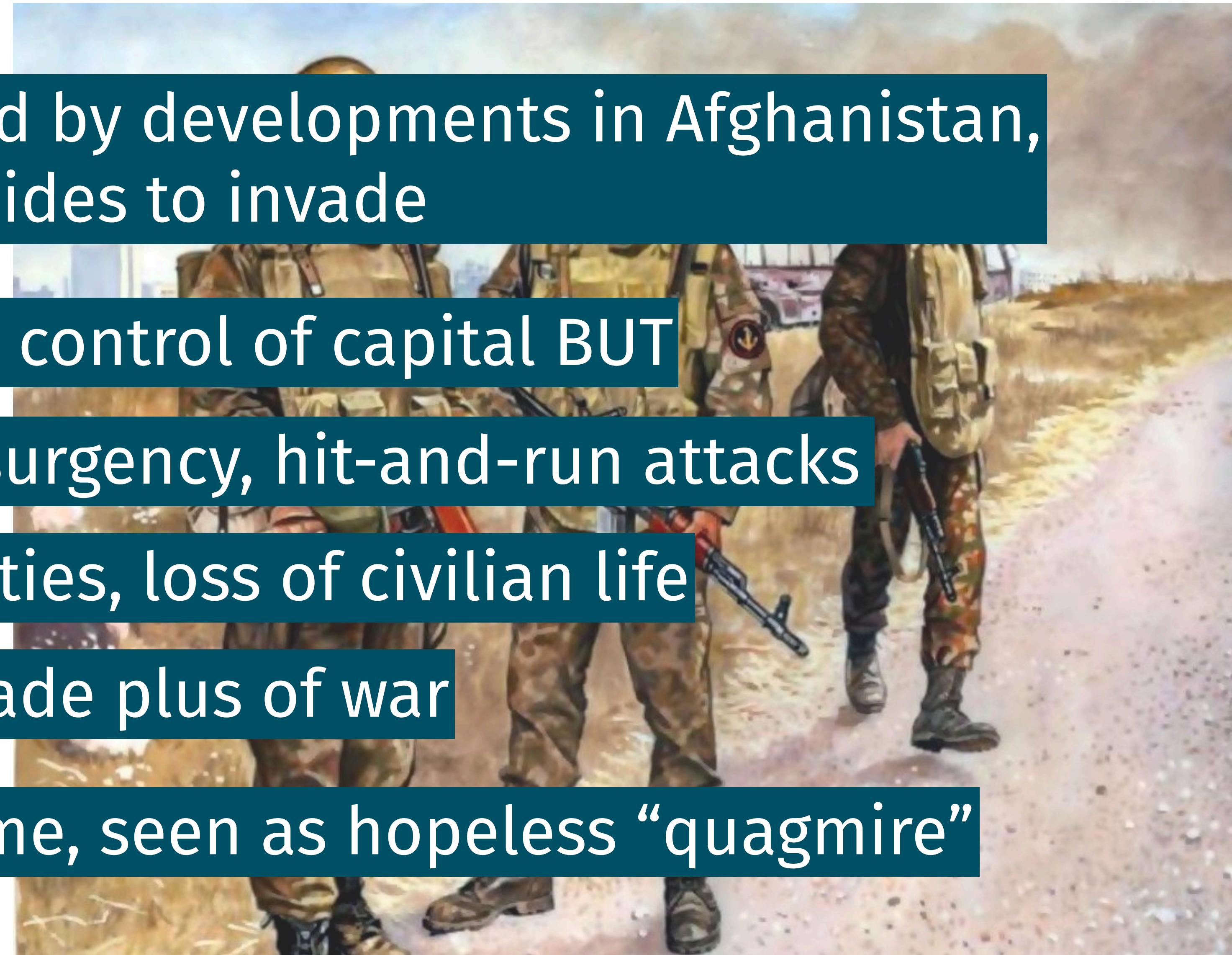
Easily takes control of capital BUT

Quickly faces insurgency, hit-and-run attacks

Huge casualties, loss of civilian life

Decade plus of war

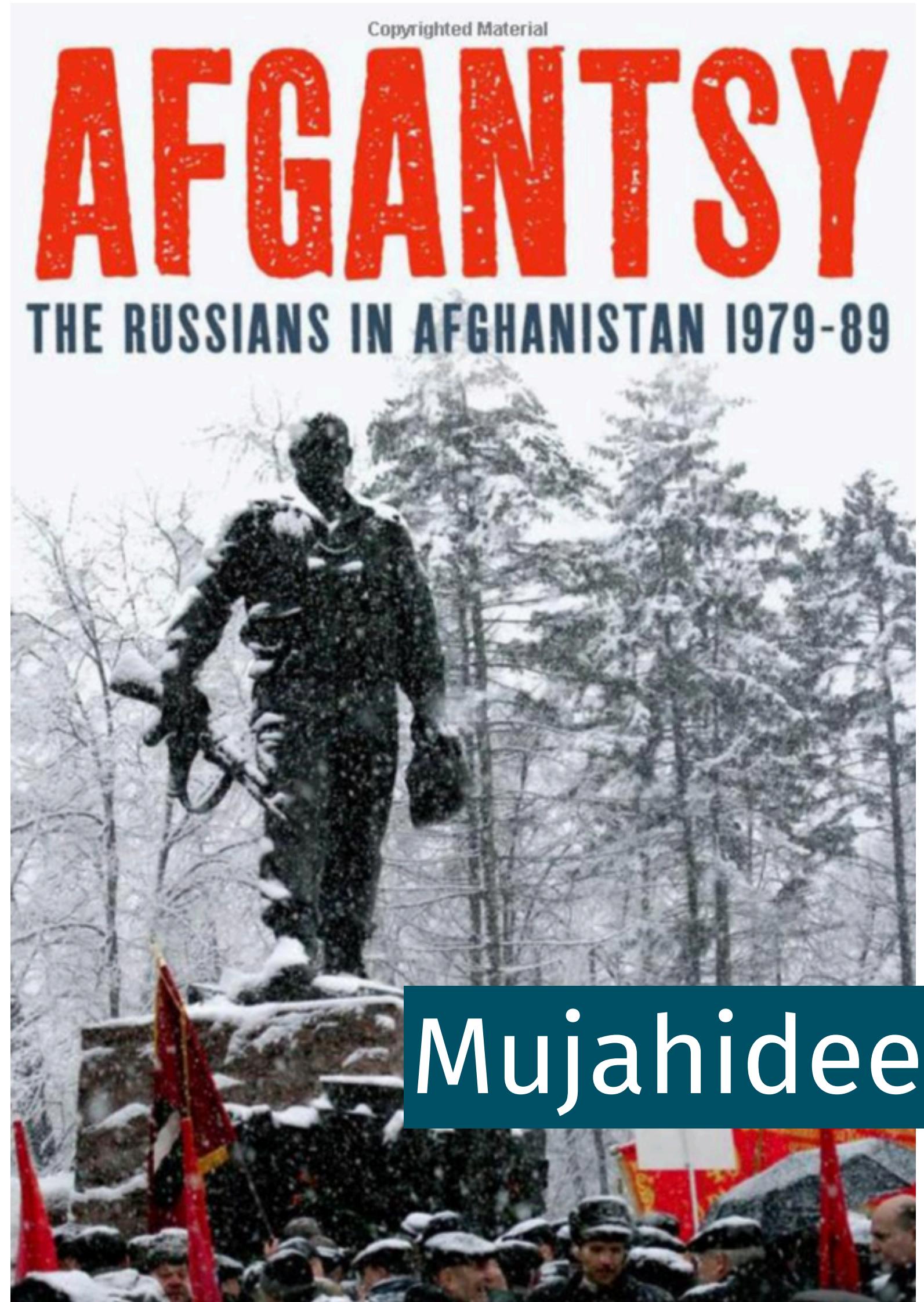
War unpopular at home, seen as hopeless “quagmire”



Who is it?



It's the soviets!



In 1979!

Withdraw in 1989



15k casualties



Mujahideen victory ~ Cuban Revolution

Soviet Navy behavior guidelines



Prohibited! Do not enter into unauthorized communications or acquaintances



*Prohibited!
Do not patronize Afghan stores,
shops or markets whether
government or private. Do not
obtain from there or from private
people any sort of item, food, liquor
or drugs*



*Do not undress to sunbathe or
swim in the sight of local
population or near houses since
such behavior is not in keeping
with national and religious
customs of the Afghans and are
considered offensive.*

Active presence

Counterinsurgents want to maintain active presence – “Share” risk with locals

Presence is **costly** and **risky**, both for troops and civilians

Is it sustainable? And what if insurgents know about it?



“sniper at work” sign in Catholic neighborhood of Northern Ireland

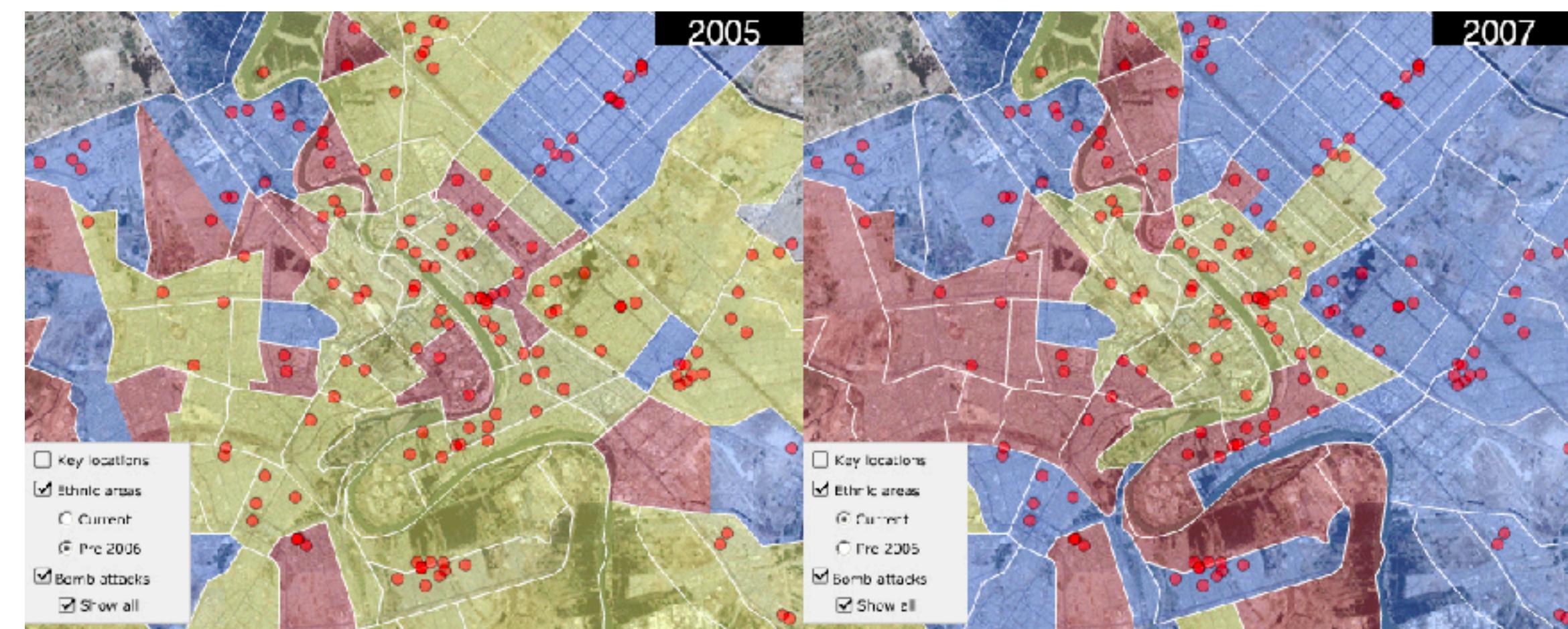
Stoking the flames in Iraq

Rebels may strategically inflame unrest

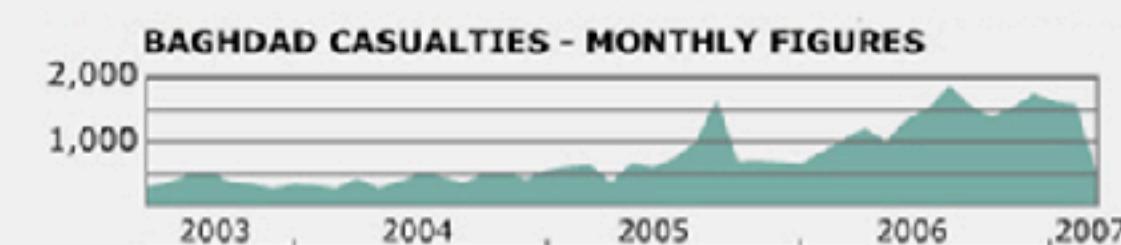
Sunni rebels fighting US in Iraq

Actively target Shi'a civilians

Shi'a militias form – obstacles to US occupation



■ Mostly Shia ■ Sunni/Shia mixed
■ Mostly Sunni ■ Bombing with +10 deaths



Ethnic cleansing in Baghdad

Winning over the locals: civilian harm

Civilian casualties are virtually inevitable in war

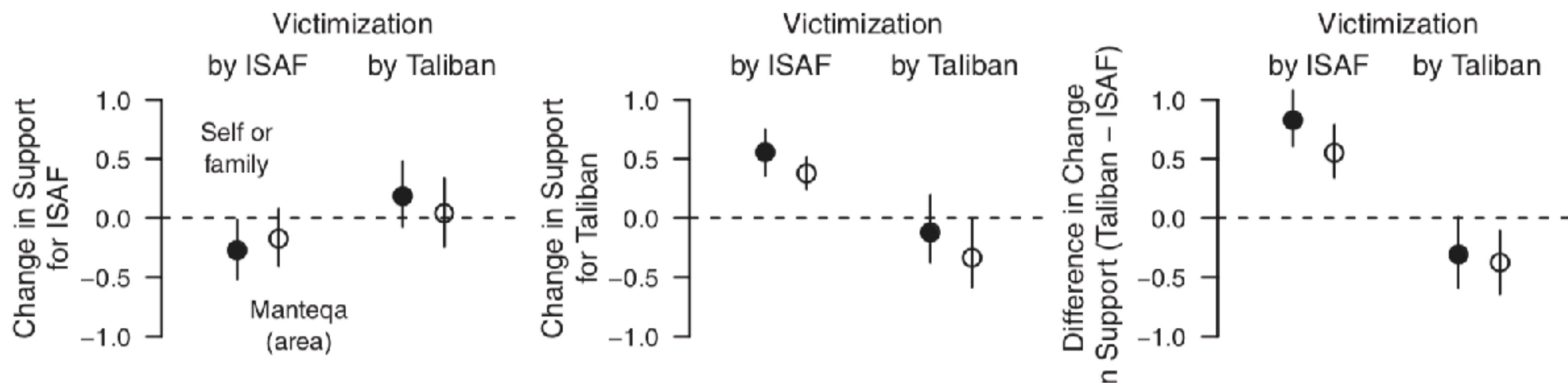
Intelligence is imperfect

Civilians respond to these casualties and withdraw support
(Vicious cycle with intelligence!)

Some evidence casualty effects are **worse** for states

Asymmetric casualties

FIGURE 6. Estimated Effects of ISAF and Taliban Victimization on Support Levels for Each Combatant

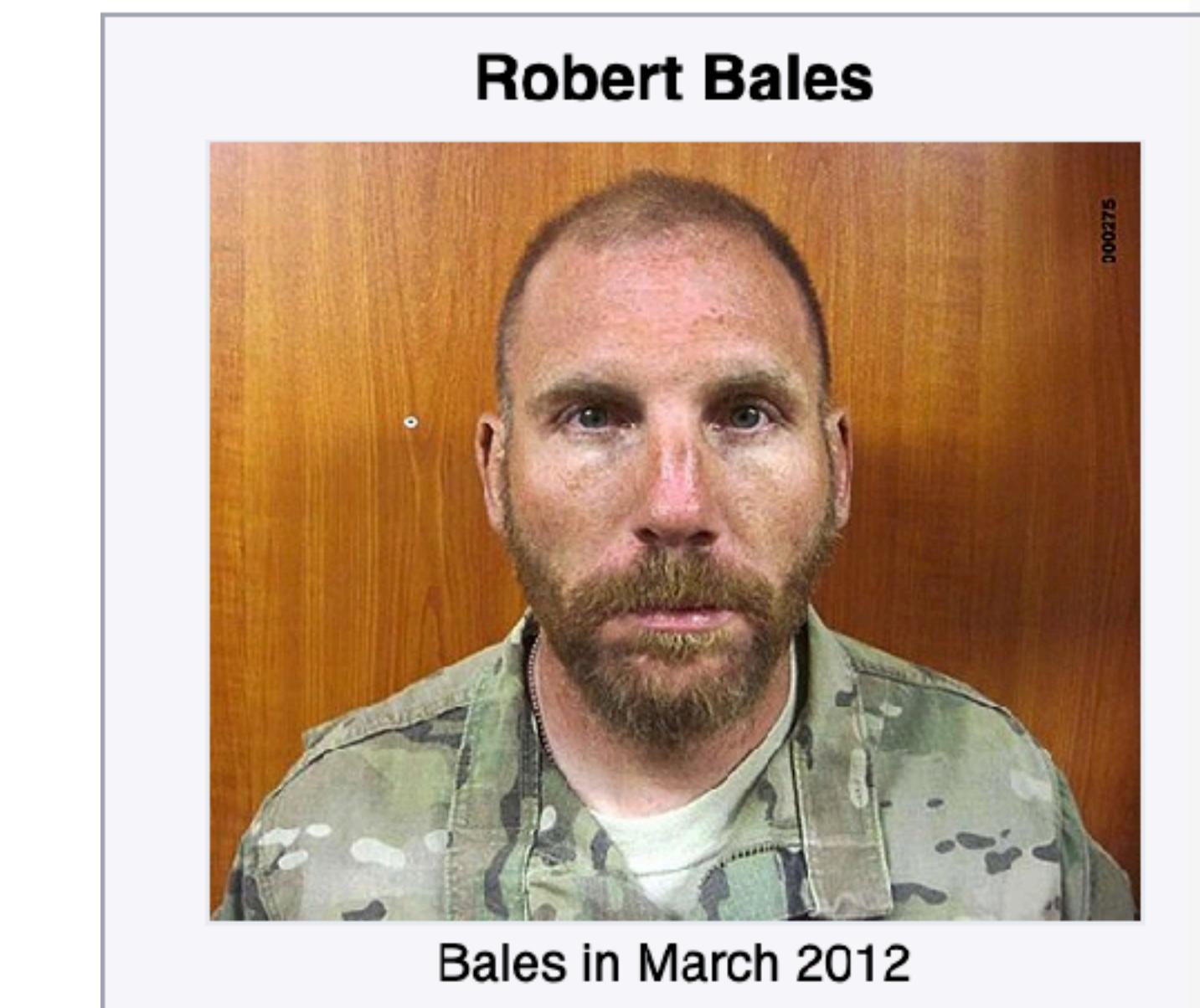


Notes: The right panel presents the differences between the results in the middle and left panels. Posterior means of coefficients derived from multilevel models are plotted with 95% confidence intervals.

Why might this be?
And which side of the debate does this help?

Winning the locals: abuse

Civilian abuse is also, inevitably, not-zero



Minimizing abuse

Troop quality (training, selection) and ability/willingness to monitor behavior – less abuse

But there are important trade-offs with quality!

Quality is (mostly) **inversely related** to supply of soldiers

COIN must often weigh: fewer high-quality soldiers vs.
More, lower-quality soldiers

Recruitment incentives

	Inducement	Target	Description
	Quick-ship bonuses	Recruits	To push new troops out to the field faster, the Army started offering \$20,000 bonuses this summer to new specialty.

Most armies incentivize participation/recruitment

	Enlistment bonuses	All recruits	In 2006, the Pentagon spent more than \$1 billion on enlistment bonuses. In November 1999, new recruits could enlist and receive up to \$20,000 for joining. Today, they can join for a total signing bonus of up to \$40,000. Enlistees also receive \$5,000 for enlisting in six-year contracts.
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Desperate armies lower *quality* thresholds

	Deferred-enlistment bonus	High-school seniors who enlist	Aimed at snagging high-school seniors early, encouraging them to finish school and then head on to boot camp, this new program pays \$1,000 to students for each month they spend in the Army's Future Soldier Training Program. High-schoolers receive an additional \$1,000 when they graduate. This bonus can be combined with other enlistment bonuses. So, if a senior enlists for a specialty with a \$20,000 bonus, spends seven months in the Future Soldier Training Program, and graduates, his total bonus would be \$28,000.
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	Fifteen month + training enlistment bonus	Recruits who answer the Army's "National Call to Service"	In response to market demand from young people for shorter tours of duty, the Army began offering two-year enlistments that allow a recruit to sign up, deploy to Iraq, and get out of the service. This means recruits go to boot camp, then individual training, then to their units for 15 months. New soldiers taking this path are eligible for the GI Bill and can choose between a \$5,000 cash payment or up to \$18,000 in student-loan repayment, but are not eligible for the other signing bonuses.
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	Money for college	All recruits	All service members can sign up for the active-duty Montgomery GI Bill program , which pays up to \$38,700 for college or vocational training, usually after the soldier, sailor, airman, or Marine gets discharged.
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Inducement	Target	Description
Student-loan repayment	College grads who	Recruits who join with existing student loans can earn up to \$65,000 in loan repayment in exchange for three years of service. Soldiers who join the Army for six years in certain specialties can earn \$72,900 in combined

	Inducement	Target	Description
	Student-loan repayment	College grads who go to officer training	Recruits who join with existing student loans can earn up to \$65,000 in loan repayment in exchange for three years of service. Soldiers who join the Army for six years in certain specialties can earn \$72,900 in combined

Plan"		
Less-stringent education standards	Recruits without a high-school diploma or equivalent	Relying on decades of social science research showing that smarter soldiers do better in combat, the Pentagon long insisted that 90 percent of its new recruits enter with a high-school diploma, and that they score well on the military's aptitude tests. Since 2004, the Army has waived these rules for an increasing number of recruits . Among 2004 recruits, 92.5 percent had a high-school diploma, while the same could be said for 87 percent in 2005, 81.2 percent in 2006, and 79.1 percent in 2007.

Moral waivers	Recruits with previous drug or criminal convictions	According to a January 2007 Army briefing, two-thirds of young men and women are ineligible to enlist because of medical problems, poor education, past drug use, or criminal convictions. (To read this briefing in PowerPoint format, click here) To make ends meet, the Pentagon has raised the number of "moral waivers" the services can grant for new recruits with past convictions or drug use. In 2003, the Army handed out 4,644 waivers for past criminal convictions and 1,028 exemptions for drug and alcohol offenses. By 2007 those same numbers jumped to 12,057 and 1,492. In the case of Army Pvt. Steven Green, this policy went disastrously wrong. Green entered the Army as a high-school dropout with a GED, as well as with past convictions for alcohol and drug-related crimes. He now stands accused of a grisly rape and murder near Mahmudiyah, Iraq.
Less-stringent age standards	Recruits aged 35-42	To enlarge the pool of eligible recruits, the Army raised the maximum age for enlistment from 35 to 40 in January 2006, and then from 40 to 42 in June 2006, both times with Congress' explicit authorization.

Berghdal (and others)



Sgt. Bowe Bergdahl, right, leaving the Fort Bragg Courtroom Facility after a sentencing hearing in October 2017. Andrew Craft/The Fayetteville Observer, via Associated Press

Accused G.I. Was Troubled Long Before Iraq

By JIM DWYER and ROBERT F. WORTH JULY 14, 2006

On the last day of January 2005, Steven D. Green, the former Army private accused of raping a 14-year-old Iraqi girl and murdering her family, sat in a Texas jail on alcohol-possession charges, an unemployed 19-year-old high school dropout who had just racked up his third misdemeanor conviction.

Days later, Mr. Green enlisted in a soldier-strapped Army, and was later assigned to a star-crossed unit to serve on an especially murderous patch of earth.

He arrived at the very moment that the Army was increasing by nearly half the rate at which it granted what it calls “moral waivers” to potential recruits. The change opened the ranks to more people like Mr. Green, those

Lower quality soldiers – abuses (think of the Cohen article!)

Hearts and minds: public works

Public goods provision – road building, community

USAID, Peace Corps, etc.

But: Is it sustainable (\$\$\$)? And what if insurgents know about it?



Public school project in Vietnam

“Hearts and Minds”

[Home](#) / [Live news](#)

Ethiopia's Tigray rebels looting aid supplies: US agency

TERRORISM/ COUNTER TERRORISM



Issued on: 31/08/2021 - 21:58

The Assault on Aid Workers: A New Pattern In Terrorism

[Christopher C. Harmon](#)

January 2008, Number 001

Rebels often actively undermine “hearts and minds” efforts

RECAP

States struggle as counterinsurgents

COIN strategy varies in how people or enemy-centered it is

Eliminating insurgents, winning over locals, keeping troops safe
— goals at odds!

“Hearts and minds” is costly, insurgents might adapt