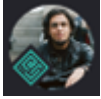# Twitter Thread by Rami Ismail (■■■■)

Rami Ismail (■■■■)
@tha_rami

OK, we're going to go through this and explain why it sucks.

War *is* political machinations. That's the entire thing about war. It's politics that leads to people killing each other. The entire point is political gain or the diminishment of the other party's political power.

In the case of Iraq, it was neither: the US made up a reason.

That makes the job of Peter Tamte, head of *Six Days in Fallujah* publisher Victura, perhaps harder today than it was more than a decade ago. In an interview with Polygon on Thursday, after the game was announced for a second time, he was insistent that developer Highwire Games will not grapple with the political machinations that led to the titular conflict. Instead, their first-person shooter will try to engender empathy for American troops in the field, for their work destroying the insurgents that dug in throughout Fallujah, and for the civilians trapped in between.

Engender sympathy for US troops? Excuse the fuck me? When you look up the casualty statistics for the Iraq war you'll find US deaths, but you could barely *find* Iraqi victims, civilian or resistance or insurgent or terrorist. They're all defined "terrorist" or "collateral".

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How about the experiences of that individual that was just living there & they & their kids and husband tried to flee but men of military age were refused escape from the besieged city by the US before the US went door to door & killed anyone that was looked at them wrong.

> "I think reasonable people can disagree with that," he told Polygon of his narrative strategy. "For us as a team, it is really about helping players understand the complexity of urban combat. It's about the experiences of that individual that is now there because of political decisions. And we do want to show how choices that are made by policymakers affect the choices that [a Marine] needs to make on the battlefield. Just as that [Marine] cannot second-guess the choices by the policymakers, we're not trying to make a political commentary about whether or not the war itself was a good or a bad idea."

This is literally the least interesting part of the entire conflict: between kill and be killed, people tend to opt to kill. We can play that in DOOM. We can play that in Quake. If you leave out the context of knowing the war is wrong, you might as well not make this.

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Also: https://t.co/WyA2CmtbIN

what the fucking fuck are you talking about

what political statement is there in "making up false pretenses to bomb the fuck out of a country killing hundreds of thousands of innocent people over a decade is bad"

how the fuck can you fail even the most basic humanity test

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how the fuck was this just the opening paragraphs

With all due respect to @Charlie_L_Hall's phenomenal reporting, the Iraq war and its devastating effects are not in the rearview mirror by a long shot. The notion that wars are over as soon as they're no longer in the news in the US is how the US ends up in this mess over & over.

> It's the kind of dodge that we've heard from game makers many times before, most recently from Ubisoft in the lead-up to *Tom Clancy's The Division 2*. But that game's conflict was a wholly fictional one. *Six Days in Fallujah* recalls a battle that still looms large in the rearview mirror of our country's headlong push into the Middle East, a tragic event seemingly on the cusp between current events and modern history. Its main characters will be real Marines and soldiers who fought there.

A reminder that the last 'newsbeat' from the Iraq war was the Iraqi government dismissing all US troops from the country, and Trump refusing and threatening sanctions. Since then, 900+ civilians were killed in war-related violence. https://t.co/Dss5S5lcXm

The worst thing about Fallujah is that the civilians had two murderous groups with no respect for human life on their hands: the growing threat of extremist factions in a destabilized Middle East, and the US government and its troops that invaded under false pretense.

> The city of Fallujah became a hotbed of insurgent activity during the 2003 Iraq War. A terrorist named Abu Musab al-Zarqawi drew fighters to that city from around the country and beyond. The violence he inspired directly caused thousands of civilian casualties, but also resulted in the deaths of a team of private military contractors from Blackwater USA. The image of their burned and mutilated corpses hanging from a bridge became synonymous with the U.S. occupation of the country itself. In 2004, Western forces tried to retake the city not once but twice. *Six Days in Fallujah* focuses on the Second Battle of Fallujah, which cost around 100 American lives, and — according to the International Red Cross — the lives of at least 800 civilians.

In 2004, 4 US mercenaries were murdered in Iraq. In response, the US besieged Fallujah twice, murdered thousands, used chemical weapons, and executed unarmed citizens.

In 2007, that mercenary group killed 14 civilians among which 2 children. The US government pardoned them.

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For details on that one. https://t.co/pFHGkmejBu

Note the difference in clarity on deaths of US military personal & the carefulness around civilian deaths. The US never counted the Iraqis as human enough to be worthy of counting. It took external organisations to count, as well as they could.

Every figure is "at least".

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Each of these questions has been answered: there were no WMDs. The "coalition of the willing" was duped or complicit. The administration did lie to the US people.

Tamte isn't interested in those question because the answers aren't "USA USA" propaganda material.

> Looking back on the reasons for the Iraq War itself, many rightly question whether the U.S. military should have been there at all. Did the administration of President George W. Bush mislead the American people and the world in the months before the March 2003 invasion? Was the so-called "coalition of the willing" duped or otherwise incentivized into following along? Tamte isn't interested in those questions.

Tamte can go fuck himself and I think there are probably a ton of people on the team for this game that would make something better if it wasn't his pathetic war-crime-apologetic ass running this project.

Anyway, let's continue.

THIS WAR WAS LITERALLY AN ATROCITY

YOU CANNOT DEPICT THIS WAR AS ANYTHING ELSE

IT WAS A WAR CRIME

IT WAS FOUGHT THROUGH WAR CRIMES

YOU CANNOT MAKE A SINCERE DOCUMENT ABOUT FALLUJAH WITHOUT WAR CRIMES

> He's also not interested in portraying the alleged atrocities that may have been committed there.

Spec Ops: The Line will be a better portrayal of Fallujah than Six Days of Fallujah.

Just to mention two war crimes that are documented specifically in Fallujah:

- The use of chemical/incendiary as weapon against unknown targets
- Violence against Iraqi civilians & children. The US claims to have issued warnings, but refused escape to any men of military age

Anyway it's not as nice a USA USA game if you have to refuse safe passage to a father and his two daughters because the daughters refuse to leave their father after their mother was already killed in war.

But that was the work US military personnel was actually doing there.

The face of a man who literally can't tell whether faking a reason for war to then murder thousands while using incendiary weapons on civilians and filling the ground with so much uranium that cancer rates are still abnormally high in Fallujah is actually good or bad you know

Peter Tamte was executive vice president at Bungie during the development and launch of *Halo*. | Photo: Victura

The good guys for Six Days of Fallujah, folks, actual fucking war criminals.

Medal of Honor had to patch out one multiplayer faction being called The Taliban because "you shouldn't play terrorists in a video game"? Here's a singleplayer campaign about playing our terrorists.

> The U.S. military has said that it used "shake-and-bake" tactics, a combination of high explosive and white phosphorus rounds that flushed out insurgents from their hardened bunkers in order to destroy them. But using white phosphorus as a weapon, and in close proximity to civilians, would seem to contravene the accepted laws of war. Again, Tamte isn't interested in litigating what constitutes a war crime.

We don't need you to litigate what constitutes a war crime, you disingenuous snake - there's conventions for that and while the US dodges international justice courts by threat of invasion, history has documented what war crimes were committed by the US in Iraq, and in Fallujah.

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We need you to stop saying you're going to portray the real Fallujah if you're just making propaganda that won't even touch documented war crimes. We need you to admit that downplaying water-resistant fire sticking to a civilian's skin is no obstacle to money for you.

You want to know how you can tell Six Days in Fallujah, at least under this guy, is bullshit? This line here. "The human stories we can all identify with". Let's unpack that.

> "There are things that divide us, and including those really divisive things, I think, distracts people from the human stories that we can all identify with," Tamte said. "I have two concerns with including phosphorus as a weapon. Number one is that it's not a part of the stories that these guys told us, so I don't have an authentic, factual basis on which to tell that. That's most important. Nu[m] sensational types of things to distract from the parts of that e[x]

From another article at @GameRant a few days ago comes this quote here: Highwire wants authenticity & heavy realism. They want to put you in the shoes of soldiers in a war, an experience most people do not have.

There are no "human stories we can all identify" with in war.

> Highwire explains that it will be aiming to recreate authentic experiences from the Second Battle of Fallujah. As such, its aim is heavy realism and unique features and mechanics that will present the player with consequential tactical decisions. Voice recordings taken from US Marines and Iraqi civilians will apparently be used to construct the game's experience, as well photographs and video recordings. Highwire repeats that authenticity is its goal.

The entire suggested promise of Six Days in Fallujah is that the game will give us an experience, an emotional insight into the realities of war. The difficult choices. The sacrifice. The hardships. The trauma.

But that line right here reveals the truth: that's not the goal.