War has been described as a manifestation of death and destruction, an exhibit of all negativities of life. This is also how we can describe the situation in Kunduz, a province of Afghanistan and a very sad and recent chapter in history. Involving many NATO and non-NATO nations, such as Albania, Armenia, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Finland, Germany, Hungary, Latvia, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Mongolia, Montenegro Netherlands, Norway, and Sweden, it is an international responsibility. It is a war, in which it is almost impossible to tell friend from foe. All of the members of the coalition forces, the ISAF, agree on this. How can one tell whether informants follow the same goals as we do? In 2009, Colonel Georg Klein, the new commander of Germany’s Provincial Reconstruction Team, witnessed attacks by the Taliban killing of one of his men and injuring others, in addition to a suicide bomb attack on his camp. Reacting on information received from a hitherto reliable informant, Klein called on the American forces in the region to drop two, 500-pound GBU-38 bombs on two fuel trucks previously captured by the Taliban.

Klein, adamant that no innocent people should be harmed, believed he was doing something of the utmost military and political relevance — the taking out of key Taliban insurgents. Unfortunately, he had received false information and the supposed insurgents visible on a reconnaissance video were in fact more than 100 Afghan civilians, amongst them many children, attempting to collect fuel from the tankers for purely domestic purposes. The Americans obliged Klein’s request and unleashed their deadly cargo. The ensuing deaths of innocent civilians, especially their children, constituted a major setback for the coalition forces in their quest to win over the hearts of a people hitherto suppressed by the Taliban.

This is a story of grief, of suffering — and of mistrust. A story of the belief in a cause. Of belief in a mission. A mission in Kunduz.