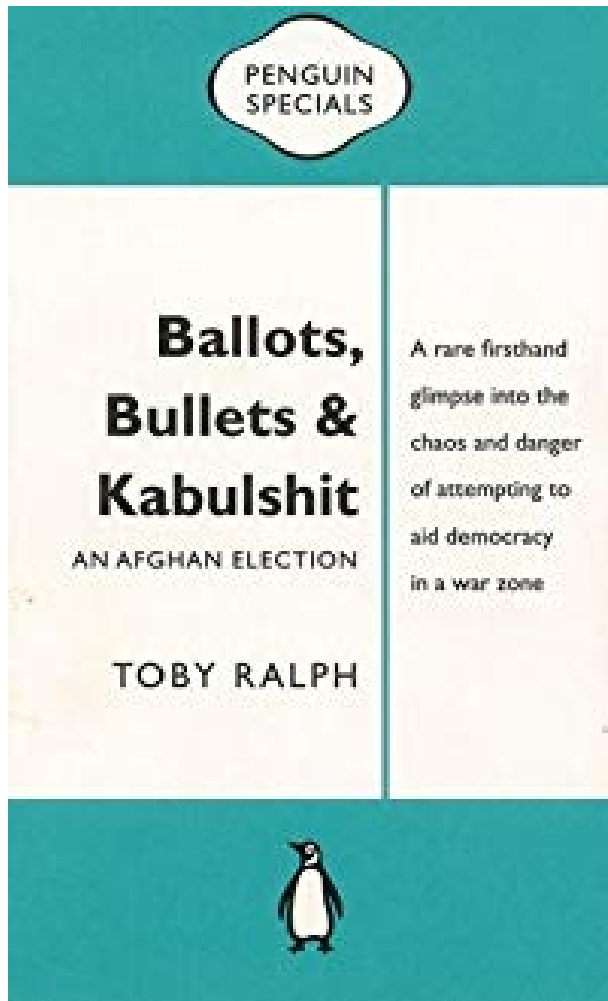


# Ballots, Bullets & Kabulshit: An Afghan Election



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When Toby Ralph joined a UN team assisting preparations for Afghanistan's 2009 presidential election, he didn't quite know what he was getting into. In a country unaccustomed to fair and free processes, the resistance he encountered to the idea democracy ranged from corruption and ineptitude to violence. Along the way, he found AK-47s stuffed into the couch at his lodgings, Taliban wearing tennis shoes, and press conferences that descended into farce. Rocket fire rattled the guesthouse walls. A candlelit diner required three rounds of security checks. Ralph's wryly humorous account of his experiences as electoral advisor in a war zone makes voting for the Australian Senate look like a cakewalk.