Who undermines the peace at the ballot box? The case of Colombia [*]

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Abstract

Electoral politics and violent civil conflict often coexist. Citizens exposed and unexposed to violence bear the costs of conflict unevenly and, thus, conceive of militant vs. accommodationist state response to the perpetrators of violence differently. The literature has found that victims of political violence tend to endorse militant state response against nonstate actors seen as responsible. This result is mostly based on secessionist conflicts in which victims of violence are often shielded from the costs of state counterinsurgency or counterterrorism campaigns. By contrast, we argue, in non-secessionist conflicts, individuals exposed to violence tend to also experience the state militant anti-guerrilla operations, which often lead to state abuses of civilians. We expect that civilians exposed to nonstate and state attacks will be more likely to support pro-peace policies. We find support for this argument analyzing Colombia's 2014 presidential election and 2016 peace agreement referendum. In addition, we use original data on local candidates' pro- and anti-peace process positions in Colombia's 2014 congressional election to test the underlying logic of the argument that local communities exposed to both nonstate and state violence are more likely to demand pro-peace policies.

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Introduction

Electoral politics and violent civil conflict often coexist, yet scholarship has not conclusively answered how exposure to violence plays into voters' preferences to approve hawkish or accommodationist policies in the context of intrastate conflict. Whether a governing party should violently suppress insurgents or accommodate them often becomes a major political cleavage in democratic societies that face insurgencies (e.g., Israel, Pakistan, Philippines, Ukraine). To answer this question we look at Lower House and presidential elections in Colombia, a country that has seen a total of 23 national elections since the emergence of the FARC in 1964 with politicians campaigning (at least to an extent) in each of these elections on the issue of what a desirable counterinsurgency approach should be.

Most research argues that voters exposed to insurgent attacks tend to endorse a hawkish state policy against the responsible nonstate actor. Most of this literature is driven by results from secessionist conflicts in which voters exposed to attacks are often shielded from the costs of the state militant response.[1] By contrast, in non-secessionist conflicts, civilians suffering from insurgent attacks also tend to be victimized by the state militant counterinsurgency or counterterrorism operations. We posit that civilians in areas exposed to attacks from nonstate actors and to violence from counterinsurgency operations will bear greater costs from ongoing conflict, thus residents of these localities should be more willing to endorse a policy that could end violence. We thus propose that civilians enduring the greatest toll of civil conflict should be more likely to support pro-peace policy.

Analyzing Colombia's 2014 presidential elections and 2016 peace referendum, we find that exposure to FARC attacks (after correcting for the imbalance in covariates) increased voters' support for pro-peace policy in those areas where the Colombian government conducted military operations to combat the FARC. In addition, using originally coded data on the 2014 Lower House candidates' positions regarding the peace process, we also find that state and nonstate violence in a locality substantially reduced the probability that congressional candidates campaigned against

the peace process in the 2014 congressional election.

This project contributes to the scholarship on political violence and voter preferences in three ways. First, the paper propels two literatures. It intervenes in the scholarship on the impacts of nonstate violence which finds that localities exposed to violence by a nonstate actor tend to punish the responsible group by voting for a more hawkish state policy.[2] We argue that this finding should hold only for the localities insulated from the ramifications of counterinsurgency. Indeed, these findings mostly come from cases where voting publics are protected from state violence against insurgents. Relatedly, this paper shifts the scholarship on the impacts of state violence in the direction of asking how state violence shapes public approval of the peace process. Prior research studied how militant state response to rebellion shapes the approval of political actors.[3] Our argument underscores that the localities exposed to state and nonstate attacks, form distinct political preferences in favor of ending conflict which requires accommodating insurgents.

Second, the established locality-level statistical relationships between exposure to violence and political preferences are further supported by the test of congressional candidates' pro- and anti-peace positions. This second test of how violence in a locality shapes candidates' propensity to publicly oppose or support the peace process allows us to test the microfoundation of our argument — that civilians in the localities affected by nonstate and state violence will exhibit greater demand for pro-peace policies, which is why politicians should supply fewer anti-peace and more pro-peace public stances there. The paper therefore tests its argument's underlying logic as opposed to focusing on a single observable implication.

Finally, our findings shed light on how democracy and conflict may coexist for decades, as is the case in Colombia. The normative preference for democracy among western policymakers and scholars stems, in part, from the assumption that democracies translate voters' preferences into policies. Since voters would not want to bear the cost of war, democracy and violence should not coexist for long periods of time. Yet, they often do.[4] This presents a puzzle, the answer to which—we suggest—emanates from an uneven distribution of warfare across the territory of a given state. The costs of warfare are not borne uniformly by all voters. Instead, voters in safe

and dangerous areas have different incentives to support accommodationist or militant policies towards the perpetrators of violence. Citizens in safety are exempt from the direct consequences of counterinsurgency policy, which is why they do not prioritize ending conflict. Contrarily, a state policy against nonstate actors may shape life and death outcomes of those in proximity to violence, these voters are more likely to endorse the peace process.

Before we proceed with our argument and evidence, we note that we avoid using the term "terrorism" when referring to nonstate actors' premeditated, politically motivated attacks on civilians for three reasons. First, most governments, including the United States (22 U.S.C. §2656f), promote the idea that only nonstate actors commit "terrorism"; such a definition absolves governments of moral responsibility for crimes of terror, even when they target civilians directly (e.g., the Ukrainian army used cluster bombs in the residential areas of Donetsk[5]) or indirectly (e.g., Colombian government has encouraged and/or aided right-wing paramilitary groups responsible for over 2,000 massacres, 78,000 selective killings, and 26,000 forced disappearances since the 1980s[6]). Second, this one-sided definition politicizes the term because governments tend to apply it only to those nonstate actors whom they find objectionable. For instance, the US described Osama Bin Laden and his 50,000 fighters (recruited and trained by Pakistan and the US) as 'freedom fighters' in the 1980s during the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan,[7] but after the 9/11 attacks — only as "terrorists." Similarly, Álvaro Uribe administration (2002–2010) openly opposed the negotiations with the FARC because since they are "narco-terrorists," not insurgents;[8] this perspective continues to influence the implementation (or lack thereof) of the FARC peace accords by the current Iván Duque administration (2018–present). Finally, such a narrow view of terrorism obscures the term's history: *la Terreur* that followed the French Revolution was the very definition of state targeting of civilians.[9]

Argument

Exposure to violence and policy preferences among voters

Multiple studies have focused on estimating policy preferences of voters in the localities affected by political violence. For instance, in Israel, voters in the municipalities that experienced fatalities from terrorist attacks increase their preference for a more militant counterinsurgency policy towards Palestinian groups.[10][11] Similarly, in the context of Turkey, local military fatalities from PKK's attacks increase voter preferences for a more militant policy towards the group.[12][13] Furthermore, the mere threat of an attack—as opposed to the experience of violence—has been demonstrated to increase voters' preferences in support of a more hawkish stance against the perpetrators.[14]

Most of this literature is driven by results from secessionist conflicts in Israel and Turkey where victims of nonstate actors' attacks are often shielded from the costs of the state militant response. By contrast, in non-secessionist conflicts, civilians suffering from terrorist attacks by guerrillas also tend to be victimized by the state militant counterinsurgency or counterinsurgency operations. When state forces target civilians, citizens feel resentment against the state due to the loss of loved ones and livelihood. As a result, the intensified grievances against the state propel civilian collaboration with the opposition.[15] Thus, state indiscriminate attacks backfire against the government.

Both of these findings—victims' resentment of nonstate groups and of states targeting civilians—hinge on the assumption that civilians exposed to violence form anti-perpetrator attitudes, which is consistent with a literature that contrasts individuals exposed and unexposed to violence. First, one's exposure to violence inflates one's preference for exclusionary policy towards minorities associated with perpetrators.[16] Furthermore, even descendants of individuals exposed to violence continue to hold anti-perpetrator attitudes.[17] Finally, victims of violence tend to disapprove of the political actors viewed as perpetrators of violence;[18] similarly, victims are less likely to give the perpetrator the benefit of a doubt when evaluating whether the latter was pro-

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voked.[19] That is, scholarship strongly indicates that one's experience of violence indeed creates (long-lasting) anti-perpetrator attitudes.

To summarize, on the one hand, scholarship indicates that civilians exposed to political violence tend to endorse a punishing policy against the nonstate groups conducting attacks. On the other hand, the counterinsurgency literature's long-standing finding is that civilians resent the governments that attack them indiscriminately, which leads to civilians punishing these governments by assisting the opposition. Yet, nonstate groups' attacks on civilians are often accompanied by a government's crackdown that involves abuses of civilians. Many civil conflicts create localities where civilians become victims of *both violence by nonstate groups and militant state response that also targets civilians.*

Consider the contrast between the cases of Israel vis-à-vis Colombia. In Israel, voters exposed to attacks by Palestinian groups are unlikely to endure the cost of the IDF's counterinsurgency operations, which mainly occur in the Palestinian Territories, separated by check points and physical barriers from Israel proper. Thus, by endorsing a more hawkish state policy towards the perpetrators, the Israeli voters remain in relative safety from the state's militant response, whereas the Palestinians living in the occupied territories bear the costs of the state's counterinsurgency operations. Similarly to Palestinians living in the occupied territories, the Colombian citizens exposed to attacks by the FARC are not insulated from the repercussions of state counterinsurgency operations. During the five decade-long conflict, the Colombian government implemented a mostly hawkish approach to suppress the insurgency (this approach undermined the FARC but failed to fully defeat the guerrilla group), killing thousands of innocent civilians during anti-guerrilla operations.

That is, citizens exposed to violence by nonstate actors should differ in their expectations of potential harm to their lives and property associated with the state militant response in localities that isolate their voters from said damage (like Israel proper) as opposed to citizens in localities that experience both nonstate actors' attacks and bear the brunt of state's militant response (like most of Colombia's areas affected by violent conflict). This difference, in turn, should lead to

varying degrees of support for hawkish state response as opposed to support for a peace process with nonstate actors. We argue that the costs of state counterinsurgency operations to voters shape how violence influences voters' preferences to support or oppose a policy of militant suppression of nonstate actors that engage in violence against civilians. Citizens exposed to attacks by nonstate groups but safe from (potential) state violence associated with counterinsurgency operations should be more supportive of a militant response. By contrast, civilians in localities that experience insurgent attacks in combination with a state's militant response will expect to endure greater harm from ongoing conflict. Thus, citizens in the areas that undergo both nonstate and state violence should be more willing to endorse a policy that could end violence; we expect civilians in these areas to be more likely to support pro-peace candidates.

Hypothesis 1: Localities that suffer from both insurgent violence and counterinsurgent operations will be most likely to exhibit pro-peace policy preferences.

The mechanism we have outlined in the first hypothesis is the costs of the potential harm to civilians. An alternative mechanism could be fatigue or disillusionment with a militant state response. For instance, over the decades of conflict, exposure to violence has shifted the entire political landscape of Israel to the left, making an average voter more willing to grant territorial concessions to Palestinians in 2006 than a comparable voter would in 1988.[20] This effect is particularly strong for the voters on the right. Thus, as a long-term strategy, violence by nonstate actors may achieve important political goals of creating a demand within a population for a more accommodationist policy towards the perpetrators.[21][22]

That is, in cases of protracted conflict, individuals exposed to violence will, over time, contemplate more accommodationist policies if they think the latter could help stop the attacks. While[23] do not explore the exact mechanisms through which voters' demand for a more compromise-based policy is created over time, one could speculate that long-term exposure to violence may create fatigue and disillusionment with the militant counterinsurgency approach. Like Israel—with the exception of two peace processes in 1982-1990[24] and 1998-2001—the Colombian state

employed a harsh military approach to quell guerrilla violence for decades. Despite some successes, a hawkish strategy has not brought a conclusive settlement to the conflict in Colombia. In this context, civilians affected by violence for longer periods of time may have come to believe that a military approach cannot defeat the FARC and therefore may be more likely to support more accommodationist policies. In summary, the proposed effect of the first hypothesis may be most pronounced in the localities exposed to insurgent violence and counterinsurgency operations for longer periods of time.

Exposure to violence and local candidates' declared positions

Although the peace talks dominated the national debate during the 2014 elections in Colombia, voters often prioritize different issues when selecting local vs. national office holders. Research in the United States, for instance, shows that voters are more likely to elect a president based on "peace and prosperity" issues than they are to choose congressional candidates.[25] In Brazil, moreover, split voting has proven to be the outcome of voters focusing on national concerns when electing president and local-level concerns when electing lower house candidates.[26] Thus, voting preferences may differ at the national and local levels.

In Colombia, candidates for the Lower House hold statewide districts, while the counterinsurgency policy is formulated at the national level. It is possible that presidential candidates could more easily label themselves as pro- or anti-peace than Lower House candidates. In addition, Colombia has a high level of administrative and economic decentralization as well as the de-nationalized nature of its patron-client relationships.[27] Thus, politicians have strong incentives to campaign on local, rather than national issues. While nationwide matters (e.g., the peace process) might be relevant for presidential elections, local problems may concern voters when they consider House candidates. This reasoning is consistent with the finding that clientelistic preferences are more pronounced at the local than at the national level across Latin America.[28]

The literature on local vs. national voting behavior, however, does not explore how violence shapes local elections. As outlined in the previous section, political violence is not uniformly

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experienced by all citizens as the consequences of violence are not borne uniformly in all localities. Voters in exposed and unexposed to violence areas conduct different cost-benefit analyses of ongoing conflict and, as a result, of accommodationist vs. militant policies towards nonstate actors. In countries that do not isolate their citizens from militant militant response, the voters living in localities with violence are also exposed to the consequences of the state militant strategy (e.g., civilian casualties or internal displacement or loss of property). These consequences directly shape life and death outcomes of voters in proximity to warfare. Therefore, ending the ongoing civil conflict becomes a local issue only in those areas of the country where violence is concentrated. In Colombia, we should then expect Lower House candidates to openly campaign in support of the peace process in the areas where the ongoing conflict is the costliest to civilians (with a combination of nonstate and state violence); by contrast, in the areas of the country safe from violence, civilians have the luxury of focusing on problems other than the ongoing conflict with the FARC, so local candidates would be more likely to take anti-peace positions in the areas, where civilians bear the least costs of conflict.

Finally, given that the counterinsurgency policy is formulated at the national level in Colombia, could voters expect the legislators to influence the peace process with the insurgents? In Colombia, the legislature was key in advancing or hindering acts pertaining to the negotiations with the FARC prior to the 2014 election (e.g., the Victims and Land Restitution Law in 2011 and the Peace Legal Framework in 2012). While voters may attribute the responsibility for the type or the outcomes of the military response more directly to the executive, potential legislators were seen as playing at least some part in whether to continue or cease negotiations with the FARC.

Hypothesis 2: Local candidates running in areas that suffer from both insurgent violence and counterisurgent operations will be more likely to support the peace process.

Why Colombia?

Colombia presents a rich case for the study of how violence shapes electoral outcomes. The country has suffered a five decade-long armed conflict that has coexisted with democratic politics.

Elections occurred in areas controlled by or with the presence of various left- and right-wing armed nonstate actors, as well as state-controlled areas. Violence also varies temporally and spatially in this case.

Colombia's armed conflict

Colombia's current armed conflict has its origins in the period known as *La Violencia* (1948–1958), a civil war between the Liberal and Conservative parties, that left a death toll of 80,000–400,000 people.[29] The postwar period restricted political participation and failed to address Colombia's pervasive economic inequality. The emergence of the FARC (alongside other guerrilla groups like the EPL, ELN, M-19, and Quintín Lame) is a consequence of that exclusion. Throughout the second half of the 20th century these groups played an important role in shaping Colombian politics.[30]

After years of employing a harsh military approach to quell guerrilla violence, and in line with developments in other Latin American countries, in 1982, Belisario Betancur (1982–1986) started a peace process with the FARC and other guerrilla groups. The Patriotic Union (*Unión Patriótica–UP*), a party formed by left-wing leaders and some demobilized guerrilla members, won important mayorships and governorships in the 1986 elections.[31] In light of these electoral victories, fearing for their status, livelihood, and political control, regional elites—together with drug traffickers and members of the armed forces—sponsored rural armies and "*self-defense* groups" that derailed the peace process.[32] The paramilitaries threatened, disappeared, and assassinated left-wing politicians including 3,000 members of the UP. Despite this harassment, some guerrillas stood by the agreements and eventually demobilized despite the violence (i.e. M-19, EPL, and Quintín Lame). Others, like the FARC and the ELN, however, withdrew from the peace negotiations and resumed their violent struggle.

While not the only or even the most lethal,[33] the FARC became increasingly visible in Colombia's politics due to its unprecedented growth in the 1990s. Using resources from illicit crops, kidnapping, and/or extortion, it expanded from six fronts in 1975 to 65 in 1995.[34] In response

to this growth and the salience the group had gained in the political debate, president Andrés Pastrana (1998–2002) initiated a new set of peace negotiations. Unfortunately, both the government and the FARC exploited the negotiations to buy time. The state, paramilitary, and guerrilla violence skyrocketed between 1998 and 2002. Massacres rose from 111 in 1998 to 224 in 2001; selective assassinations from 439 in 1998 to 761 in 2001; and kidnappings from 3,278 in 1998 to 3,545 in 2001.[35] The FARC, alone, doubled its attacks from 400 in 1998 to over 1,000 in 2002.[36]

By 2002, when Alvaro Uribe (2002–2010) became president, a majority of Colombians blamed the FARC for the failure of the peace process and the overall insecurity in the country. Uribe won the presidential election without a runoff on an iron fist campaign against the FARC. His security program combined an increased pressure on the guerrilla group with a demobilization process with the paramilitary groups.[37] Uribe's policies notwithstanding immediately successful came with a significant humanitarian and institutional cost.[38] Not only did his administration harass human rights leaders, the opposition, judges, and journalists, but it also enacted policies that fueled disregard for human rights.[39] For example, in response to the incentives designed by Uribe's government, the armed forces killed 4,000 civilians and reported them as guerrilla members killed in combat.[40]

Peace talks, the 2014 elections, and the 2016 referendum

In 2010, Juan Manuel Santos came to power. While initially running on a hawkish platform against the FARC, once in office, he changed course and started peace talks with the guerrilla group in 2012. It took the negotiating teams four years to reach an agreement on six topics: rural reform, political participation, illicit crops, transitional justice, ceasefire, and verification. The guerrilla acceded to demobilize and disarm, to cut their ties with the illicit drugs traffic business, and to aid illicit crops substitution efforts. In return, the government agreed to increase investment in rural areas, formalize land ownership for small landowners, restore lands stolen during the armed conflict, and lower entry barriers for political participation. The teams also agreed to a transitional justice framework that offered alternative/reduced sentences to ex-combatants, state

agents, and civilians who confessed their crimes.[41]

The peace talks soured the relationship between Uribe and Santos, as former president Uribe argued that FARC ex-combatants were receiving too many concessions. Leveraging his immense popularity,[42] Uribe launched a political campaign against Santos and the peace process. In 2013, he created a new political party, *Centro Democrático*, which nominated Oscar Iván Zuluaga for the presidency and ran a closed list for the Senate led by Uribe himself. Zuluaga and Uribe's party became the largest contenders of Santos and his *Partido de la U.*

Conflict has long been the main cleavage in Colombia.[43] The 2014 campaign entirely re-volved around the peace process.[44] Santos presented himself as the "peace candidate" with a white dove as one of his campaign's symbols. The left-wing coalition Alternative Democratic Pole (*Polo Democrático Alternative–PDA*) and the Green Party (*Partido Verde*), the political enti-ties that would have never supported him campaigned for the president in the runoff. It was a coalition in defense of the peace process, which won the election.

Zuluaga, on the other hand, vowed to stop and only restart the peace talks once the FARC had committed to a unilateral ceasefire, agreed to pay for their crimes with jail time, and forgo any participation in politics afterwards. The *Centro Democrático* slogans and ads primed people's hostility towards the group. Zuluaga put up billboards asking voters if they wanted the FARC's leader to be president and explicitly stated that Santos was "handing down the country to the FARC."[45]

In 2014, the FARC was not the only armed nonstate group in Colombia. The ELN was still active, and Colombia had seen the rise of criminal gangs (BACRIM), heirs of the AUC, and other paramilitary groups. It was, however, the focus of the 2014 election, which centered singularly on the peace talks with the FARC—as few elections do—and is thus a fitting case to address this paper's question.

The Colombian government reached an agreement with the FARC in June 2016 and asked Colombians to ratify it in a referendum four months later. With low turnout, the "no" campaign narrowly prevailed.[46] The peace referendum in October 2016 represents another direct expression

of Colombians (dis)approval for the accommodationist policy.

Research design

The online appendix provides descriptive statistics for each measure of our analysis. We evaluate the first hypothesis against the municipality-level data with variables measured at the level of municipality. The second hypothesis is tested against the data whose each observation is a congressional candidate and all explanatory variables are averaged across the municipalities where the candidates ran.

Dependent variables

Colombia is divided into 1,122 municipalities in 32 states and a special district of Bogotá. The electoral data were obtained from Colombia's National Registrar. To evaluate voter preferences for pro- and anti-peace candidates and policies we use electoral data recorded at the municipal level. Our first set of dependent variables includes:

1. Anti-peace vote share in the first round of the 2014 election (two candidates advocated against the peace process with the FARC in the first round: Zuluaga (CD) and Marta Lucía Ramírez (PC).

2. Pro-peace vote share in the first round of the 2014 election (three candidates advocated for peace in the first round: Santos (PdU), Enrique Peñalosa (PV), Clara López (PDA).

3. Anti-peace vote share in the 2014 runoff (Zuluaga). Juan Manuel Santos (*PdU*) won the runoff election by 6 points.

4. Pro-peace vote share in the second round of the 2014 election (Santos).

5. Anti-peace vote share in the 2016 peace referendum.

6. Pro-peace vote share in the 2016 peace referendum.

The results for the vote share in the second round of the 2014 election are presented in the appendix.

Violence may influence turnout,[47] therefore all four measures represent proportions of the valid vote in a municipality as opposed to absolute number of votes. These variables are continuous without any notable skews.

Second, to examine whether candidates running for the Lower House in different *departamentos* were more or less likely to declare their individual pro- and anti-peace process positions, we coded each of 1,243 candidates who ran for a seat in the Lower House with respect to their public position on the peace process. We examined available online data including campaign ads, candidates' interviews and speeches, Facebook posts and tweets and their voting record in legislation key to the peace process[48] in order to discern whether a candidate had publicly declared his/her support or opposition for the peace process or expressed no position. 450 candidates (36%) for the House took a stance regarding the pursuit of peace negotiations with the FARC: 390 candidates (or 31%) supported peace openly, while 60 candidates (5%) opposed the peace process. A multinomial three-category variable *Candidate's multinomial position* records no position, anti-peace position, and pro-peace position as separate unordered categories.

Explanatory variables

Our explanatory variables reflect the experience of FARC violence in a municipality, also accounting whether municipality underwent any anti-guerrilla operations. All conflict data were obtained from the CEDE (The Center for Economic Development Studies of the University of Los Andes), which in turn received the original records of FARC's presence from the National Police, Colombia's Security Service (DAS), Colombia's Planning Department (DPN), and the Ministry of Defense.

FARC attacks in 2011–2013 is a binary indicator of whether a municipality saw any violence by the FARC in these years. For robustness (in the appendix), we also employ *Cumulative FARC attacks in 2011–2013*, which sums up violent acts by the FARC in a municipality in 2011–2013. The Ministry of Defense of Colombia defines attacks by the FARC as "terrorism"[49] designed "... to provoke or terrorize (a group) of the population, via actions that risk the life, the physical integrity, or the freedom of people, buildings, media outlets, transportation systems, ducts that transport fluids or motive powers via mechanisms that could cause damages." 81% of the municipalities saw no attacks in the three years preceding the election and 19% experienced violence

by the FARC. The average number of attacks is 1; the maximum cumulative number of attacks is 80. This independent variable captures recent violence before the 2014 election, designed to test the first hypothesis.

The appendix also presents the results for how a longer history of FARC violence in a municipality, *FARC attacks in 2003–2013* influences the electoral outcomes. This variable evaluates whether the expected effect is most pronounced in localities with longer histories of violence. For robustness analyses (in the appendix), we create the proportion of years between 2011 and 2013 and between 2003 and 2013, during which the FARC carried out any activity in a municipality. Employing measures of any violent activity, as opposed to focusing exclusively on attacks, constitutes a more general test of our hypotheses.

The presence of state militant operations would be ideally measured by the number of civilians killed by the government troops in a municipality. Since those data are unavailable, we capture the experience of state counterinsurgency operations, *COIN operations* with two indicators: whether any government troops were injured or killed in a municipality during anti-guerrilla warfare (these results are shown in the main paper) and whether the government conducted any operations to eradicate illegal coca crops in a municipality (shown in the appendix for robustness). 10% of municipalities had military personnel killed or injured in counterinsurgency operations in 2011–2013, this number rises to 24% when we consider the period of 2003–2013. 9% and 30% of municipalities saw coca eradication efforts in 2011–2013 and in 2003–2013 respectively.

Covariates

The covariates account for the characteristics of municipality that might shape both violence and electoral behavior. These include such characteristics as the log of municipal population, area, and the percentage of the municipality that is rural.[50] The history of land conflict in the early 20th century (1901–1931) is measured as a binary indicator (collected by the CEDE from the Colombian National Archive). To control for the baseline propensity of the municipality's population to vote for pro- vs. anti-peace candidates, we control for the history of voting in 2002 (Colombia's

National Registrar). Social and economic variables include poverty rate, the outflow of internally displaced individuals, and the presence of coca crops; while these three variables cannot be included for matching (post-treatment bias is discussed in the following section), we include them in unmatched samples in the appendix to demonstrate the robustness of our findings.

Empirical strategy

Evaluation of hypothesis 1. Using the cross-sectional municipality-level data set, we first present the differences-in-means in characteristics between localities exposed and unexposed to FARC violence (most differences are statistically discernible). Using coarsened exact matching (CEM), we estimate the gap in vote share between these municipalities. CEM identifies which localities with and without violence have identical (or most similar) covariates.[51] In all models, all covariates are better balanced after matching.

To avoid post-treatment bias,[52] matching of the units should only be based on those characteristics not influenced by insurgent violence: population, area, land conflict in 1901–1931, how rural a municipality was, and prior history of voting.[53] Such attributes as displaced persons, coca production, poverty have likely been shaped by insurgency, therefore, we exclude these measures from matching criteria.

We then estimate the effect of nonstate and state violence on vote share in unmatched and matched samples via linear least squares models with state-specific fixed effects (we use beta regression as a robustness check in the appendix).

Evaluation of hypothesis 2. Using the cross-sectional candidate-level data set, we estimate the probabilities that a congressional candidate would take an anti-peace or a pro-peace position (relative to "No Position") via a multinomial probit regression. Ideally, we would match candidates who ran in states with and without violence on their party affiliation. However, the models do not converge after matching, so we treat these results as suggestive.

Analysis

The effect of exposure to violence on presidential vote share

We expect that populations in localities exposed to both nonstate and state violence to be most supportive of pro-peace candidates/policy, because these citizens endure the greatest costs of conflict in the nation.

Table 1: Differences in attributes and presidential vote share of municipalities with and without FARC attacks in 2011−2013

	No FARC attacks	FARC attacks in 11−13	Difference	t-statistic	p-value
COIN operations in 11−13	0.03	0.41	−0.37	−18.47	0.00
Log population	9.43	10.00	−0.57	−7.14	0.00
Log Area	10.15	11.34	−1.19	−13.38	0.00
Index rural	58.29	57.29	1.01	0.55	0.58
Land conflict in 1901−1931	0.04	0.09	−0.04	−2.41	0.02
Voted pro-peace in 2002	0.01	0.04	−0.03	−2.89	0.00
Poverty	0.42	0.52	−0.10	−6.24	0.00
Coca crops present	0.09	0.29	−0.20	−11.54	0.00
Displaced outflow in 2011−2013	131.49	711.36	−579.87	−6.92	0.00
Anti-peace vote share 2014 (1st)	0.49	0.40	0.09	6.38	0.00
Pro-peace vote share 2014 (1st)	0.44	0.52	−0.08	−5.56	0.00
Anti-peace vote share 2014 (2nd)	0.50	0.40	0.10	6.62	0.00
Pro-peace vote share 2014 (2nd)	0.45	0.55	−0.10	−6.28	0.00
Anti-peace vote share 2016 (referendum)	0.47	0.41	0.07	5.27	0.00
Pro-peace vote share 2016 (referendum)	0.50	0.56	−0.06	−4.94	0.00

Table 1 presents the differences-in-means and associated t-statistics for the characteristics of municipalities that experienced at least one FARC attack in 2011−2013 and those that did not. These groups differ on many attributes. The municipalities affected by the FARC are more populous, have greater land area, and are more likely to have the history of land conflict in 1901−1931. Among the attributes that could be shaped by the insurgents, the affected municipalities tend to be poorer. They also tend to host the production of coca and see more internally displaced persons leaving per year. By contrast, there is no difference in how rural a municipality is.

Table 1 also displays the differences-in-means for presidential and referendum vote share in the exposed and unexposed municipalities. Municipalities that recently experienced violence by

the FARC have a pro-peace vote share of 6 to 10 percentage points higher than the localities without attacks. By contrast, municipalities recently safe from FARC attacks favored the anti-peace candidate/policy by 7 to 10 points.

Table 2: The effect of FARC attacks in a municipality on presidential vote share in the first round of the 2014 election

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	Anti-peace vote share 2014 election		Pro-peace vote share 2014 election		Anti-peace vote share 2016 referendum		Pro-peace vote share 2016 referendum	
	Unmatched	Matched	Unmatched	Matched	Unmatched	Matched	Unmatched	Matched
FARC attacks	-0.0553***	-0.0522***	0.0513***	0.0482***	-0.0659***	-0.0677***	0.0639***	0.0640***
in 2011–2013	(0.013)	(0.015)	(0.012)	(0.015)	(0.011)	(0.013)	(0.011)	(0.013)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State-level FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	1052	510	1052	510	1052	510	1052	510
R^2	0.530	0.587	0.562	0.611	0.547	0.556	0.548	0.559
AIC	-1324.3	-687.9	-1349.5	-681.0	-1653.5	-767.4	-1655.6	-770.3

Note: Models 2, 4, use coarsened exact matching. Linear least squares models. Numbers in cells are coefficient estimates; standard errors are shown in parentheses. $^*p < 0.05;^{**} p < 0.01$ in a two-tail test.

Table 3: The effect of FARC attacks in combination with counterinsurgency operations in a municipality on presidential vote share in the first round of the 2014 election

|	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)
	Anti-peace vote share 2014 election		Pro-peace vote share 2014 election		Anti-peace vote share 2016 referendum		Pro-peace vote share 2016 referendum	
	Unmatched	Matched	Unmatched	Matched	Unmatched	Matched	Unmatched	Matched
FARC attacks	-0.0304*	-0.0292	0.0272	0.0258	-0.0426**	-0.0444**	0.0423**	0.0431**
in 2011–2013	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.015)	(0.018)	(0.013)	(0.016)	(0.013)	(0.016)
COIN operations	-0.0542*	-0.0324	0.0535*	0.0322	-0.0895**	-0.0642*	0.0883**	0.0647*
in 2011–2013	(0.026)	(0.028)	(0.026)	(0.029)	(0.022)	(0.026)	(0.022)	(0.026)
FARC attacks ×	-0.0205	-0.0290	0.0192	0.0277	0.0101	-0.00575	-0.0134	-0.000115
COIN	(0.032)	(0.034)	(0.032)	(0.035)	(0.027)	(0.032)	(0.027)	(0.032)
Controls	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
State-level FE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Observations	1052	510	1052	510	1052	510	1052	510
R^2	0.538	0.594	0.570	0.617	0.564	0.570	0.563	0.572
AIC	-1339.6	-692.5	-1364.2	-685.1	-1689.0	-780.2	-1688.1	-781.6

Note: Models 2, 4, use coarsened exact matching. Linear least squares models. Numbers in cells are coefficient estimates; standard errors are shown in parentheses. $^*p < 0.05;^{**} p < 0.01$ in a two-tail test.

In Tables 2 and 3, we present the results for unmatched (Models labeled with odd numbers) and matched samples (even numbers), where the treatment group is municipalities that experi-

enced political violence by the FARC, while the control group is unexposed units. After matching municipalities on their attributes that could not be affected by insurgency, we examine whether terrorist attacks by the FARC (Table 2) in combination with counterinsurgency operations (Table 3) influence anti- and pro-peace vote share.[54] The results for the second round of the election are very similar; included in the appendix.

Models 1–8 display the effect of recent FARC violence in 2011–2013 on vote share without accounting for whether a municipality encountered government's militant response to the FARC. In the matched samples of Models 2, 4, 6, and 8, the presence of FARC attacks before the election decreases the anti-peace vote share and increases the pro-peace vote share by about 5–6 points. In the appendix, we also evaluate whether the experience of FARC attacks during the decade before the election affects presidential vote share; these results are substantively consistent with the argument but not consistently statistically discernible at 0.05 level).

Figure 1: Predicted vote share for anti- and pro-peace presidential candidates in the first round of the 2014 election
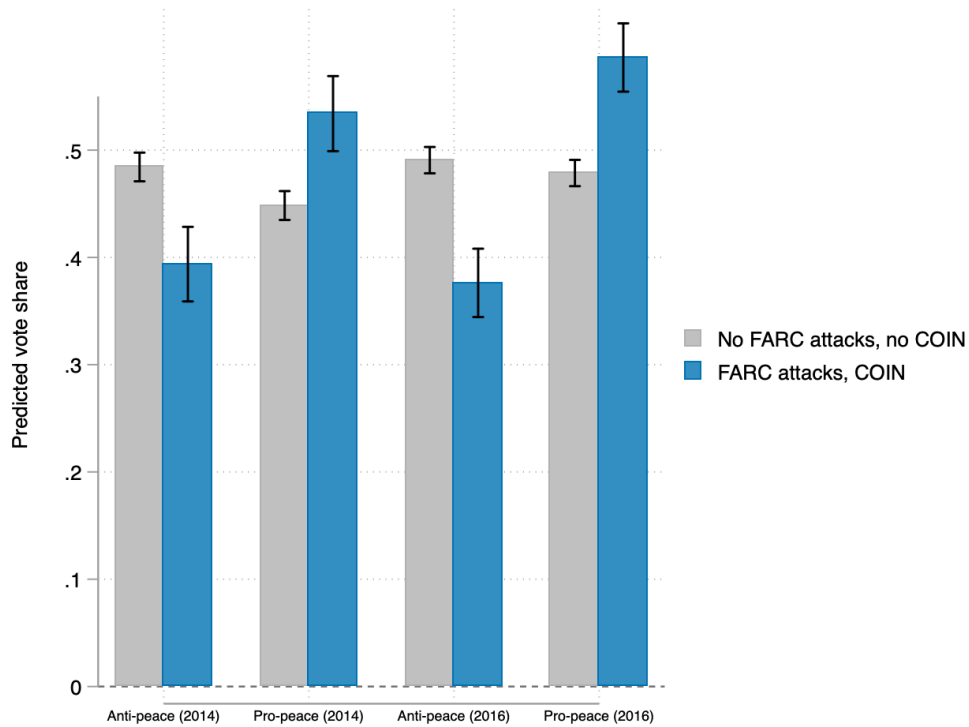
Note: Estimates of anti-peace and pro-peace vote share are based on Models 10, 12, 14, and 16 of Table 3.

Models 9–16 present the effects of recent FARC attacks on presidential and referendum vote share interacted with the counterinsurgency (COIN) operations. In the appendix, we also present analogous (but not equivalent) models with split samples. To help interpret the multiplicative interaction terms, we graph the predicted estimates of vote shares of interest in Figure 1. Based on the matched sample of Model 10, we estimate that municipalities without violence are predicted to vote for anti-peace presidential candidates at 47–50% rate, while the localities where both types of violence occur are predicted to give anti-peace candidates between 36–43% of the vote. This large substantive difference in estimates of 9 points is also statistically significant at 0.001 level.[55] The estimates of the pro-peace vote share in 2014 of Figure 1 are based on Model 12. We find that the localities with no violence are predicted to vote for pro-peace candidates at the rate of 43–46%, while municipalities exposed to both types of violence – at 50–57%. This substantive difference of 8 points is also statistically discernible at 0.001 level.[56]

The 2016 vote shares are based on Models 14 and 16. The municipalities with no violence are estimated to favor the 'No' campaign by 11 points more (at the rate of 48–50%) than the localities that experienced both COIN and FARC violence (34–41%). By contrast, the municipalities that suffered from both state and nonstate violence endorsed the 'Yes' campaign by 11 points more (55–62%) than the areas safe from any violence (47–49%).[57]

In summary, recent FARC violence in combination with state militant response in a municipality is associated with a substantively and statistically important rise in citizens' support for pro-peace policy and a symmetric withdrawal of support from anti-peace position. These results are consistent with hypothesis 1.

Does exposure to violence influence an individual candidate's choice of position?

In 2014, 1,243 individuals competed for Colombia's House of Representatives across 1,122 municipalities. Only 40% of the candidates disclosed their position regarding the peace process to the electorate. Naturally, the highly politicized peace process was less important at the local level, as congressional campaigns tend to revolve around local issues that affect local communities more

directly.[58] This section investigates whether local candidates were more likely to endorse the peace process when running in municipalities affected versus unaffected by insurgent and state warfare.

Table 4: The effect of violence on congressional candidates' positions regarding the peace process in the 2014 election

	Base outcome = no disclosed position	
	Outcome = anti-peace position	Outcome = pro-peace position
FARC attacks in 2011−2013	0.577	0.521**
	(0.332)	(0.171)
COIN operations in 2011−2013	1.311**	0.519**
	(0.300)	(0.111)
FARC attacks × COIN	−1.867**	−0.831**
	(0.441)	(0.192)
Observations	1243	
Log pseudolikelihood	−976.24	
AIC	1964.5	

Note: Multinomial probit regression model. Numbers in cells are coefficient estimates; standard errors are shown in parentheses. *$p<0.05$; **$p<0.01$ in a two-tail test. Standard errors are clustered on state.

Figure 2: Marginal effect of insurgent violence (conditional on state violence) on congressional candidates' probability of taking anti- and pro-peace positions in the 2014 election
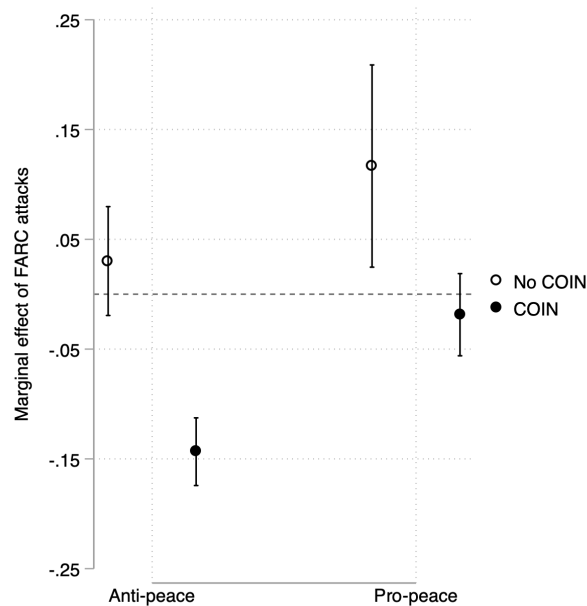
Table 4 presents the effects of FARC attacks and COIN operations on congressional candidates' propensity to campaign against or in favor of the peace process relative to not disclosing any position. Matching or including controls like party membership of candidates prevents the models from converging, thus we treat these results as suggestive. The interaction coefficient for candidates' probability of taking anti-peace position is negative, indicating that the presence of both insurgent and state violence reduces the demand among voters for anti-peace positions. Figure 2 visualizes this effect: in localities where FARC attacks are accompanied by the state militant operations, congressional candidates are 14 points less likely to campaign against the peace process. This effect is consistent with our second hypothesis and is statistically discernible at 0.05 level.

However, the interaction effect for the pro-peace position outcome is also negative, which contradicts our expectation of candidates declaring pro-peace positions at higher rates in affected localities. Figure 2 demonstrates that this effect is substantively and statistically negligible. We therefore conclude that the data are only partially consistent with our second expectation: while the congressional candidates are indeed less likely to oppose the peace process in affected municipalities, they are no more likely (compared to not disclosing) to support peace. Notably, when we use our alternative measure of COIN operations, eradication of illegal coca crops (in the appendix), this effect becomes positive and statistically discernible, which means that some measures of counterinsurgency yield results consistent with out second hypothesis.

These results indicate that violence or lack thereof was also a local issue in the affected municipalities: congressional candidates were less likely to oppose peace in affected localities. However, the data show that candidates were no more likely to explicitly support the peace process in municipalities with both state and nonstate violence, thus our second expectation is partially consistent with the data.

Robustness checks

All robustness checks mentioned throughout the paper are reported in sections A4–A6 of the online appendix. All results are consistent with those presented in the paper.

Conclusion

Colombia's 2014 elections and 2016 referendum represent particularly suitable cases to evaluate how exposure to nonstate and state violence shapes citizens' preferences for state policy towards insurgents. In 2012, the Colombian government started peace talks with the FARC, which faced a strong opposition from right-wing elites. The 2014 elections were dominated by that divide; the pro-peace coalition prevailed. In 2016, Colombia held a referendum on whether to uphold the peace accord with the FARC; the 'No' campaign won. Both votes juxtaposed hawkish versus accommodationist policies towards the nonstate actor.

Prior scholarship argues that localities exposed to violence by a nonstate actor tend to support a hawkish state policy against the responsible group.[59] We move this literature in a new direction by contending that said finding should hold only for the localities that insulate their citizens from the counterinsurgency-related violence (which is more common in secessionist conflicts with geographically concentrated patterns of violence). The voters exposed to both nonstate and state violence bear the highest toll of continued warfare, these citizens should then favor the policy to end conflict. This reasoning is compatible with evidence from Pakistan and Ukraine which shows that citizens most supportive of political actors' attacks on civilians tend to be in safety from the consequences of such violence.[60] Our argument does not, however, imply that the peace process should survive in perpetuity, only that localities that continue to experience violence should also continue to favor ending warfare. Despite the opposite national outcomes in 2014 and 2016, local exposure to state and nonstate violence predicted support for the accommodationist policy in both 2014 and 2016.

The data indicate that the experience of insurgent attacks in 2011–2013 in a municipality

raises the pro-peace and reduces the anti-peace vote share by 5 to 6 points in the 2014 election and the 2016 referendum respectively. The presence of counterinsurgent violence boosts the effect of nonstate attacks: the municipalities affected by both types of violence are 9–11 points less likely to vote for anti-peace policy and 8–11 points more likely to support the pro-peace policy in 2014 and 2016 votes. These are substantively and statistically important effects.

We also originally coded the positions of each of 1,243 candidates running for the Lower House in 2014. The highly politicized peace process was less important at the local level: 60% of the House candidates took no position. This is intuitive as politicians elected statewide are more likely to appeal to voters on local (rather than national) issues. We argue that ending the conflict will become an important local issue in affected municipalities. The data show that the experience of both insurgent and state violence reduces the probability that a candidate would oppose the peace process by 14 points (relative to "No Position").

These results at the congressional level improve our understanding of how voters view their local representatives. Indeed, areas unaffected by violence have more clientelistic relationships. Yet our finding underscores the importance of the peace process to the voters who have been exposed to insurgent and counterinsurgent violence, as even congressional candidates select to publicly campaign on this seemingly national-level issue.

In summary, this paper contributes to the literature on microlevel examination of intrastate violence and voting patterns by demonstrating that citizens recently affected by nonstate and state violence consistently prefer accommodationist (not hawkish) policy, while citizens recently safe from conflict tend to undermine the peace at the ballot box. Given the relatively fine-grained municipality- and candidate-level data, our confidence that said associations are not spurious rises. Furthermore, we test the underlying logic of our argument, as opposed to focusing on a single observable implication, by evaluating the positions taken by individual congressional candidates.

The downside of the microlevel approach is that drawing comparisons across cases is diffi-cult, as contextual factors that inflate or undermine voters' perceptions of how viable a peaceful

vs. hawkish approach is at any point in time vary over time within cases as well as across cases. How generalizable are these findings? Our argument about the greater cost borne by the citizens exposed to violence is not case-specific and should apply to other contexts, where counterinsurgency operations coincide with insurgent activity. Nevertheless, two other factors may distinguish the Colombian case from others: the viability of the peace process and the identity of its chief negotiator.

The peace process had credibility domestically and abroad. Juan Manuel Santos hired a professional negotiator, experienced in other peace processes. The international community endorsed the talks wholeheartedly. Moreover, by 2014 the negotiations had been ongoing for two years. Unlike in the late 1990s, the FARC indicated their seriousness by refraining from violence during the 2014 elections. Besides the 2016 and 2018 elections, the 2014 vote was the most peaceful that Colombia has seen in decades.

The identity of Santos—as a right-wing politician who had previously advocated for hawkish policies against the FARC—could help solidify citizens' support for the peace process in 2014. His opponents could not as credibly demagogue his plan as "soft" on security, as they would have, if Santos was a left-wing politician previously known as a dove. In other words, the former president had a reputation of "owning" the security issue.[61]

Colombia represents an important case of democratic politics unfolding in the context of civil conflict for five decades. We demonstrate that in those areas where state militant response coincides with exposure to insurgent violence citizens tend to prefer accommodationist policies, as opposed to hawkish ones. These patterns of voter preferences we observe in Colombia differ from other cases;[62] this implies that exposure to attacks by nonstate actors may result in both accommodationist and hawkish voter preferences. We argue and provide evidence that the key determinant of whether voters will want to accommodate or punish the nonstate actor is the degree of insulation that citizens experience from the ramifications of state violent response. This insight helps explain why some democratic societies tolerate protracted civil conflicts: those governments that protect their winning coalitions from counterinsurgency violence may not pay

the political price at the ballot box.

Notes

[1]Claude Berrebi and Esteban F. Klor, "On Terrorism and Electoral Outcomes: Theory and Evidence from the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50, no. 6 (2006): 899–925; Arzu Kibris, "Funerals and Elections: The Effects of Terrorism on Voting Behavior in Turkey," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55, no. 2 (2011): 220–247; Anna Getmansky and Thomas Zeitzoff, "Terrorism and Voting: The Effect of Rocket Threat on Voting in Israeli Elections," *American Political Science Review* 108, no. 3 (2014): 588–604; Claude Berrebi and Esteban Klor, "Are Voters Sensitive to Terrorism? Direct Evidence from the Israeli Electorate," *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 3 (2008): 279–301; Luis de la Calle and Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca, "Killing and Voting in the Basque Country: An Exploration of the Electoral Link Between ETA and its Political Branch," *Terrorism and Political Violence* 25 (2013): 94–112.

[2]Ibid.

[3]Jason Lyall, Graeme Blair, and Kosuke Imai, "Explaining Support for Combatants during Wartime: A Survey Experiment in Afghanistan," *American Political Science Review* 107, no. 4 (2013): 679–705; Anna O. Pechenkina, Andrew W. Bausch, and Kiron K. Skinner, "How Do Civilians Attribute Blame for State Indiscriminate Violence?," *Journal of Peace Research* Forthcoming (2019).

[4]The coexistence of violence and electoral politics is often identified as the central obstacle to "meaningful democratization" Paul Staniland, "Violence and Democracy.," *Comparative Politics* 47, no. 1 (2014): 100.

[5]Human Rights Watch, "Ukraine: Widespread Use of Cluster Munitions. Government Responsible for Cluster Attacks on Donetsk," *Report from October 20, 2014*, 2014,

[6]"Observatorio de Memoria y Conflicto," *http://centrodememoriahistorica.gov.co/observatorio/* Accessed on August 30, 2019 (2019).

[7]Felicity De Zulueta, "Terror breeds terrorists," *Medicine, Conflict and Survival* 22, no. 1 (2006): 14.

[8]Maria Alejandra Silva, "Alvaro Uribe: The Most Dangerous Man in Colombian Politics," *Council on Hemispheric Affairs* October 20 (2017).

[9]"Reign of Terror," *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 2019,

[10]Berrebi and Klor, "On Terrorism and Electoral Outcomes: Theory and Evidence from the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict"; Berrebi and Klor, "Are Voters Sensitive to Terrorism? Direct Evidence from the Israeli Electorate"; Eric D. Gould and Esteban F. Klor, "Does Terrorism Work?," *Quarterly Journal of Economics* 125, no. 4 (2010): 1459–1510.

[11]We note that Gould and Klor's (2010) finding is more nuanced, as they argue that the long-term effect of political violence against civilians is the overall shift of the Israeli political spectrum to the left, we discuss this finding in

detail further in this section (Gould and Klor, "Does Terrorism Work?").

[12]Kibris, "Funerals and Elections: The Effects of Terrorism on Voting Behavior in Turkey."

[13]While the data from Perú and Spain do not investigate voter preferences for militant vs. accommodationist response towards the perpetrators of violence, they reveal that the provinces that experienced civilian casualties from insurgent attacks punished the political parties associated with them (Jóhanna Kristín Birnir and Anita Gohdes, "Voting in the Shadow of Violence: Electoral Politics and Conflict in Peru," *Journal of Global Security Studies* 3, no. 1 (2018): 181–197; de la Calle and Sánchez-Cuenca, "Killing and Voting in the Basque Country: An Exploration of the Electoral Link Between ETA and its Political Branch").

[14]Getmansky and Zeitzoff, "Terrorism and Voting: The Effect of Rocket Threat on Voting in Israeli Elections."

[15]Andrew Shaver and Jacob N. Shapiro, "The Effect of Civilian Casualties on Wartime Informing: Evidence from the Iraq War," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Forthcoming (2017); Stathis N. Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge University Press, 2006).

[16]Daphna Canetti-Nisim et al., "A New Stress-Based Model of Political Extremism Personal Exposure to Terrorism, Psychological Distress, and Exclusionist Political Attitudes," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53, no. 3 (2009).

[17]Arturas Rozenas, Sebastian Schutte, and Yuri Zhukov, "The Political Legacy of Violence: The Long-Term Impact of Stalin's Repression in Ukraine," *Journal of Politics* forthcoming (2017); Noam Lupu and Leonid Peisakhin, "The Legacy of Political Violence across Generations," *American Journal of Political Science* forthcoming (2016); Nathan Nunn and Leonard Wantchekon, "The Slave Trade and the Origins of Mistrust in Africa," *American Economic Review* 101, no. December (2011): 3221–3252.

[18]Graeme Blair et al., "Poverty and Support for Militant Politics: Evidence from Pakistan," *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 1 (2013): 30–48.

[19]Pechenkina, Bausch, and Skinner, "How Do Civilians Attribute Blame for State Indiscriminate Violence?"

[20]Gould and Klor, "Does Terrorism Work?"

[21]Additionally, in 2004, Spain experienced a large-scale terrorist attack by al-Qaeda three days before the election. The attack mobilized turnout within the population that disapproved of the incumbent's foreign policy (José G. Montalvo, "Voting after the bombings: A natural experiment on the effect of terrorist attacks on democratic elections," *Review of Economics and Statistics* 93, no. 4 (2011): 1146–1154; Valentina Bali, "Terror and Elections: Lessons from Spain," *Electoral Studies* 26, no. 3 (2007): 669–687). While this case differs from the rest of the literature as it focuses on foreign policy, it emphasizes that exposure to violence does not always create preferences for a more militant response. Sometimes, civilians are more likely to blame the incumbent for failed policies that are perceived as being responsible for the violence.

[22]Alternatively, Nicolás Liendo and Jessica Maves Braithwaite, "Determinants of Colombian attitudes toward the peace process," *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, 2018, find that self-reported experience of violence is unre-

lated to voter preferences and Michael Weintraub, Juan F. Vargas, and Thomas E. Flores, "Vote choice and legacies of violence: evidence from the 2014 Colombian presidential elections," *Research and Politics* April-June (2015): 1–8 find a curvilinear effect. Due to space constraints, we discuss these studies in detail in the online appendix.

[23]Gould and Klor, "Does Terrorism Work?"

[24]The peace process was uneven. Although the official cease fire with the FARC did not officially end until 1990, wrapped up in the war against drug cartels and other armed groups, the government led attacks since, at least, 1985.

[25]Brandice Canes-Wrone, William G. Howell, and David E. Lewis, "Toward a Broader Understanding of Presidential Power: A Reevaluation of the Two Presidencies Thesis," *Journal of Politics* 70, no. 1 (2008): 1–16.

[26]Barry Ames, Andy Baker, and Lucio R. Renno, "Split-ticket voting as the rule: Voters and permanent divided government in Brazil," *Electoral Studies* 28, no. 1 (2009): 8–20.

[27]Juan Albarracín, Laura Gamboa, and Scott Mainwaring, "De-Institutionalization Without Collapse: Colombia Party System," in *Latin America Party Systems: Institutionalization, Decay and Collapse*, ed. Scott Mainwaring (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

[28]Herbert Kitschelt et al., *Latin American Party Systems* (Cambridge University Press, 2010).

[29]Marco Palacios and Frank Safford, *Historia de Colombia: país fragmentado, sociedad dividida*, 10th Reimpression (Bogotá: Universidad de los Andes, 2011), 494, ISBN: 978-958-04-6509-6.

[30]Laura Wills Otero, "Colombia: Analyzing the Strategies for Political Action of Alvaro Uribe's Government, 2002-10," in *The resilience of the Latin American right*, ed. Juan Pablo Luna and Cristbal Rovira Kaltwasser (Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014); Laura Gamboa, "El reajuste de la derecha colombiana. El éxito electoral del uribismo," *Colombia Internacional* 99 (2019): 187–214.

[31]Until 1986, the president selected mayors and governors. Since 1986 they are popularly elected.

[32]Mauricio Romero, *Paramilitares y autodefensas, 1982-2003*, Grandes temas 13 (Bogotá: Temas de Hoy : Instituto de Estudios Políticos y Relaciones Internacionales, Universidad Nacional de Colombia : Editorial Planeta Colombiana, 2003), ISBN: 978-958-42-0613-8; Sarah Zukerman Daly, *Organized violence after civil war: the geography of recruitment in Latin America*, Cambridge studies in comparative politics (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2016), ISBN: 978-1-107-12758-6.

[33]Paramilitary groups alone, account for 44% of the fatal victims of the armed conflict in Colombia "Observatorio de Memoria y Conflicto"

[34]Ana Arjona, *Rebelocracy: social order in the Colombian civil war*, in collab. with Ebook Library (Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 89-91, ISBN: 978-1-316-86851-5.

[35]Centro Nacional de Memoria Histórica, "!'Basta ya! Colombia: memorias de guerra y dignidad," !'Basta ya! Colombia: memorias de guerra y dignidad, 2016, accessed February 8, 2016, http://www.centrodememoriahistorica.gov.co/micrositios/informeGeneral/descargas.html.

[36]Camilo Echandía Castilla and Eduardo Bechara Gómez, "Conducta de la guerrilla durante el gobierno Uribe Vélez: De las lógicas de control territorial a las lógicas de control estratégico," *Análisis Político* 19, no. 57 (August 2006): 31–54.

[37]Arjona, *Rebelocracy*.

[38]Soledad Granada, Jorge Restrepo, and Andrés Vargas, "El agotamiento de la política de seguridad: evolución y transformaciones recientes en el conflicto armado colombiano," in *Guerras y violencias en Colombia: Herramientas e interpretaciones*, ed. Jorge Restrepo and David Aponte (Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2009).

[39]Laura Gamboa, "Opposition at the Margins: Strategies against the Erosion of Democracy in Colombia and Venezuela," *Comparative Politics* 49, no. 4 (2017): 457–477.

[40]Arjona, *Rebelocracy*, 92.

[41]Acuerdo final para la terminación del conflicto y la construcción de una paz verdadera. August 24, 2016.

[42]Four years after he left the presidency, Uribe's approval rating was, on average, 62% Gallup, *Encuesta Gallup Colombia* (2014)

[43]Juan Albarracín, "Ideological Self-Placement and Issue Attitudes in Colombian Public Opinion" (Bogotá, Colombia, September 25, 2013); Wills Otero, "Colombia: Analyzing the Strategies for Political Action of Alvaro Uribe's Government, 2002-10."

[44]Albarracín, Gamboa, and Mainwaring, "De-Institutionalization Without Collapse: Colombia Party System."

[45]Uribe remains the head of the party, with party members openly vowing to uphold his wishes.

[46]Annette Idler, "Colombia just voted no on its plebiscite for peace. Here's why and what it means," *Washington Post* 3 October (2016).

[47]Laia Balcells and Gerard Torrats-Espinosa, "Using a natural experiment to estimate the electoral consequences of terrorist attacks," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States* 115, no. 42 (2018): 10624–10629.

[48]We used roll call voting for the conference report of two pre-2014 pieces of legislation: a) Victims and Land Restitution Law (*Ley de Víctimas y Restitución de Tierras*–Ley 1448 de 2011) and b) the Peace Legal Framework (*Marco Jurídico para la Paz*–Acto Legislativo 1 de 2012).

[49]The Colombian government employs the term "terrorism" to delegitimize the insurgency (Silva, "Alvaro Uribe: The Most Dangerous Man in Colombian Politics"). To avoid taking a pro-government position, we use a more neutral term "FARC attacks."

[50]These control variables come from Weintraub, Vargas, and Flores, "Vote choice and legacies of violence: evidence from the 2014 Colombian presidential elections."

[51]Stefano M. Iacus, Gary King, and Giuseppe Porro, "Causal inference without balance checking: Coarsened exact matching," *Political Analysis* 20 (2012): 1–24; Gary King and Richard Nielsen, "Why Propensity Scores Should Not Be Used for Matching" (Harvard University Working Paper, 2015).

[52]Jacob M Montgomery, Brendan Nyhan, and Michelle Torres, "How conditioning on posttreatment variables can ruin your experiment and what to do about it," *American Journal of Political Science* 62, no. 3 (2018): 760–775.

[53]We use the 2005 measures of population and rural index, so that insurgency could not affect them. We exclude these criteria from matching on long-term violence.

[54]Covariates included for matching are those that could not be shaped by the FARC: population in 2005, area, history of land conflict, and how rural a municipality was in 2005 (see Table 1).

[55]In municipalities with only COIN operations, the predicted vote share is 40–50% and in the municipalities with only FARC attacks, it is 43–49% (not shown in Figure 1). These two estimates are not statistically distinct from each other but they are distinct from the municipalities with no violence and with both types of violence.

[56]In localities with only COIN operations, the predicted vote share is 43–53% and in the municipalities with only FARC attacks, it is 44–50% (not shown in Figure 1). These estimates are not statistically distinct from each other but they are distinct from the municipalities with no violence and with both types of violence.

[57]In municipalities with only COIN operations, the predicted anti-peace vote share is 38–47%, while in the municipalities with only FARC attacks it is at 42–47%. In municipalities with only COIN operations, the predicted pro-peace vote is at 49–59%, while in the municipalities with only FARC attacks it is 49–55% (not shown in Figure 1). These pairs of estimates are not statistically distinct from each other but they are distinct from the municipalities with no violence and with both types of violence.

[58]Kitschelt et al., *Latin American Party Systems*.

[59]Berrebi and Klor, "On Terrorism and Electoral Outcomes: Theory and Evidence from the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict"; Kibris, "Funerals and Elections: The Effects of Terrorism on Voting Behavior in Turkey"; de la Calle and Sánchez-Cuenca, "Killing and Voting in the Basque Country: An Exploration of the Electoral Link Between ETA and its Political Branch."

[60]Blair et al., "Poverty and Support for Militant Politics: Evidence from Pakistan"; Pechenkina, Bausch, and Skinner, "How Do Civilians Attribute Blame for State Indiscriminate Violence?"

[61]For instance, see John R. Petrocik, William L. Benoit, and Glenn J. Hansen, "Issue Ownership and Presidential Campaigning, 1952–2000," *Political Science Quarterly* 118, no. 4 (2003): 599–626; John R. Petrocik, "Issue Ownership in Presidential Elections, with a 1980 Case Study," *American Journal of Polititcal Science* 40, no. 3 (1996): 825–850 for a discussion of how issue ownership affects voter perceptions of parties in American politics.

[62]Kibris, "Funerals and Elections: The Effects of Terrorism on Voting Behavior in Turkey"; Berrebi and Klor, "Are Voters Sensitive to Terrorism? Direct Evidence from the Israeli Electorate."