



How are wars fought? Insurgency

POL 126

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TODAY

Rational violence

Wartime collaboration

Rebel tactics

Rational violence

The fate of interpreters in Afghanistan

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/08/19/podcasts/the-daily/afghanistan-interpreters-special-immigrant-visas-taliban.html?>

Is violence “random”?

Mexican Cartel Skins Rival's Face, Stitches It on Soccer Ball

by | Associated Press



MEXICO CITY – The body of 36-year-old Hugo Hernandez was left on the streets of Los Mochis in seven pieces as a chilling threat to members of the Juarez drug cartel. A note read: "Happy New Year, because this will be your last."



Mapiripán massacre in Colombia

Is violence “random”?

Public discourse on wartime violence as inherently
chaotic or “random”

Especially when conflicts linked to **ethnicity**
(What's up with that 🤔)



Rwandan genocide

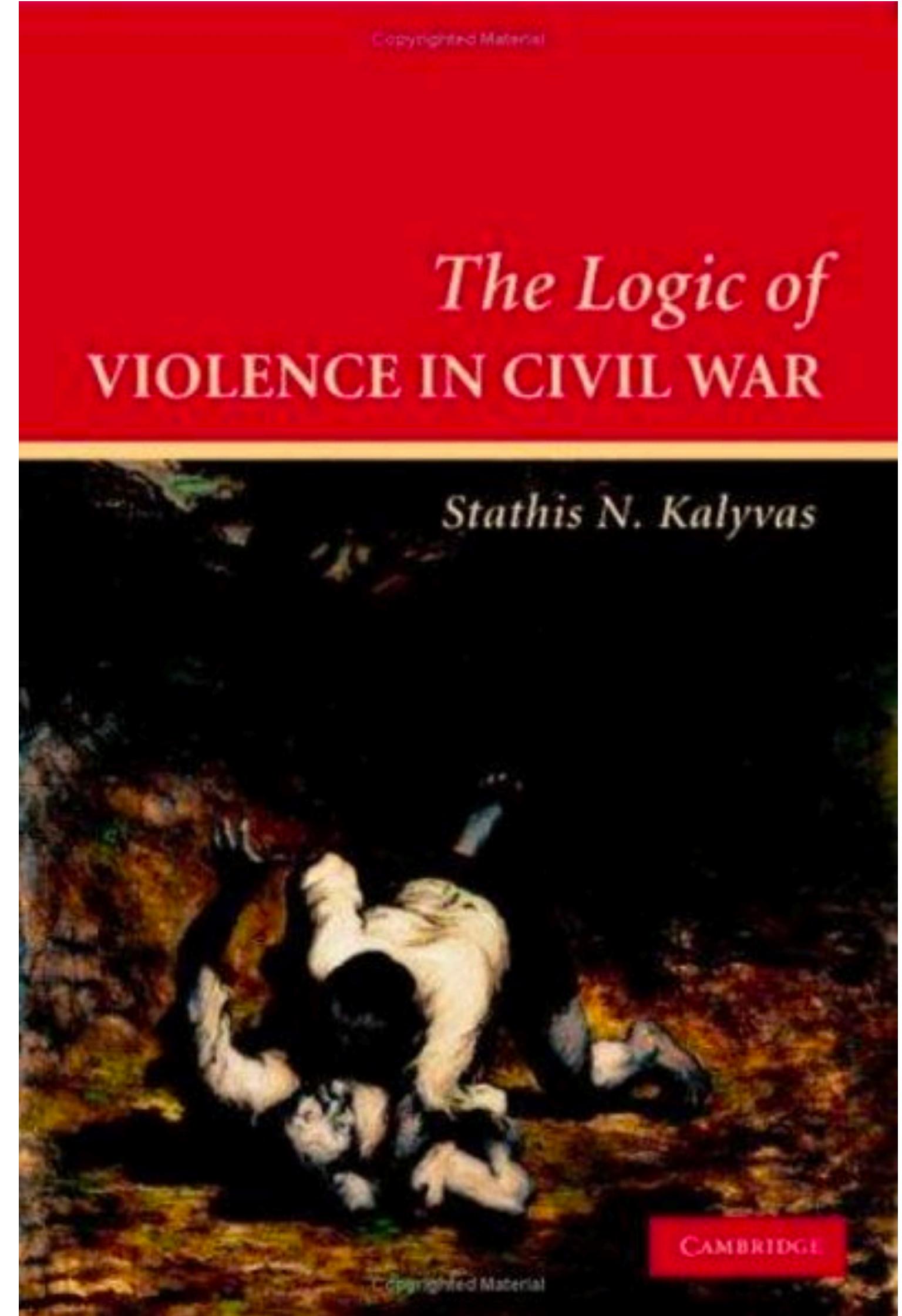
The logic of violence

Why “logic”?

Violence in civil war as result of
deliberate calculation

Combatants use violence **selectively** and
indiscriminately depending on context

Random, driven by passions



Irregular wars

Three actors: incumbents (states), rebels, civilians

Incumbents want to eliminate rebels

Rebels want to overthrow incumbent or extract concessions

Civilians want to survive, but can have **own agendas**

The identification problem

Fundamental characteristic of **irregular warfare**

Inability to distinguish between combatant and civilian

The extent to which civilians **collaborate** with combatants will determine type of violence

The classic Mao quote (relevant to psychiatry?)

“The guerrilla must move amongst the people as a fish swims in the sea” – Mao Zedong. What is the relevance to the quote to psychiatry (and more broadly the practice of medicine)?

Planning

- Meaning of the quote
- Who is Mao Zedong
- Relevance of quote
- Relevance of MaoZedong
- What is psychiatry?
- Quote – guerrilla (the fighters) amongst the people
- Metaphor – Fish in sea
- Context – Mao was fighting the Japanese and later the Nationalist government in China

Forms of violence?

Selective violence

Executed against specific individuals

Assassinations, murders, “black-lists”, drone strikes

Casualty-free, “clean”, moderate, accurate

Indiscriminate violence

Executed *en masse*; group-level membership

Massacres, chemical attacks, forced displacement

Random or wanton

Indiscriminate violence in the American Civil War

There will be trouble in Missouri until the Secesh [Secessionists] are *subjugated* and made to know that they are not only powerless, but that any desperate attempts to make trouble here will only bring upon them *certain* destruction and this [certainty] of their condition must not be confined to Soldiers and fighting men, but must extend to non-combatant men *and women.*⁷⁷

Induce **collaboration** against rebels
by punishing broader community

Example: Assad's chemical attacks

Syrian army used chemical weapons in rebel stronghold

1982 Hama massacre

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

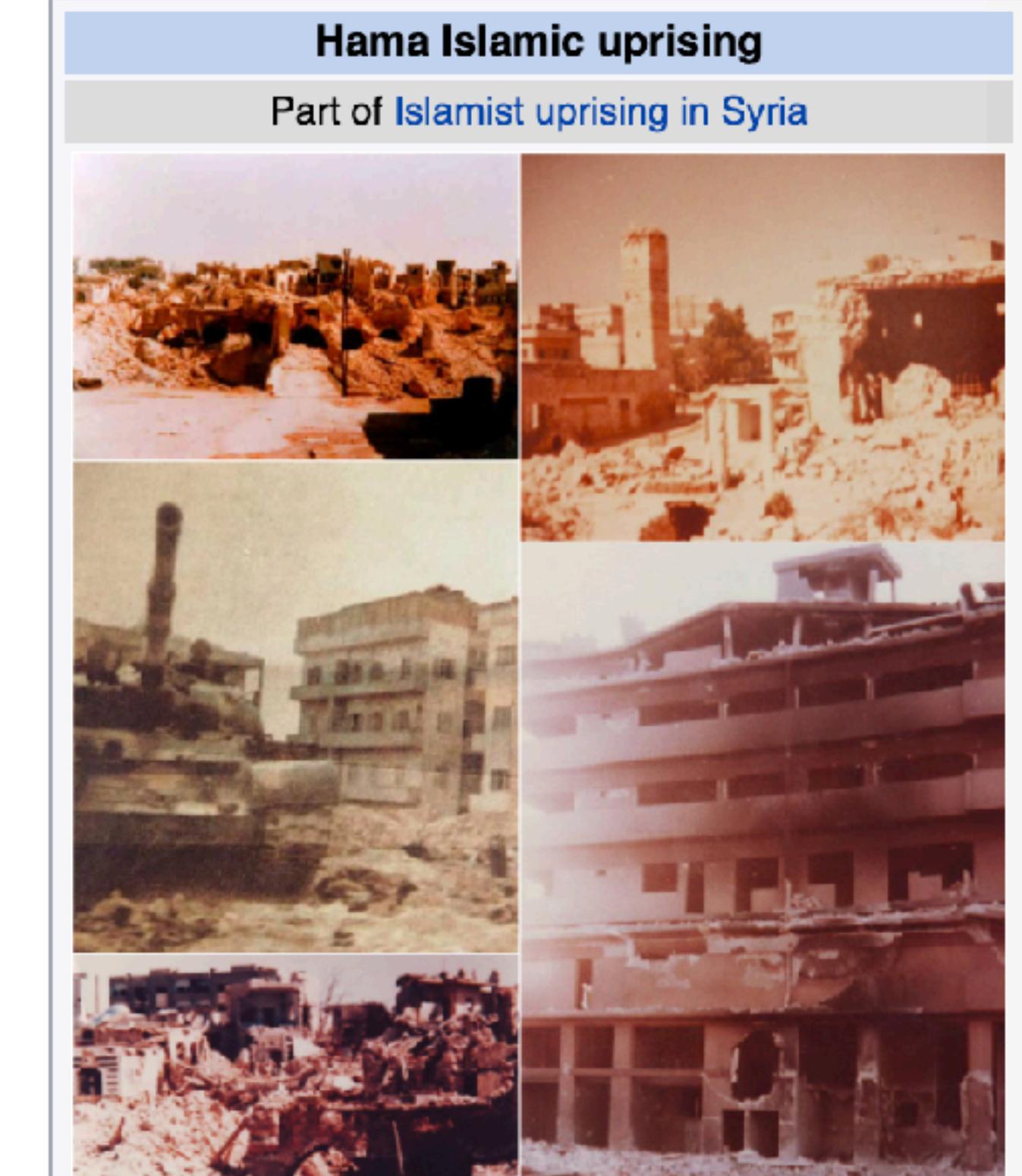
Not to be confused with the [2012 Hama massacre](#) or the [1981 Hama massacre](#).

NEWS / SYRIA'S WAR

US accuses Syria's Assad of chemical attack in Idlib

Secretary of State Mike Pompeo says Syrian government forces used chlorine during an attack in May this year.

26 Sept 2019



Syria activists: Airstrikes knock out hospitals in rebel-held Aleppo

By [Laura Smith-Spark](#), [Eyad Kourdi](#) and [Kareem Khadder](#), CNN

⌚ Updated 1:45 AM ET, Sun November 20, 2016

Indiscriminate violence

Likely when combatants face steep imbalances of power,
And where resources and info are low

Most often used by **states** (but not always!); why?

Local knowledge

WORLD NEWS

SEPTEMBER 19, 2019 / 3:25 AM / 11 DAYS AGO

States almost always know less about local population than insurgents

U.S. drone strike kills 30 pine nut farm workers in Afghanistan

Ahmad Sultan, Abdul Qadir Sediqi

4 MIN READ



JALALABAD, Afghanistan (Reuters) - A U.S. drone strike intended to hit an Islamic State (IS) hideout in Afghanistan killed at least 30 civilians resting after a day's labor in the fields, officials said on Thursday.

Angered by the attack, some residents of Nangarhar province demanded an apology and monetary compensation from the U.S. government.

“Such mistakes cannot be justified. American forces must realize (they) will never win the war by killing innocent civilians,” said Javed Mansur, a resident of Jalalabad city.

Scores of local men joined a protest against the attack on Thursday morning as they helped carry the victims' bodies to Jalalabad city and then to the burial site.

Though stay tuned for week on Shining Path...

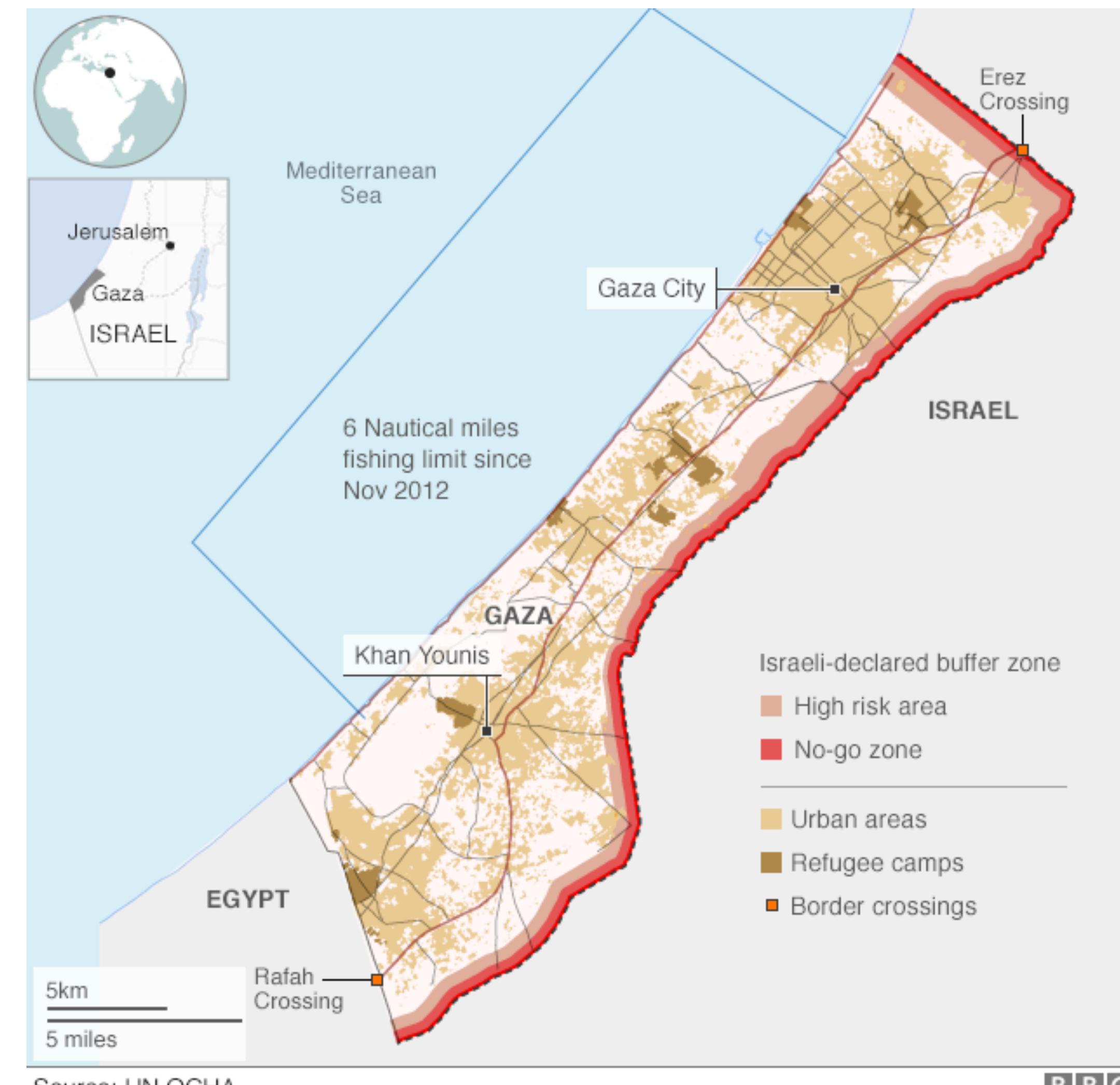
Ineffective?

“Indiscriminate violence is unlikely to achieve its aims where the presence of a rival makes defection possible”

“Indiscriminate violence...erases the relationship between crime and punishment... innocence is irrelevant and compliance is utterly impossible.”

Collective punishment in Gaza

Gaza repression ~~ election of Hamas
– but no way to opt out!



Blowback

Insurgents may even welcome indiscriminate violence from the other side

Why Hamas stores its weapons inside hospitals, mosques and schools

By [Tessier-McCoy](#)



“The Party was correct in its judgment that [US bombing]...would drive additional segments of the population into opposition...where they would have no alternative but to follow the Party’s leadership to obtain protection.” – Kocher (2007)

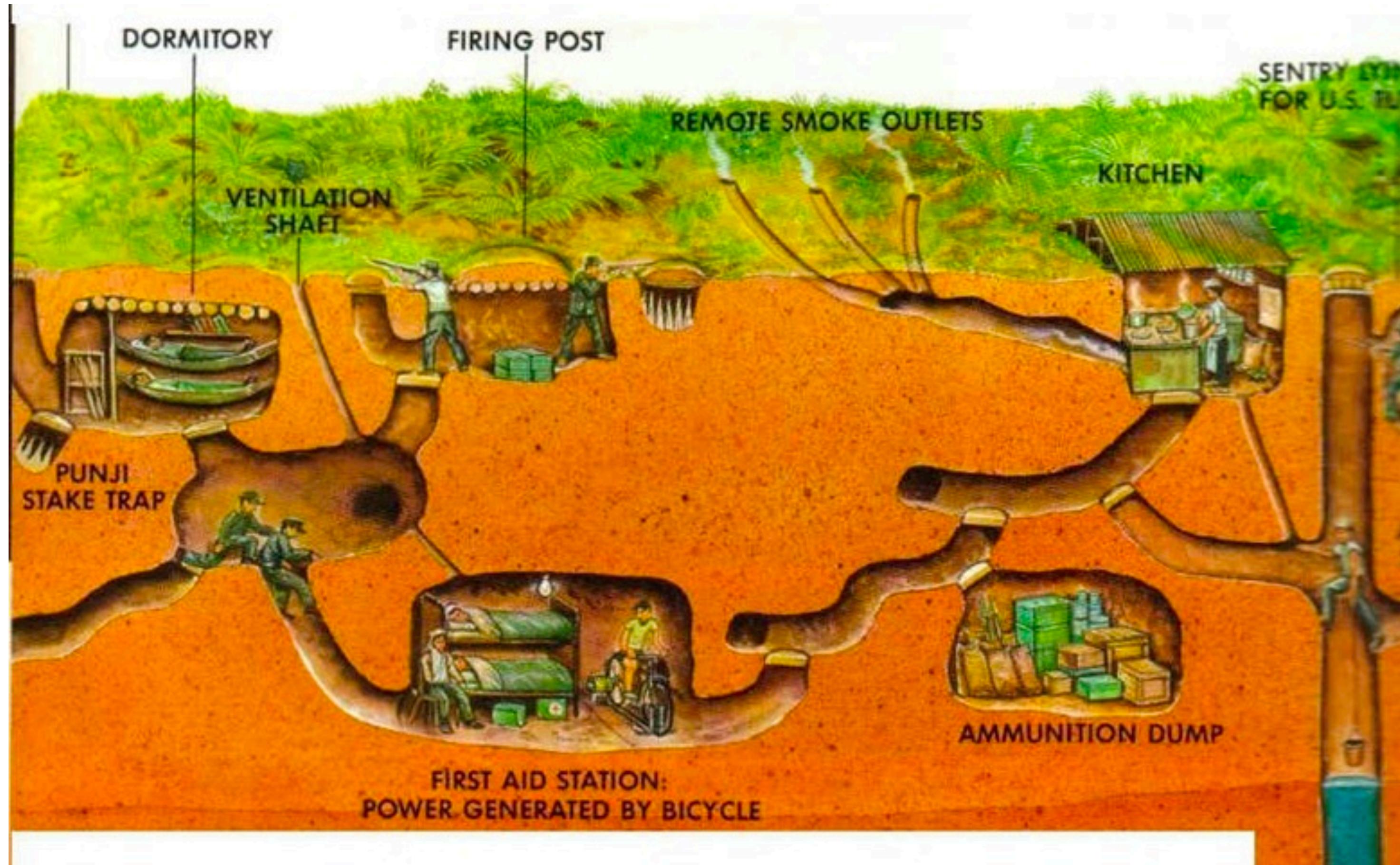
Counterproductive

Generates emotional responses, desire for vengeance

May inadvertently target most innocent for violence
(e.g., guilty flee, innocent remain)

Opens opportunity for rebels to provide **selective incentives** for civilians to support them

Selective incentives in Vietnam War



Supporting Vietcong – safety from bombing

Why then?

Selective violence too costly, no info

Anger, irrationality (more next week)

Institutional distortions

Institutional distortions

Measuring **success** for counterinsurgents super difficult
but super influential to how war is conducted!

Why was such a policy allowed to go on? The underlying cause was, Sheehan argues, the failure to curb “institutional proclivities.” On the one hand, there was competition within the U.S. military between different branches, and the Air Force was quite successful in promoting bombings: it was in the personal interest of the Air Force Chief and of his institution to believe that the bombing furthered the war effort, and so he believed it.¹⁹⁶ Moreover, processes of learning were undermined by the fast one-year or 6-month rotation period for military personnel: as soon as a military advisor began to understand the situation, he had to go back.¹⁹⁷ Thus, the U.S. military system provided for the unlearning rather than the learning of lessons. On the other hand, South Vietnamese officers saw artillery shelling as an easy way to show that they were aggressive without running the risks of actual “search and destroy” operations. Commanders at all levels who only engaged in shelling could still retain their command and even be promoted, while those who took risks might be relieved if they suffered a setback or sustained heavy losses.¹⁹⁸

Strictly preferable: selective violence

Requires intimate knowledge of target

Against specific individuals, based on **local denunciations**

Political denunciations

Personal denunciations

“Loyalty-driven”

Private feuds/motives

Political denunciations

Supporters of Mao during Cultural Revolution would publicly **denounce** “counter-revolutionaries”

Note! No need for this process to be **accurate**



Personal denunciations

Germans (accurately) denouncing Jewish neighbors to steal property

Afghans (falsely) denouncing neighbors as Taliban to steal land, or for revenge

Because of the totalitarian state's exceptional willingness to receive denunciations from its citizens and to act upon them, that state's formidable powers were in effect put at the disposal of individual citizens. If you have a private enemy, why not denounce him to the police as a Jew or Trotskyite? Then the Gestapo or the NKVD would take him away to a concentration camp, and your problem would be solved. . . . This kind of manipulative denunciation was extremely common in both societies. Class enemies were denounced in Stalin's Soviet Union by neighbors who coveted their apartments; Jews were denounced by neighbors in Nazi Germany for the same purpose, and with similar success.¹¹⁹



How to get (accurate) denunciations

Set up committees, local activists

Offer incentives to provide information

Information that brings to justice...



Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi
Up to \$25 Million Reward

Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi, also known as Abu Du'a, also known as Ibrahim 'Awwad Ibrahim 'Ali al-Badri, is the senior leader of the terrorist organization Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). The threat that al-Baghdadi poses has increased significantly since the Department of State's initial \$10 million reward offer for

Cross-reference accusations

This is difficult!

Phoenix Program – joint South Vietnam + USA
information gathering on Vietcong rebels

94% of likely go free

32% of unconfirmed go free

Estimate: 4-10 innocents
killed per 1 Vietcong

TABLE 1

PHOENIX PROGRAM RESULTS BY CONFIRMATION STATUS FROM JANUARY 1971

Status	Confirmed Vietcong	Unconfirmed Vietcong	Total
Killed	4.53% (366)	20.32% (10,341)	18.16% (10,707)
Captured	1.35% (109)	32.21% (16,392)	27.98% (16,501)
Defected	0.21% (17)	15.33% (7,801)	13.26% (7,818)
At Large	93.91% (7,587)	32.14% (16,355)	40.60% (23,942)
Total	100.00% (8,079)	100.00% (50,889)	100.00% (58,968)
Killed + Captured	5.88% (475)	52.53% (26,733)	46.14% (27,208)

SOURCE: U.S. Department of Defense, NPIASS-II.
 $\text{Pr}(\chi^2) = 0.000$

Wartime collaboration

In irregular war, each side wants to use selective violence, and needs:

Civilians to denounce enemy collaborators

Collaborators not to fear retaliation

Enemy collaborators to fear retaliation

The goal

Combatants want to establish perception of
credible selection

Hurts the enemy + produces **deterrence**

Need many + accurate denunciations

What produces false or few denunciations?

Private motives

Fear of retaliation

Retaliation

Fear of retaliation keeps civilians from denouncing (even if they want to)

Combatants actively try to make civilians fear
retaliation

The Tragic Fate of the Afghan Interpreters the U.S. Left Behind

These men risked their lives for the U.S. military. Now many would like to come to America but are stranded — and in danger

By T.A Frail; Photographs by Erin Trieb

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NOVEMBER 2016

Territorial control

How does Kalyvas describe relationship
between **territorial control**, collaboration, and
violence?