If They Endorse It, I Can't Trust It: How Outgroup Leader Endorsements Undercut Public Support for Civil War Peace Settlements

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Abstract: *Civil wars are a greater source of violence than any other type of conflict, yet little is known about one of the key determinants of civil war peace settlement success: civilian support. We evaluate how a core component of nearly all peace settlements, leader endorsements, affects public support. We predict that individuals in conflict settings will view settlements endorsed by outgroup leaders as less trustworthy and that they will become less supportive. We conduct an endorsement experiment with nearly 1,000 respondents in South Sudan in 2016, taking advantage of a brief cessation in a devastating civil war. Public support for a tentative settlement drops precipitously when it is endorsed by an outgroup leader but does not increase when it is endorsed by an ingroup leader. We find suggestive evidence that effects are strongest for individuals with the greatest reason to fear outgroup leaders: those whose communities were targeted most violently by that outgroup.*

Over the past half century, intrastate conflict has become a markedly more frequent phenomenon and today far outpaces interstate conflict as a source of violence (Pettersson, Hogbladh, and Oberg 2019). Scholars seeking to explain variation in the success of negotiated peace settlements to durably end civil conflicts have identified two key determinants.[1] First, settlement content matters: The presence of provisions that solve commitment problems for warring parties, or the ability of one group to credibly commit to the other that it will not renege on settlement terms once in power (Fearon 1998), increases the likelihood of durable peace. Second, settlement implementation can be a powerful predictor of settlement success (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003; Joshi and Quinn 2017). Implementation of useful provisions like those that solve commitment problems can have significant positive direct effects. Implementation can also serve as a costly signal of a commitment to long-term peace by groups in power (Hartzell and Hoddie 2003; Joshi and Quinn 2017).

In this article, we investigate how leader endorsements shape public opinion toward peace settlements during ongoing conflicts. There is abundant evidence that public opinion affects the two primary drivers of settlement success—settlement content and implementation—but until recently, civilian attitudes have not attracted significant scholarly attention (Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock 2019; Matanock and Garcia-Sanchez 2017). Civilians most clearly weigh in on the peace process when terms or

[1]Estimates of the percentage of settlements that fail depend on the selection of cases; see Joshi, Quinn, and Regan (2015).

the settlement itself is subject to referendum. But public opinion can also shape settlement negotiations and implementation when no referenda are held, or when a settlement has already been approved, with important implications for settlement success (Nilsson 2012). Recent civilian-led protests in Sudan resulted both in changes in leadership and the terms of transition until planned democratic elections (Associated Press 2019). Leaders often use unfavorable public opinion polls and the threat of referenda to gain leverage in peace deal negotiations and to put constraints on possible settlement content. For instance, Israel in 2010 passed a law requiring a referendum to approve any peace deal in which territory was ceded. The referendum requirement was widely interpreted as an effort to take land-for-peace deals off the negotiating table, as most surveys showed a majority of citizens opposing such terms (Kershner 2010). Peace deals that are passed without widespread civilian support or involvement, or for which support wanes following their passage, risk falling short of full implementation, as constituents are less likely to hold politicians accountable for reneging on settlement terms they do not support or view as legitimate and may even pressure them to do so (Nilsson 2012). Although Colombia's Congress ultimately passed a peace deal in November 2016—bypassing a second referendum after the first settlement proposal was narrowly rejected by voters in October—its implementation has lagged in core areas and significant uncertainty looms (Casey 2019).[2] Kew and John (2008) find that indirect and direct civil society participation in peace negotiations are associated with greater durability of negotiated peace.

We experimentally evaluate how endorsements from real leaders of two parties engaged in an ethnic civil war in South Sudan affect civilian support for a tentative peace settlement. We specifically focus on how *leader endorsements* affect public opinion of a peace settlement for three key reasons. First, we study an aspect of an ongoing settlement process with relevance to a large number of cases. Endorsements by parties pursuant to the agreement accompany nearly all peace settlements: Parties typically endorse the settlement not only through their signatures, but also through written statements and spoken words at signing ceremonies. Second, there is good reason to expect that endorsements are especially impactful in low-information conflict settings and concerning complicated peace provisions. Research shows that uninformed citizens often use political endorsements as a cognitive short-

cut to decide which candidate or policy to support and, thus, to act "as if" they were informed (Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009; Broockman and Butler 2017; Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock 2019; Lupia 1994; Minozzi et al. 2015). Further, citizens are likely to have strong feelings about different leaders, to whom they may alternatively attribute violent actions, heroic resistance, or gross incompetence. Third, endorsements of settlements are of theoretical interest. Scholars have found that conflict can change individuals' priorities and emotions, but we lack knowledge regarding how these changes might interact with individuals' interpretations of leader endorsements of peace settlements.

The extant literature indicates that effects of leader endorsements of complex peace provisions should differ depending on a respondent's perception of the endorser. Individuals have been found to respond differently to cues from sources they trust and whom they see as sharing common interests, values, and an identity, as compared with sources who do not have these characteristics (Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009; Coan et al. 2008; Lupia 1994). In the context we study, where individuals were targeted for violence based on ethnic markers (Center for Civilians in Conflict 2016), the ethnic identity of leaders is likely to condition how individuals respond to their endorsements. However, although the literature points us toward considering whether a leader and respondent share an ethnic identity, it does not offer clear predictions as to how endorsements should operate in conflict settings. We thus draw on the literature to propose two hypotheses but note that *ex ante*, effects from in and outgroup leaders could plausibly shift support in multiple directions.

A number of studies have found that endorsements from ingroup political elites tend to increase support for a policy, particularly over complex issues (Brader and Tucker 2012; Coan et al. 2008; Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock 2019; Minozzi et al. 2015). Violence can tighten group boundaries and lead to greater ingroup cohesion and coethnic support (Hadzic, Carlson, and Tavits 2020; Rohner, Thoenig, and Zilibotti 2013); if individuals blame outgroup leaders for the continuation of violence and believe that their ingroup leaders are representing their interests the best they can under difficult circumstances, then we should expect ingroup endorsements to have a positive effect on support for peace settlements. Our Ingroup Hypothesis draws on these studies to propose that individuals should be more likely to support peace settlement terms endorsed by ingroup political elites.

However, there is reason to question the applicability of these findings to the conflict setting we study. In

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[2]Although implementation in Colombia has advanced in some areas, the Kroc Institute (2018) found that over two-thirds of stipulations had either been minimally implemented (31%) or not initiated at all (39%).

contexts such as South Sudan, where both sides have been repeatedly blamed for relapses in violence and broken peace deals, ingroup leaders may not emerge completely unscathed in the eyes of their coethnics (De Juan and Pierskalla 2016; de Vries and Schomerus 2017; Lyall, Blair, and Imai 2013). If people begin to question the ability of ingroup leaders to deliver peace, then a noncredible but nonthreatening ingroup endorsement may not convey new information about the costs and benefits of the policy and may not lead individuals to update their level of support. In other contexts that feature high intergroup polarization and outgroup distrust, scholars have found that outgroup endorsements conveyed more information than did ingroup endorsements, which had no or very little effect on policy preferences (Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009; Lupia 1994; Nicholson 2012). Finally, an ingroup endorsement could decrease support if individuals begin to question their leaders' intentions and interests.

Expectations regarding the effects of outgroup leaders' endorsements are similarly mixed. Scholars have found that elites can be persuasive among the general population, and even with outgroup constituents (Broockman and Butler 2017; Minozzi et al. 2015). If people feel that outgroup leaders will represent them and their interests well, then outgroup leader endorsements could lead to increases in support. Where outgroup leaders are not viewed as having expertise or as being threatening, their endorsements may have little effect on support. A third possibility that has found support in other contexts is that outgroup leader endorsements will lead to decreases in support (Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009; Lupia 1994; Lyall, Blair, and Imai 2013; Matanock and Garbiras-Díaz 2018; Nicholson 2012). Outgroup endorsements may especially decrease support in conflict settings. First, conflict can make individuals more distrustful of outgroup leaders and individuals (Beber, Roessler, and Scacco 2014; Hall et al. 2018; Hetherington and Suhay 2011). Second, studies have found that conflict and threat may lead individuals to put a greater priority on security, as opposed to other considerations such as equality, democracy, or the uncertain future that a peace deal promises (Berrebi and Klor 2008; Huddy and Feldman 2011; Phayal 2016). Our Outgroup Hypothesis posits that individuals should be less likely to support a peace deal endorsed by outgroup political elites.

To evaluate these competing hypotheses, we conducted an endorsement experiment with a diverse array of nearly 1,000 respondents in South Sudan in early 2016, when there was a brief lull in civil war violence between the ethnically Dinka-associated Sudan People's Liberation Movement (SPLM), led by the incumbent president Salva Kiir, and the ethnically Nuer-associated SPLM-In Opposition (SPLM-IO), led by ousted vice president Riek Machar. Participants were randomly assigned to receive policy questions with no endorsement or with an endorsement by a political actor of interest, either SPLM/Kiir or SPLM-IO/Machar. We estimate the effects of in and outgroup leader endorsements on support by considering Dinka and Nuer respondents (n = 491). We supplement these results with analyses of two minority ethnic groups, the Shilluk (n = 59) and Luo (n = 330), that had vastly different wartime experiences.

We find support for the Outgroup Hypothesis but not the Ingroup Hypothesis. For both Dinka and Nuer subjects, support drops significantly for peace deals when they are endorsed by an ethnic outgroup leader, but it does not change significantly following the endorsement of an ingroup leader. We find suggestive evidence that the negative effect of an outgroup endorsement is strongest for individuals whose communities were targeted most violently by that outgroup. There is inconsistent evidence that the outgroup effect is moderated by the effect of being displaced among Nuer respondents. Where a group (Shilluk respondents) has been targeted by one side in the dispute, an endorsement from that side's leader decreases support for the peace deal, but endorsements from leaders who have not targeted the group do not significantly alter support. Where a group (Luo respondents) has faced similar levels of violence from both leaders, endorsements do not significantly change support.

Our study makes a number of contributions to the extant literature. First, it advances a nascent literature on public opinion toward peace deals—and the role that leaders' endorsements play in swaying views (Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock 2019; Matanock and Garbiras-Díaz 2018; Matanock and Garcia-Sanchez 2017). Second, it elucidates how conflict may affect individuals' responses to endorsements in particular ways. Third, we take a different tack from much excellent previous work on ethnic conflict, focusing on the determinants of support for *policies* that may result in peace, rather than on how *candidate selection* can contribute to or alternatively damage prospects for peace.[3] Fourth, we extend research on how conflict and fear affect attitudes and preferences to consider how they can shape views toward peace deals.

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[3] An extensive literature considers under what conditions individuals support ethnic candidates or political parties (e.g., Chandra 2004).

Theory and Hypotheses

How should we expect citizens to respond to leaders' endorsements of peace settlements? An extensive literature has found that citizens often utilize political endorsements as information shortcuts, or heuristics, to make decisions about a wide range of outcomes, including preferred policies and candidates (Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009; Broockman and Butler 2017; Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock 2019; Lupia 1994; Minozzi et al. 2015). These heuristics allow citizens to reduce the costs of making complex decisions that would otherwise be cognitively taxing both in terms of effort (information collection) and capacity (processing; Chaiken, Liberman, and Eagly 1989). Political endorsements from trusted and familiar sources indicate that the policy or candidate under consideration is good and would advance the respondent's interests; endorsements from distrusted sources may indicate the opposite. Through adopting informational shortcuts, uninformed citizens may cheaply emulate the behavior of more knowledgeable individuals (Lupia 1994).

Scholars have often found that individuals respond differently to endorsements from elites with a shared identity. However, the literature does not provide clear predictions as to how endorsements of peace settlements from in and outgroup leaders should affect public support in conflict settings (see Table A24 in the supporting information [SI]). In what follows, we review the literatures on in and outgroup endorsement effects and derive two hypotheses for how they might operate in conflict settings.

Ingroup Endorsements

A number of studies have found that ingroup endorsements can significantly increase support for policies and candidates (Brader and Tucker 2012; Coan et al. 2008; Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock 2019; Minozzi et al. 2015).[4] Coan et al. (2008) conduct a lab experiment in the United States in which they randomly assign subjects to receive endorsements from either the Republican Party, one of two smaller parties (Green or Reform), or no party, on issues ranging from abortion (least complex or new) to class action lawsuits (most difficult and unexplored). They find that individuals are significantly more likely to adopt the issue positions of parties with

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[4]A number of studies do not disentangle whether movement toward an ingroup elite's position was driven by an ingroup endorsement, an outgroup endorsement, or both. SI Table A24.

which they are familiar and trust, and where the issue area is complex. Brader and Tucker (2012) conduct party cue endorsement experiments with subjects from three countries: Britain, Hungary, and Poland. They find that ingroup endorsements increase support and that effects are stronger in countries with more established party systems, where partisanship is a salient identity and parties have established clear reputations.

To our knowledge, Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock (2019) and Matanock and Garbiras-Díaz (2018) present the only other experimental evidence on peace policy endorsements, in Colombia where there was an extended civil war between the government and a rebel group, FARC. Whereas the former study includes endorsements from two government officials and distinguishes between ingroups and outgroups on the basis of stated affinity with each leader, the latter study only includes endorsements from FARC, which due to its widespread unpopularity the authors treat as an "outgroup" for all respondents. Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock (2019) find that an endorsement from one politician (former President Uribe) significantly increases support among affiliating respondents, but they do not find parallel results for the other (President Santos). Research has shown that outgroup violence can lead individuals to support an ingroup, but that ingroup violence does not result in outgroup gains; this "home team discount" suggests that ingroup leaders may largely avoid blame despite the continuation of violence (Lyall, Blair, and Imai 2013, 696). If people blame the outgroup for violence but not the ingroup, and if conflict increases ethnic identification and coethnic support (Hadzic, Carlson, and Tavits 2020; Rohner, Thoenig, and Zilibotti 2013), then positive ingroup endorsement effects may even be greater in conflict settings.

Ingroup Hypothesis. Individuals should be more likely to support peace settlement terms that are endorsed by ingroup political elites. Endorsements from outgroup political elites may increase, decrease, or not have an effect on support.

There are a number of reasons why ingroup endorsements may not generate increases in support for peace provisions in conflict settings. In nonconflict settings characterized by intergroup polarization or higher outgroup distrust than ingroup trust—two features we expect to be strongly present in many conflict settings, as we discuss below—scholars have found that ingroup endorsements have little to no effect on support for policies, possibly because they convey less information than outgroup endorsements (Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009; Lupia 1994; Nicholson 2012). Additionally, in conflict

settings, blame for persistent violence may permeate individuals' perceptions of ingroup leaders, whose continued failures to deliver peace could make their subsequent promises to do so seem noncredible. If ingroup endorsements appear both noncredible and nonthreatening, then they may not convey new information about costs and benefits of a policy or lead individuals to update their level of support. De Juan and Pierskalla (2016, 71) argue that the failure of a group to protect its supporters "communicates low competence"; in South Sudan, there is evidence that civilians do not view as credible calls for peace from either side (de Vries and Schomerus 2017).

We believe that this theory could be consistent with at least two possible interpretations of results from Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock (2019). First, the authors find that an ingroup endorsement in 2017 from Uribe, who was last president in 2010, increased support, but that an ingroup endorsement from President Santos, who served until 2018, did not. These asymmetric results may be explained by individuals attributing greater blame for failures to the ingroup leader currently in power, Santos, but not to an ex-president, Uribe. Second, as Matanock and Garbiras-Díaz (2018) show, in the Colombian context, FARC was very unpopular with the vast majority of citizens. Where everyone agrees that one group is responsible for violence, alternative elites, in this case both Santos and Uribe, may to a large degree escape blame for violence. The findings from Matanock and Garbiras-Díaz (2018) thus suggest possible bounds on the theory proposed above. First, for individuals to attribute blame to ingroup leaders, those leaders should be seen as recently making decisions that impacted the peace process. Second, there must be some uncertainty over who is responsible for violence: In settings such as Colombia where a guerrilla group waged an insurgent campaign against the government, individuals on one side (the government) may largely avoid blame.[5]

Finally, an ingroup endorsement could decrease support if blame for continued violence leads individuals to doubt both in and outgroup leaders' intentions. If an ingroup leader is seen as advancing interests contrary to one's own, then just as with an outgroup leader, their endorsement of a policy may signal that it is costly. Although Lyall, Blair, and Imai (2013, 692) find that people respond asymmetrically to violence perpetrated by ingroups and outgroups, they still find that in the aggregate, neither side is popular; in a number of regions, endorsements from both sides decrease support for policies, which the au-

thors attribute to a "backdrop of war weariness in which neither combatant is especially favored."

Outgroup Endorsements

As with ingroup endorsements, the literature indicates that outgroup endorsements in conflict settings could shift support of peace provisions in multiple directions. Scholars have found that politicians' endorsements can shift policy support in the intended direction with the general population, including outgroup constituents. Minozzi et al. (2015) show that copartisans and other constituents find their U.S. members of Congress similarly persuasive. Broockman and Butler (2017) do not observe that Democratic state legislators are less persuasive with constituents who do not approve of Democratic president Barack Obama. If a belief that national politicians represent *everyone's* interests is sufficient to override salient identity divisions, then outgroup leader endorsements could result in increases in policy support. Outgroup leader endorsements could also result in little to no shift in policy preferences if outgroup leaders are seen as having different interests but are not viewed as particularly credible or threatening, or where they do not have an established reputation.

A third possibility is that outgroup leader endorsements in conflict settings will signal that a policy is costly and will decrease support. Even in nonconflict settings, endorsements from distrusted outgroup leaders have been found to result in substantial decreases in support for policies (Arceneaux and Kolodny 2009; Lupia 1994; Nicholson 2012). We posit that negative outgroup effects are likely to be even stronger in conflict settings for two reasons. First, conflict is likely to reduce trust in outgroup leaders and individuals. Individuals with greater threat perception and who have been targeted for violence are more intolerant, are less trusting, and seek more punitive measures against outgroups (Beber, Roessler, and Scacco 2014; Hall et al. 2018; Hetherington and Suhay 2011). Blair et al. (2013) attribute lower support for militant groups among the urban poor to that group's greater exposure to terrorist violence and its negative externalities. Lyall, Blair, and Imai (2013) similarly find that victimization from an outgroup leads to a drop in support for that group. These studies suggest that individuals in conflict settings will be less trusting of outgroup leaders and more fearful that an outgroup endorsement of a policy indicates that the leader sees an opportunity for further exploitation.

Second, individuals in conflict settings may become more likely to prioritize security above other concerns.

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[5]Similarly, people may attribute an outgroup responsibility for violence where the group is seen as a foreign occupying force, as in the context of Lyall, Blair, and Imai's (2013) study.

People who perceive a greater threat have been found to favor aggressive foreign policy (Hetherington and Suhay 2011; Huddy and Feldman 2011) and to be more willing to exchange personal liberties for security and for leaders who are punitive, conservative, or nationalist (Berrebi and Klor 2008; Phayal 2016). In sum, we propose that conflict may significantly reduce individuals' trust in outgroup leaders and shift their priorities toward security. These changes lead us to expect that individuals should be less likely to support peace settlement terms that are endorsed by outgroup leaders. Where individuals' central concern is security, and where the central threat to that security comes from heavily distrusted outgroup leaders, an outgroup endorsement of peace terms vulnerable to exploitation may draw particular attention from respondents and reduce their support.

Outgroup Hypothesis. Individuals should be less likely to support a peace deal when it is endorsed by outgroup political elites. Effects should be strongest for those who perceive the most threat from the outgroup. Endorsements from ingroup political elites may increase, decrease, or not have an effect on support.

Divergent findings in Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock (2019) and Matanock and Garbiras-Díaz (2018) in Colombia may highlight how endorsements from outgroups that have engaged in violence are perceived as particularly negative signals of a policy's merits. When the outgroup elite is a politician one holds in low esteem (but who has not violently targeted supporters of the alternative elite), his endorsement does not result in decreases in support for peace provisions (Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock 2019). In contrast, when the outgroup is a rebel group that engaged in guerrilla warfare, their endorsement results in a significant drop in support for provisions (Matanock and Garbiras-Díaz 2018).

We posit that exposure to violence may moderate a negative outgroup endorsement effect. Exposure to violence has been shown to increase fear and distrust of and lower support for outgroups (Beber, Roessler, and Scacco 2014; Blair et al. 2013; Grossman, Manekin, and Miodownik 2015; Hadzic, Carlson, and Tavits 2020). De Juan and Pierskalla (2016) find that those exposed to greater violence have less trust in leaders who failed to protect them. Berrebi and Klor (2008, 289) argue that Israeli voters become more supportive of far-right political parties following terror attacks because those parties place "more weight on security-related issues."

Findings pointing to the negative effects of exposure to violence notably contrast with studies showing positive outcomes related to exposure to violence, such as increased altruism (Voors et al. 2012) and social cohesion (Gilligan, Pasquale, and Samii 2014), and with studies indicating that the effects of exposure to violence may differ depending on local context and institutions (Hall et al. 2018). We expect negative effects for two main reasons. First, many positive social outcomes have been limited to ingroups and did not spill over to outgroups (Grossman, Manekin, and Miodownik 2015; Hadzic, Carlson, and Tavits 2020; Voors et al. 2012). Second, studies on the effects of exposure to violence typically take place long after the conclusion of violence, providing time for changes in context and institutions that might increase intra and intergroup trust but which are not realized in our study (De Juan and Pierskalla 2016; Hadzic, Carlson, and Tavits 2020; Hall et al. 2018). De Juan and Pierskalla (2016, 71) note that "the stage of postwar recovery at which trust is measured may play a pivotal role" and that negative short-term effects of violence on trust might dissipate, or even reverse, over time.

Our selection of South Sudan as a case provides a number of potential advantages. Most important, our study was conducted at a time when both sides had recently agreed to a tentative settlement. We are able to show subjects *real* endorsements of a settlement deal that was highly salient and the fate of which had yet to be determined. Second, we believe that this setting provides a particularly strong test of the Outgroup Hypothesis. In South Sudan, militia frequently identify individuals by their ethnicity, using either visual markers or language tests, and single them out for violence (Center for Civilians in Conflict 2016): Especially in this context, we expect individuals to be distrusting of outgroup leaders and to be particularly focused on security. In addition, it is a low-information environment and thus endorsements should convey information: The majority of our respondents are of low educational attainment and socioeconomic status, and only a minority owned a cell phone (see Table 3). People overwhelmingly want peace, and any result showing that an endorsement decreases support for a peace deal is meaningful, but we believe that if such a response exists, we are likely to capture it in this context. The targeted violence and low-information environment in South Sudan are also representative of many civil wars, giving us confidence that our findings would be generalizable to other conflict settings.

An Uncertain Peace in South Sudan

The South Sudanese civil war started in earnest on December 16, 2013, when Dinka militias loyal to President

TABLE 1 **Timeline of Events**

July 2013	President Kiir dismisses cabinet, Vice President Riek Machar.
December 2013	Kiir accuses Machar, 10 others of coup. Kiir-allied forces patrol Juba, killing Nuers; Machar flees Juba, and **ethnic civil war begins**.
August 2015	Peace accords signed, with transitional government until elections in 2018.
April 2016	Machar returns with troops to Juba, and is sworn in as vice president in accordance with deal.
July 2016	Fighting breaks out between Dinka/Nuer-allied troops; Machar flees Juba. Civil war resumes.

Salva Kiir, an ethnic Dinka, started killing ethnic Nuers while patrolling Juba, the nation's capital (see Table 1 and SI Figure A1).[6] Most accounts attribute the outbreak of violence to elite maneuvering for power and control over a dwindling pot of resources. In July, Kiir had dismissed the majority of his cabinet, led by Vice President Riek Machar, an ethnic Nuer. The cabinet members' increasing rent demands coupled with a breakdown in negotiations with Sudan that had temporarily shut down oil production meant that Kiir could no longer afford to divert funds to his colleagues, and he accordingly replaced them with cheaper alternatives (de Waal 2014). On December 15, the fragile arrangement crumbled when Kiir accused Machar and 10 others of trying to unseat him in a coup (Radon and Logan 2014). Machar fled Juba the following day and became the de facto leader of the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-In Opposition (SPLM-IO).

Despite numerous attempts at peace brokering by the international community, including one that culminated in a lengthy peace agreement to which both sides formally agreed in August 2015, fighting has continued. This study exploits a brief period of de-escalation in conflict between February and late summer 2016, during which time Machar, in accordance with one of the terms of the 2015 peace accords, returned to the nation's capital for the first time since the outbreak of the civil war to again assume the role of vice president.[7] In late July, most hope for peace in the near future disappeared when Kiir again dismissed Machar, who fled the capital as he had before.[8] SI Figure A1 shows how violence increased soon after this period.

From the start, the prevailing view was that violence was caused by elites and not by ethnic hostilities between civilians (Radon and Logan 2014).[9] Even Kiir's claim of a coup on December 15 did not necessarily imply an ethnic dimension: Only two of the 11 politicians accused were Nuer, fewer than the six Dinka (Radon and Logan 2014). However, the costs of the civil war have been largely concentrated on civilians. Over 2.3 million civilians—approximately one in every five people—have been displaced, and an estimated 50,000–300,000 have lost their lives (Kristof 2016). Of the over 2,800 violent events in South Sudan compiled in the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED; Raleigh et al. 2010) from the start of the war on December 15, 2013, to December 3, 2016, over 34% were coded as violence against civilians (see Table 2). Even that is a heavy underestimation of the costs faced by civilians, as it overlooks more local-level and small-scale violence against civilians, anticipation of violence that has led millions to flee their homes, and economic and social costs (de Waal 2014).

[6] Ethnic Dinkas (36% of the country's population) and Nuers (16%) comprise the two largest ethnic groups in South Sudan, with Shilluks and Luo, who are also represented in this study, the third largest at an estimated 9% together (Izady 2011).

[7] Many other provisions were never implemented, and there was significant uncertainty if they would be.

[8] Controlling for surveys conducted before and after Machar's return (only conducted with a portion of Luo respondents) does not alter results.

[9] See de Waal (2014) for more on why violence took on an ethnic dimension.

TABLE 2 **Type of Conflict Event Since Civil War Outbreak (South Sudan)**

Event Type	Frequency	Percent
Battles	1,401	48.24
Violence Against Civilians	991	34.13
Strategic Developments	200	6.89
Explosions/Remote Violence	141	4.86
Protests	109	3.75
Riots	62	2.13
Total	2,904	100.00

Source: ACLED (Raleigh et al. 2010). December 15, 2013, through December 3, 2016.

Research Design

Endorsement Experiment

To isolate the effects of leader endorsements on support for the tentative peace settlement, we conducted an experiment similar in design to party and group cueing studies conducted in the United States (e.g., Nicholson 2012) and to work on the peace settlement in Colombia (Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock 2019; Matanock and Garbiras-Díaz 2018). Our experiment also draws significantly on the endorsement designs of two studies conducted in Afghanistan and Pakistan (Blair et al. 2013; Lyall, Blair, and Imai 2013). However, these latter studies interpret changes in support due to an endorsing party as solely indicating individuals' underlying support for that party, independent of the policies that parties are said to endorse. In our context—one characterized by a high degree of violence, distrust, and low information—we echo Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock (2019) and Matanock and Garbiras-Díaz (2018) in our expectation that endorsements of policies will change individuals' support for those policies not solely because of the endorser's identity but also because their endorsements of policies convey information about the costs and benefits of those policies.

Figure 1 displays our experiment design. Participants were randomly assigned to a control or one of two treatment conditions. In each, they were asked how much they agreed with six different policies taken from 2015 peace accords signed by Kiir and Machar.[10] In treatment conditions, the policies were preceded by either the endorsement of Kiir/SPLM or Machar/SPLM-IO. Because the policies are the same in every respect except for the endorsement of the policy by a political actor in a treatment group, any difference in support for settlement policies between a treatment group and the control group is interpreted as representing the effect of information conveyed about the policy's costs and benefits due to the political actor's endorsement. If support increases, then this suggests that citizens learn from that endorsement that there are greater benefits to the policy. If support drops, this indicates that the leader's endorsement suggests greater costs.

We chose six domestic peace policy reforms: a power-sharing arrangement, national bank reform, the establishment of a trust and reconciliation commission, a new constitution, a unified military force, and the democratization of the SPLM political party (see SI Appendix 2.2

for a discussion of our choice of treatments and for experiment materials).

Respondents rated their level of support for each proposal on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from *not at all* to *a great deal* (Blair et al. 2013).[11] These responses were combined into a standardized "support index" for the six peace policy reforms using inverse covariance weighting (ICW) as outlined by Anderson (2008).[12] ICW increases the statistical power of our tests and addresses concerns about multiple comparisons (Mvukiyehe and Samii 2017). The index is reported in pooled outcome standard deviations (Cohen's *d* statistic). Following Mvukiyehe and Samii (2017), for all tests we report both index outcomes with nominal p-values and individual endorsement question outcomes that make up the index with false discovery rate (FDR)-controlled p-values (Benjamini and Hochberg 1995). In SI Appendix 6 and 8.3, we also show the robustness of results to, respectively, using simple policy support averages and to factor analysis.

Site Implementation and Execution

The endorsement experiment was first administered to Dinka and Nuer respondents and later expanded to include Shilluk and Luo respondents. Surveys were conducted by two experienced teams: the Danish Refugee Council's (DRC) mine risk education (MRE) team and a private survey company.[13] MRE teams educate villagers on the risks of unexploded ordnance and elicit information from them through surveys to identify the density and locations of explosive remnants of war. Teams were accordingly well versed in obtaining permissions from village chiefs and local authorities and earning the trust of village locals. Most critically, MRE teams allowed us to reach additional rural areas that would otherwise be inaccessible to civilian enumerators due to the outbreak of violence. Our private survey team, which had experience conducting surveys for the World Bank and United Nations, was utilized primarily in safer urban areas and in locations where MRE teams were not operating. Survey team members worked in groups that included a leader

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[10]The first five policies come directly from the August 2015 peace accords (Intergovernmental Authority Development 2015), and the sixth from an earlier 2015 accord (Tribune 2015).

[11]We can thus evaluate *changes* in support due to information conveyed by endorsements.

[12]The code to calculate the index is available at https://github.com/cdsamii.

[13]Controlling for whether surveys were collected by MRE or private survey teams does not alter results. Results do not appear to be driven by enumerator error and are robust to including enumerator fixed effects; see SI Appendix 8.4.

FIGURE 1 Endorsement Experiment Structure

Subjects are randomly assigned to Treatment 1 (SPLM/ Kiir endorser), Treatment 2 (SPLM-IO/Machar endorser), or control condition. In each condition, they are asked how much they support six different policy reforms on a 1-5 scale.

SPLM/Salva Kiir support [POLICY DESCRIBED]. How much do you support this policy?

TREATMENT 1 (Kiir)

POLICY DESCRIBED. How much do you support this policy?

CONTROL CONDITION

SPLM-IO/Riek Machar support [POLICY DESCRIBED]. How much do you support this policy?

TREATMENT 2 (Machar)

Example: endorsement question on power sharing
[Control Group / Treatment 1 (SPLM/Kiir) / Treatment 2 (SPLM-IO/Machar]

[It has been proposed / The ruling government under President Kiir proposed / The opposition under Riek Machar proposed] that the new First Vice President of South Sudan be from the Sudan Sudan Armed Opposition and the President be from the SPLM/current ruling party. This arrangement is expected to be a good way to bridge differences between these two warring groups. How much do you support this proposal?

(1) A great deal (2) A lot (3) A moderate amount (4) A little (5) Not at all

and if necessary a translator.[14] Surveys were then translated into English and sent to the researchers. To ensure the safety of enumerators, overcome language barriers, and increase the comfort of respondents, where possible enumerators' ethnicities were matched to respondent ethnicity.

One of the principal investigators for this project had previously worked as a DRC quality assurance officer and had conducted in-person data collection trainings with MRE and private survey team leaders. We conducted additional training sessions with team leaders for this project remotely. Team leaders then trained and oversaw data collection administered by their team members. Teams followed a three-step process: first, they randomly selected villages from those accessible in the area, as they did not have the capacity to visit them all; second, they divided villages into blocks to ensure that respondents were evenly geographically distributed across the village; third, they randomly selected an equal number of households within each block and verbally administered the demographic and endorsement surveys, the latter of which was randomized to be either the control or one of the two treatment conditions.[15] See SI Tables A1– A4 for evidence that random assignment was effectively implemented, and SI Appendix 2.3 for more information on data collection. Surveys were administered in 42 villages across eight counties and five of South Sudan's 10 states (see Figure 2).[16]

The dearth of reliable demographic data in South Sudan makes it difficult to make inferences about the representativeness of our sample (Caruso et al. 2017). In Table 3, we compare our overall and state-by-state sample characteristics with data from waves 1 (2015) and 2 (2016) of the World Bank's High Frequency Survey.[17] Though the World Bank's survey was designed to be representative for all of South Sudan, four states were excluded for security reasons: Jonglei, Unity, Upper Nile, and Warrap. MRE teams were active and collected data for our study in three of these states (Unity, Upper Nile, and Warrap), highlighting the unique value of our data.

We expect that our data will be skewed toward conflict. Indeed, Unity and Upper Nile, and Warrap to a lesser extent, fare much worse than Northern Bahr el Ghazal on a host of demographic characteristics, including exposure to violence and educational attainment. Our sample is a little older, perhaps due to greater displacement or deaths of younger civilians, and villages in our sample are almost entirely ethnically homogenous. The negative outgroup endorsement effect we identify may not generalize, at least as strongly, to less conflict-prone or to postconflict areas. See SI Table A10 for demographic summary statistics. In the supporting information, we report robustness to demographic controls (SI Appendix 8.1) and state fixed effects (SI Appendix 8.2).

Results

Citizens across ethnic groups are widely supportive of peace policies (see Figure 3 and SI Appendix 4.2).

Nuer and Dinka Respondents

We begin by restricting the sample to Dinka and Nuer respondents. First, we present point estimates of the mean levels of standardized indexed support for policies, with 95% confidence intervals across treatment conditions, and split by respondent ethnicity (see Figure 4).[18] We report difference in means tests using the standard two-tailed t-test. We do not find evidence that an ingroup endorsement shifts support for Dinka ($\mu_{DinkaEndorser} - \mu_{control} = 0.07$, 95% confidence interval $[-0.15, 0.30]$) or Nuer ($\mu_{NuerEndorser} - \mu_{control} = -0.14$, 95% confidence interval $[-0.29, 0.01]$) respondents. However, outgroup endorsements result in substantively and statistically significant decreases in support, of 1.21 standard deviations for Dinka respondents (95% confidence interval $[-1.45, -0.98]$) and 1.89 standard deviations for Nuer respondents (95% confidence interval $[-2.04, -1.75]$). These decreases exceed the standard "large" effect size of $d = 0.8$ (Lakens 2014).

SI Appendix 7 reports Bayesian estimates and minimum detectable effect sizes (MDEs) given our sample sizes. Our results indicate that the true effect of an ingroup endorsement for Dinka respondents is zero. Results for Nuer respondents are mixed—we find some support for a true effect of zero, and some support for a negative effect—and thus we do not find the evidence sufficient to accept or reject the null hypothesis of no true effect. In sum, these results support the Outgroup Hypothesis but

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[14]Different languages included Arabic, and Dinka, Luo, and Nuer dialects.

[15]We take the village as our lowest geographical unit, as blocks did not have defined boundaries.

[16]Fifteen Murle respondents are excluded from analysis due to their small sample size. Our final sample thus includes respondents from 41 villages across seven counties and four states.

[17]World Bank data from both surveys are available at http://microdata.worldbank.org.

[18]See SI Figure A7 for the same figure with simple support averages.

FIGURE 2 Data Collection
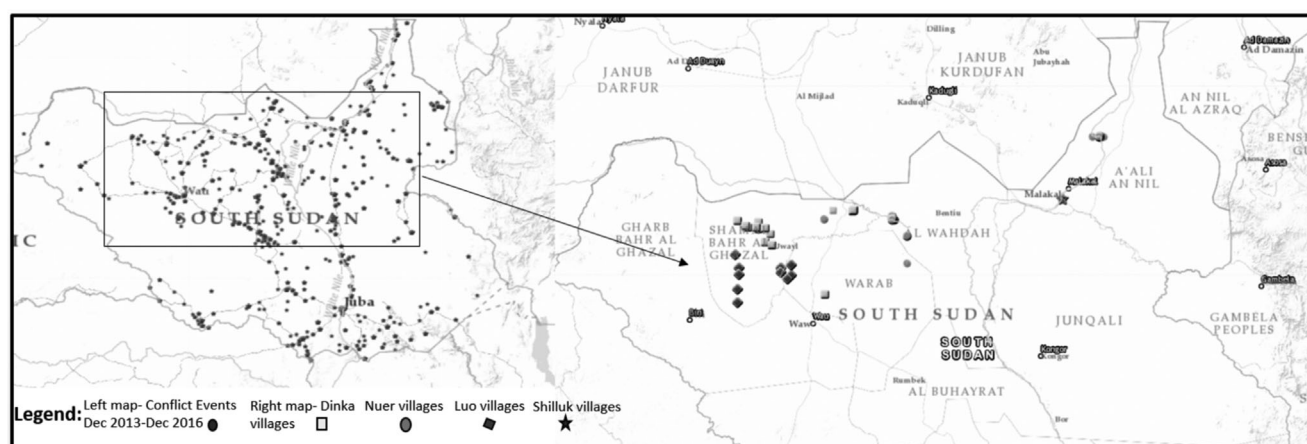
Source: ACLED (Raleigh et al. 2010) for left map. Certain villages, while distinct, were nevertheless too proximate to distinguish on this map.

not the Ingroup Hypothesis. We find evidence that outgroup politician endorsements substantially reduce support for peace policies. As regards ingroup endorsements, results either indicate no true effect (Dinka respondents) or insufficient evidence to reject the null of no true effect (Nuer respondents).

Table 4 provides evidence that subjects' responses to leaders' endorsements are conditioned by their ethnicity.[19] The fourth row (Dinka Endorser∗ Dinka Respondent) shows that an endorsement from a Dinka politician increases support among Dinka respondents, compared against Nuer respondents and relative to the control, 1.98 standard deviations (95% confidence interval [1.63, 2.33]). In contrast, the fifth row (Nuer

[19]See SI Appendix 5 for our regression models.

TABLE 3 Comparison of Study Sample with World Bank's High Frequency Survey

| | Endorsement Sample-2016 | | | | | World Bank-2015 | | World Bank-2016 | |
Covariates	All	NBG	Unity	Upper Nile	Warrap	WB All	WB NBG	WB All	WB NBG
Female	43.82%	40.33%	47.29%	51.83%	46.51%	51.83%	48.96%	54.18%	53.08%
Age (Avg.)	37.56	36.71	39.18	39.23	36.98	32.37	32.28	33.01	34.07
Christian	99.66	99.63	99.24	100.00	100.00				
Experienced violence . . .									
. . . since Dec 2013	80.07	70.20	100.00	100.00	65.91				
. . . present day	73.21	60.37	99.24	98.18	59.09				
Ever IDP	42.18	25.00	66.67	70.30	73.33				
Some Education	66.86	84.04	40.91	35.15	53.33	59.93	49.28	57.31	51.37
Some Education (Father)	48.69	69.76	12.88	10.91	40.00				
Poorer than Others	52.61	66.98	21.97	26.06	68.18	54.30	69.31	75.27	79.01
Household Size (Avg.)	8.87	7.87	10.54	10.51	10.14	8.76	10.44	9.17	8.47
Own Cell Phone	45.61	48.95	31.06	46.67	45.45				
Years in Current Village (Avg.)	22.35	27.31	14.00	15.03	13.02				

Note: IDP: internally displaced person; some education (father): any formal education (obtained by father); poorer than others: respondent said his or her household was poorer as compared with others in community; experienced violence: experienced "a great deal" or "a lot" of violence; WB: World Bank; NBG: Northern Bahr el Ghazal state.

FIGURE 3 Distribution of Answers to Endorsement Questions
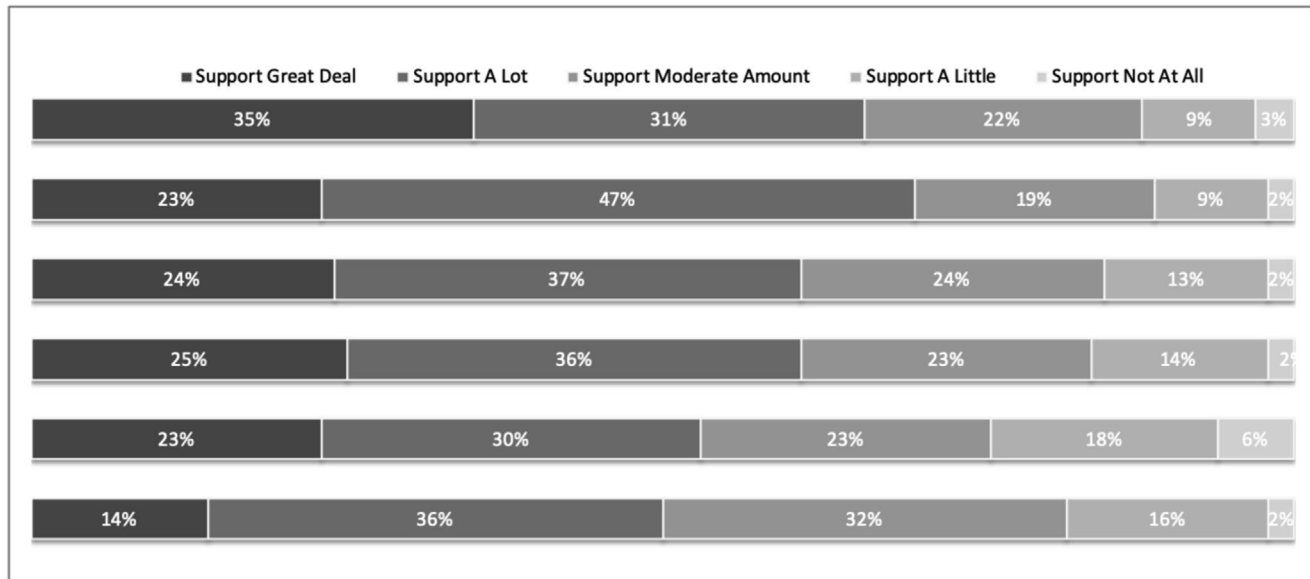
Note: Row order corresponds to endorsement question number (1-6).

Endorser∗ Dinka Respondent) shows that an endorsement from a Nuer politician decreases support among Dinka respondents, compared against Nuer respondents and relative to the control, 1.07 standard deviations (95% confidence interval [−1.44, −0.68]). Substituting average support for endorsement policies for the indexed support measure results in an estimated increase of 1.33 points (95% confidence interval [1.12, 1.53]) for the fourth row and a decrease of 0.71 points (95% confidence interval [−0.96, −0.45]) for the fifth row, on a 5-point scale. For comparison, Garbiras-Díaz, Garcia-Sanchez, and Matanock (2019) find that endorsements from favored politicians increase support for peace policies by 0.43 and 0.88 points on a 7-point scale. Interaction effects are driven by decreases in support caused by outgroup endorsements (Table 5). The negative outgroup endorsement effect is consistent across *all six policies* both for Nuer and for Dinka respondents. Findings are robust to the inclusion of controls (SI Table A19) and state fixed effects (SI Table A21).

Limited variation in Dinka and Nuer respondents' degrees of self-reported exposure to violence makes it difficult to draw strong conclusions about the moderating effect of exposure to violence on outgroup leaders' endorsements. We present results in SI Appendix 3.1. We do not find any evidence of a moderating effect with Dinka respondents, and we find inconsistent evidence of a moderating effect using a proxy for exposure to violence that contains greater variation, whether one was displaced or not, with our Nuer subsample.

Shilluk and Luo Respondents

To further investigate the moderating effect of exposure to violence and to test the robustness of our findings, the experiment was expanded to include two minority ethnic groups: the Shilluk and Luo. These groups can shed additional light on our findings because they have been exposed to violence from different combinations of ethnic outgroups over the course of the civil war. Whereas the Shilluk in our sample had only recently faced extreme ethnically targeted violence exclusively at the hands of SPLM and Dinka-allied groups, the Luo have faced indiscriminate violence from both SPLM-IO and SPLM-allied forces.[20]

Our Outgroup Hypothesis predicts that Shilluk respondents should, like Nuer respondents, respond negatively to Dinka endorsements of peace policies because exposure to violence from Dinka groups makes them trust Dinka leaders less and fear their possible exploitation of peace terms more. In contrast, because the Luo have faced indiscriminate violence from both sides, they should not fear one group more than the other. Our Outgroup Hypothesis would accordingly expect them to react similarly to Dinka and Nuer politician endorsements but does not offer a clear expectation as to whether endorsements will reduce or not change their support.

[20]See SI Appendix 2.4 for descriptions of each group's experience during the war.
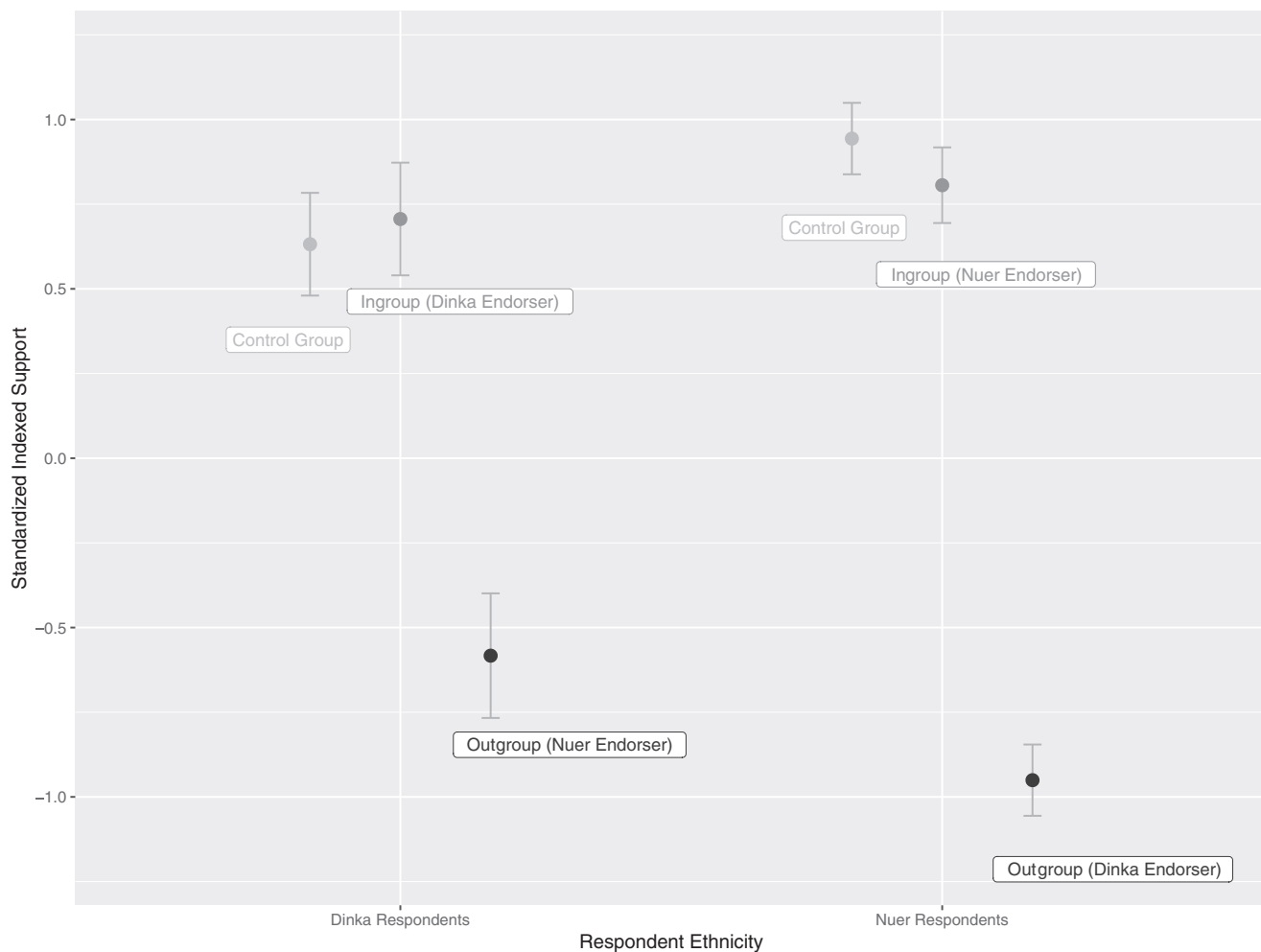
FIGURE 4 Mean Standardized Indexed Support by Treatment and Respondent Ethnicity

Figure 5 displays point estimates of the mean levels of standardized indexed support for policies with 95% confidence intervals.[21] We find evidence in favor of the Outgroup Hypothesis. A Dinka endorsement leads to a substantively important and statistically significant decrease in support for policies among Shilluk respondents of 1.34 standard deviations (95% confidence interval [−1.56, −1.11]). We do not find evidence that a Nuer endorsement shifts support either for Shilluk ($\mu_{NuerEndorser} - \mu_{control} = -0.16$, 95% confidence interval [−0.35, 0.03]) or Luo ($\mu_{NuerEndorser} - \mu_{control} = 0.08$, 95% confidence interval [−0.13, 0.29]) respondents, nor that a Dinka endorsement shifts support for Luo respondents ($\mu_{DinkaEndorser} - \mu_{control} = -0.00$, 95% confidence interval [−0.23, 0.22]). Bayesian estimation and MDE analysis (SI Appendix 7) indicate that the true ef-

fect of Nuer and Dinka politician endorsements is zero for Luo respondents. Evidence on the true effect of a Nuer politician endorsement on Shilluk respondents is inconclusive.

Discussion
Interpretation of Ingroup Endorsement Effect

We do not find any evidence of a positive ingroup endorsement effect for Nuer and Dinka respondents; to the contrary, our analysis in SI Appendix 7 suggests a true ingroup endorsement effect of zero for Dinka respondents. We interpret the lack of an ingroup endorsement effect as being attributable to a decrease in the perceived competence or shared interests of ingroup leaders due to years of prolonged conflict and failed peace deals. However, it

[21]See SI Figure A7 for simple support averages, Tables A6–A8 for regression results, and Tables A19 and A20 for robustness tests.

TABLE 4 Does Ethnicity Condition Responses to Endorsements?

	(1) Index	(2) Power Sharing	(3) National Bank	(4) Truth Commission	(5) New Constitution	(6) Armed Forces	(7) Splm Democratization
Endorser: Dinka Pol/Party	−1.91*	−1.05*	−1.52*	−2.04*	−1.74*	−0.74*	−0.63*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.01)
Endorser: Nuer Pol/Party	−0.16	0.05	0.02	−0.34*	0.07	−0.32	0.06
	(0.08)	(0.48)	(0.79)	(0.04)	(0.46)	(0.07)	(0.70)
Dinka Respondent Dummy	−1.06	−1.14	−0.81	−1.31	−1.31	0.05	−0.52
	(0.48)	(0.48)	(0.53)	(0.48)	(0.48)	(0.80)	(0.57)
Dinka Endorser∗ Dinka Respondent	1.98*	1.01*	1.52*	2.38*	1.75*	0.50*	0.80*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.02)	(0.00)
Nuer Endorser∗ Dinka Respondent	−1.07*	−0.94*	−0.58*	−0.29	−0.96*	−0.67*	−0.79*
	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.19)	(0.01)	(0.02)	(0.00)
Constant	1.16*	4.95*	4.26*	4.66*	4.15*	4.87*	3.74*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Observations	490	490	490	490	490	490	490
R-squared	0.64	0.46	0.53	0.57	0.51	0.49	0.35

Note: Standard errors are clustered at the village level. Wild bootstrap method (Cameron et al. 2008), with 1,000 replications, is used to account for low number of clusters with (here, 26 villages). First column outcome is a standardized, inverse-covariance-weighted average of the other columns' outcomes. Significance levels for non-index outcomes are based on FDR-controlled *p*-values. All regressions include village fixed effects.
The p-values are in parentheses.
*p <.05

is possible that our null finding is instead attributable to ceiling effects or to citizens' greater familiarity with ingroup politicians' stances, which could make ingroup endorsements less informative.

We think that these alternative explanations are unlikely. First, the raw average levels of support for policies in SI Figure A7 show that support has not reached a ceiling and there is still room for it to increase. In such a low-information environment, it is unlikely that respondents were very knowledgeable about the peace policies, let alone politicians' policy stances. Further, if differential knowledge prior to the experiment was driving results, we would expect that Shilluk and Luo respondents, who have no coethnic politician at the national level and thus should not have a high degree of knowledge about either politician's stances prior to the study, should be swayed either positively or negatively by both politicians' endorsements, which we do not observe.

Interpretation of Outgroup Endorsement Effect

In this section, we consider two alternative mechanisms for our negative outgroup endorsement effect findings. First, conflict could increase social polarization, leading

individuals to update downward after an outgroup endorsement not because of security or trust (*instrumental*) concerns but rather because of outgroup enmity. Scholars have found that identity-based differences can drive political behavior even where groups' issue-based differences are moderate and ingroup candidates are unpopular (Abramowitz and Webster 2018; Iyengar and Westwood 2015). Distinguishing between instrumental and affect-based mechanisms has important normative implications: If people care only about which side wins, compromise is unlikely; further, the aim of using heuristics is not to act as if one was informed, undermining its central theorized benefit (Iyengar and Westwood 2015; Lupia 1994).

Conflict is likely to increase social polarization, but we do not think it is the sole driver of our results. First, we would expect that Luo respondents who faced violence from both sides would respond negatively to endorsements from both Dinka and Nuer politicians. In contrast, individuals appear to respond negatively to endorsements only from outgroups that constitute a particular threat to their personal safety (e.g., when they are only targeted by that group for violence and not by the alternative group). Second, given the overwhelming desire for peace, we believe that people will be instrumentally motivated to support whichever policies they believe are most likely to

TABLE 5 Considering Effects of In and OutGroup Leader Endorsements

	(1)	(2) Power Sharing	(3) National Bank	(4) Truth Commission	(5) New Constitution	(6) Armed Forces	(7) SPLM Democratization
	Index						
Panel A: Dinka Respondents							
Endorser: Dinka Pol/Party	0.10	−0.01	0.01	0.37	0.03	−0.23	0.18
	(0.53)	(0.95)	(0.91)	(0.05)	(0.92)	(0.08)	(0.41)
Endorser: Nuer Pol/Party	−1.21*	−0.87*	−0.55*	−0.61*	−0.89*	−0.99*	−0.73*
	(0.00)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.01)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Constant	−1.57*	2.01*	2.99*	1.63*	1.97*	4.23*	1.82*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Observations	256	256	256	256	256	256	256
R-squared	0.46	0.35	0.23	0.33	0.29	0.40	0.23
Panel B: Nuer Respondents							
Endorser: Dinka Pol/Party	−1.90*	−1.05*	−1.52*	−2.04*	−1.74*	−0.74*	−0.63*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.01)
Endorser: Nuer Pol/Party	−0.15	0.06	0.02	−0.33*	0.07	−0.32	0.06
	(0.09)	(0.38)	(0.85)	(0.02)	(0.44)	(0.09)	(0.73)
Constant	0.88*	4.56*	4.28*	4.84*	4.61*	4.97*	2.80*
	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)	(0.00)
Observations	234	234	234	234	234	234	234
R-squared	0.83	0.59	0.70	0.76	0.74	0.28	0.49

Note: Standard errors are clustered at the village level. Wild bootstrap method (Cameron et al. 2008), with 1,000 replications, is used to account for low number of clusters. First column outcome is a standardized, inverse-covariance-weighted average of the other columns' outcomes. Significance levels for non-index outcomes are based on FDR-controlled p-values. All regressions include village fixed effects. The p-values are in parentheses.

*$p<.05$

deliver peace. Third, while most studies on social polarization emphasize the role of outgroup enmity, they still anticipate and observe a positive ingroup effect and high ingroup loyalty, which we do not observe (Abramowitz and Webster 2018; Iyengar and Westwood 2015). Fourth, a factor analysis (SI Appendix 6) shows that the six endorsement questions load on two factors. Importantly, the two questions for which security concerns are likely to be most pressing, one on power-sharing and the second on joint control of security forces, most clearly load on one factor, whereas the remaining four endorsement questions most clearly define the other. Analysis is robust to using either factor as the dependent variable.

A second alternative explanation of our results is that people respond negatively to endorsements from outgroup leaders not due to security concerns, but because they fear that outgroup leaders will exclude them from government patronage. A factor analysis indicates that the endorsement question most likely to pick up on fear of capture of material benefits, on revisions to the national bank, does not load on a different factor than the others. We also added a question to the survey with Luo respondents to measure perceived ethnic bias in the distribution of public goods. We do observe that a Nuer endorsement increases support among Luo respondents who believe that leaders are ethnically biased by 0.44 standard deviations (95% confidence interval [0.26, 0.62]).[22] This effect appears to be driven primarily by an increase in support for the banking endorsement question. Results reported in this article are robust to excluding this question.

Although we argue that security concerns play a key role in how individuals interpret endorsements, outgroup animus and material concerns may also explain some component of our observed effect.

Focus Group Discussions with Dinka and Nuer Political Elites

To better evaluate our understanding of the peace process in South Sudan, in November–December 2018 we conducted focus group discussions with Dinka (n = 7)

[22]See SI Table A9.

FIGURE 5 Mean Indexed Support Levels by Treatment and Respondent Ethnicity
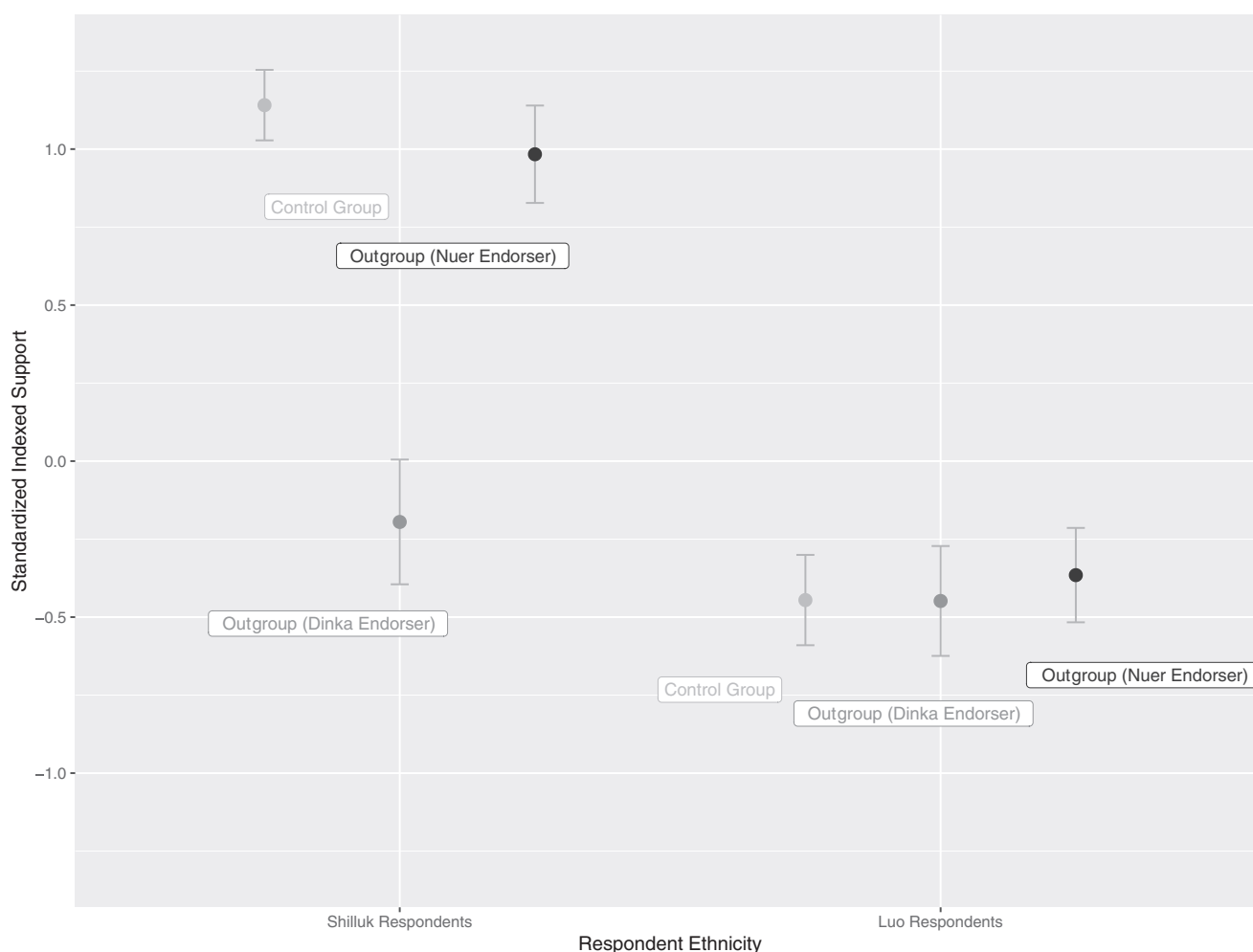
and Nuer (n = 10) political elites (see SI Figure A4 for questions).

Our claims largely found support. Leaders and citizens appeared fearful of outgroup exploitation. A Nuer officer argued that past deals had broken down because "SPLM always wanted to dominate non-Dinkas and rule the government with Dinkas only." Nuer civilians were said to be "scared to trust the [SPLM] government in fulfilling the peace deal." Leaders insisted that their fears of the other side were not due to hate, but rather to a deep distrust.[23] One Dinka village chief said, "We don't hate the opposition but they have to be more loyal and . . . fulfill their commitments as regards this peace deal." Both groups listed guaranteeing security among their top three priorities for achieving peace.

[23]Potentially consistent with this account are the high import civilians in the World Bank's High Frequency Survey attach to facilitating healing between communities, ranking such efforts only behind an end to fighting as the best way to bring peace to South Sudan.

Leaders described a low-information environment. They said that they only learned about peace deal provisions during briefings from leadership, a source of information unavailable to civilians. A SPLM-IO deputy commander observed that "some of the things [in the peace deal] are not understandable to [the people]." There was also evidence that some followers had grown weary of ingroup leaders' promises, and a Dinka village chief noted, "This peace process is significant because South Sudanese citizens are tired with prolonged years of war."

Focus group discussions, and accounts detailing how leaders on both sides in South Sudan were able to rely on critical support from coethnic communities even as they escalated violence and violated the peace deal, indicate that lower civilian support for peace deals might have consequential effects where civilians apply less pressure on ingroup elites and on communities to comply with settlement terms. A Nuer governor, the highest state-level public office, insisted that there was accountability: "If

civilians withdraw their support, then Kiir and Machar both will be out." Leaders stressed that civilians had "an equal role" in making the peace deal successful. A SPLM-IO military commander recalled instances where "people forced us to oblige with implementation of the agreements on time [and] improvement of security." A Dinka village chief stated that the key role of civilians was to "spread the positive message" of the peace deal by not engaging in intercommunal violence or cattle raiding, which could imperil on-the-ground settlement implementation.

Conclusion

We present results from a large-scale survey experiment conducted during a brief pause in civil war violence in South Sudan in 2016. We find that support for a tentative peace deal drops precipitously when policies are endorsed by outgroup leaders, and suggestive evidence that negative effects are greatest for those whose communities were targeted most violently by that outgroup. Ingroup politician endorsements do not significantly alter individuals' support for the peace settlement. We conclude that a policy from a distrusted outgroup leader conveys information—namely, that the leader sees a way to exploit the policy—and makes individuals valuing security above all else less likely to support that policy.

How can public support for peace settlements signed by leaders from warring groups be increased? Our study indicates that providing policy information may not be sufficient to overcome citizens' fears of outgroup leaders. Efforts to increase intergroup trust, to build and communicate safeguards against outgroup exploitation, and to increase inclusion of civilians and, given recent evidence, in particular women in the peace process, may be more fruitful strategies for increasing public support.

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Supporting Information

Additional supporting information may be found online in the Supporting Information section at the end of the article.

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Appendix 2: Background
Appendix 3: Additional Results: Moderating Effect of Violence, Shilluk and Luo

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