Intervention at Your Own Peril: Patterns of War Expansion and Retaliation

Hans-Inge Langø

March 23, 2022

Abstract

Most civil wars attract external intervention, with rebels often receiving external support from other states. However, interventions are not without risks. Domestic governments can and do retaliate against third-party rebel supporters, sometimes expanding the civil war into interstate war. In this paper, I present the Civil Wars Expansion Dataset (CWED), which captures various types of retaliation by domestic governments against external rebel supporters. It is the first global dataset of retaliation, and covers all civil wars with rebel-sided intervention in the period 1975-2009. Using this data, I estimate a statistical model of civil war intervention and retaliation, using urban population as a proxy for escalation costs from war expansion. My statistical analysis shows that countries with higher urban population are more likely to attract intervention and less likely to retaliate. Similarly, third parties with larger urban populations are less likely to intervene than stay out of a civil war.

Word count: 5,441

1 Introduction

Most civil wars are international in one form or another. Third parties intervene on the side of the rebels, the government, or both. But internationalization of civil wars go both ways. Domestic governments can, and often do, retaliate against external rebel supporters.[1] In 1996, the Tutsi-led government in Rwanda invaded Zaire to root out Hutu rebels, culminating in the ouster of Zairean president Mobutu Sese Seko. The First Congo War shows how civil and interstate war can intersect, and in some cases are inextricably linked. However, there is no systematic data that captures when governments choose to retaliate and expand civil wars into interstate wars.

In this paper, I present the Civil War Expansion Dataset (CWED). Covering the period 1975-2009, CWED captures different types of war expansion across 47 civil wars, as coded by UCDP, that included at least one third-party state supporting a rebel group. The conflict-recipient-intervener level data distinguishes between five types of retaliation: direct, proxy, indirect, covert, and threats (as well as some cases coded as ambiguous). CWED shows that retaliation is quite common. 47% of conflicts saw direct retaliation, meaning the civil war government used military force against a third party in the third-party territory. 38% saw proxy retaliation, in which the civil war government supported rebels against the third party. Often governments will resort to several forms of retaliation, combining direct and proxy retaliation, like apartheid-era South Africa did against Angola and Mozambique in the 1980s. These statistics elaborate on existing findings that interventions into civil wars increase the risk of interstate conflict by showing that war expansion happens because of purposeful action by civil war governments (Gleditsch et al., 2008).

Retaliation is an understudied and underexplained phenomenon, with only a handful of theoretical models of war expansion. Maoz and San-Akca (2012) focus on interstate rivalry as an explanation for intervention and retaliation. They argue that retaliation happens when both states are dissatisfied, and if an interstate war is likely to happen, the third party might as

---

[1] I use the terms 'civil war government' and 'domestic government' interchangeably in this paper.

well support the rebels first. They find that interstate rivalry both increases the risk of rebel-sided intervention and rivalry escalation. Schultz (2010), on the other hand, focuses on the role of private information and states inability to perfectly observe rebel support (or lack thereof). Sometimes third parties "cheat," hoping to go undetected, and this can result in retaliation. While these models focus on interstate relations, Langø (2021) analyzes a unified theory of civil and interstate war with private information and endogenous stakes for fighting. War expansion occurs when the rebels and the third party underestimate the domestic government's resolve for fighting, and the likelihood of interstate war depends on the actors costs and benefits of fighting.

I use the new data to test existing predictions about intervention and retaliation from Langø (2021), uncovering new patterns of war expansion. I focus on predictions related to escalation costs, which all actors pay in the event of retaliation. In short, increasing (decreasing) escalation costs for the third party make intervention less (more) likely by raising the expected costs of retaliation, while increasing (decreasing) escalation costs for the domestic government make intervention more (less) because it makes retaliation less likely to occur if intervention is undertaken. Using CWED, I estimate a multinomial logit model of rebel-sided intervention and retaliation as a function of escalation costs. I operationalize those costs as the size of the urban population in the potential rebel supporter and the civil war country, respectively. The results are consistent with the predictions and statistically significant. Highly urbanized countries are less likely to support rebels in a civil war, and urbanized civil war countries are more likely to attract rebel-sided intervention.

These results imply that international models of civil war should account for both the costs and benefits of intervention. Most studies of civil war intervention focus on the benefits of intervention. For instance, states intervene in civil wars to affect the outcome (Regan, 1996), defeat rivals (Findley and Teo, 2006; Maoz and San-Akca, 2012), promote their ideology (Choi, 2013, pp. 128-9), support co-ethnics (Gleditsch, 2007, p. 298), and ensure access to markets (Aydin, 2012). CWED shows that retaliation is not a rare risk, and several cases, including the Congo

Wars, show the costs can be significant. Third parties consider these factors when deciding to intervene, so empirical and theoretical models should do so as well.

2   Measuring war expansion

CWED covers every civil war ($n = 47$) in the period 1975-2009 that involved at least one state supporting a rebel group. The sample is constructed from the UCDP External support dataset, which defines the relevant conflicts and identifies the external supporter(s) and recipient group(s) (Högbladh et al., 2011). For each conflict, I distinguish between different recipients (rebel groups) and their external supporter, so there is a total of 185 observations in the dataset on the conflict-recipient-supporter level (though for the analyses I aggregate up to the conflict-level, the conflict-potential intervener level, or ethnic-group year). The unit of analysis means that the data can distinguish between several concurrent conflicts in the same country, multiple rebel groups, and multiple third parties. While the data is structured in disaggregated form, much of the information coded is at an aggregated level. For instance, a country might support several rebel groups in one country, or support rebels in concurrent conflicts, but we (i.e. myself and the team of coders) could not reliably code instances of retaliation specific to the specific recipients. Governments rarely offer such detailed rationales for the use of force. Therefore, if country A retaliates against country B in year t, then we code in the affirmative for every observation of B supporting a rebel group in A in periods covering year t. In some conflicts with many rebel groups (e.g. the Afghan Civil War during the 1980s), this then leads to an inflated retaliation count. Despite these limitations, the data is disaggregated, because the period of support differs between groups, and sometimes there are year-long gaps between support for two different groups, even if they both belong to the same conflict. For instance, Ivory Coast supported two separate groups in the Liberian civil war; the National Patriotic Front of Liberia from 1989 to 1990, and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia in 2003. Liberia only retaliated in the latter period, supporting rebels against Ivory Coast, so aggregating up to the conflict-intervener level

would then conflate two distinct periods of internationalization.

Table 1: Key terms and definitions.

Term	Definition
Civil war state/domestic government	The government of a country experiencing a civil war, fighting an armed rebel group.
Rebel group	A domestic-based armed group fighting for political control over all, or parts of, a country.
Intervener	A third-party state government involved in an ongoing civil war.
Intervention	Intervention can take many forms, ranging from offering sanctuary to a rebel group, to providing arms or other material support to a rebel group, to sending its own troops to fight the domestic government either alongside or in conjunction with the rebels.
Retaliation	The use of military force against an intervener **outside the original territory of the civil war**. Retaliation can take many forms, but must include the use of force against either population or material targets. The force may be conducted by regular military forces belonging to the domestic government, or it may be conducted by agents or allies of the domestic government. The latter may include other non-governmental armed groups, while the former would be other states allied with or sympathetic to the domestic government.
Threat of retaliation	The implicit or explicit threat of using force against a third-party intervener. Implicitly, a domestic government can mobilize troops on the border or conduct military exercises meant to compel the third party to stop its rebel support. Explicitly, a domestic government can make specific demands of the third party related to its rebel support, threatening to conduct (a type of) retaliation unless support is withdrawn.

2.1 Types of retaliation and war expansion

CWED distinguishes between five different types of retaliation, though in the analysis below I focus on direct retaliation. For something to be considered direct retaliation, it must involve the use of military force by the domestic government against the third party in or adjacent to the third party's territory (but never in the civil war territory).[2] On March 31, 1978, the Ethiopian

---

[2]By adjacent, I mean an area near the third party's territory, but technically not within its borders. This could mean the border area between the third party and some other country. However, there are no examples of retaliation taking place in such an area in the data collected.

Air Force raided two Somali border villages in retaliation for Somali aid to Ethiopian rebels in Ogaden, which started in 1976, according to UCDP. Direct retaliation has to follow rebel support, but it does not require an explicit statement by the domestic government that the action is taken in response to intervention. In September 1991, Indian and Pakistani forces clashed along the cease-fire line in Jammu-Kashmir, resulting in dozens of battle deaths. Prior to the incident, Pakistan had supported Kashmiri insurgents by providing sanctuary in Pakistani territory.

Proxy retaliation occurs when the domestic government begins supporting rebel(s) fighting the third party. While the details of rebel support are often undisclosed, two criteria must be met to establish proxy retaliation: an established relationship, and the use of violence by the proxy. There must be some record, rather than allegations, of the domestic government supporting rebels against the third party, and the rebel group must have conducted at least one violent attack against the third party government after support started. One example of proxy retaliation is the conflict between Eritrea and Sudan in the 1990s. Sudan was supporting the Islamic Jihad Movement's efforts to overthrow the Eritrean government, and in response, Eritrea gave shelter to Sudanese opposition groups who attacked both civilian and military targets in Sudan. Sometimes the domestic government's forces fight alongside rebels against the third party. On December 20, 1984, Ethiopian forces and the fighters from the Democratic Front for the Salvation of Somalia (DFSS) attacked the Somali military in the Awdal region of what is now Somaliland.

One challenge with these types of conflicts is that it is not always apparent when the conflict started, which has implications for who is defined as the domestic government and who is deemed the third party intervener. For instance, South Africa first intervened during the Angolan War of Independence, and shortly after the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola (MPLA) took power in 1975, it started supporting the South-West Africa People's Organization (SWAPO) in Namibia. However, Angola also started supporting the African National Congress in South Africa in 1981, according to the UCDP External Dataset. Because South Africa then supported UNITA in Angola during the 1980s, and UNITA conducted at least one violent

attack in November 1981 against Angola's largest oil refinery, this rebel support also constitutes proxy retaliation.
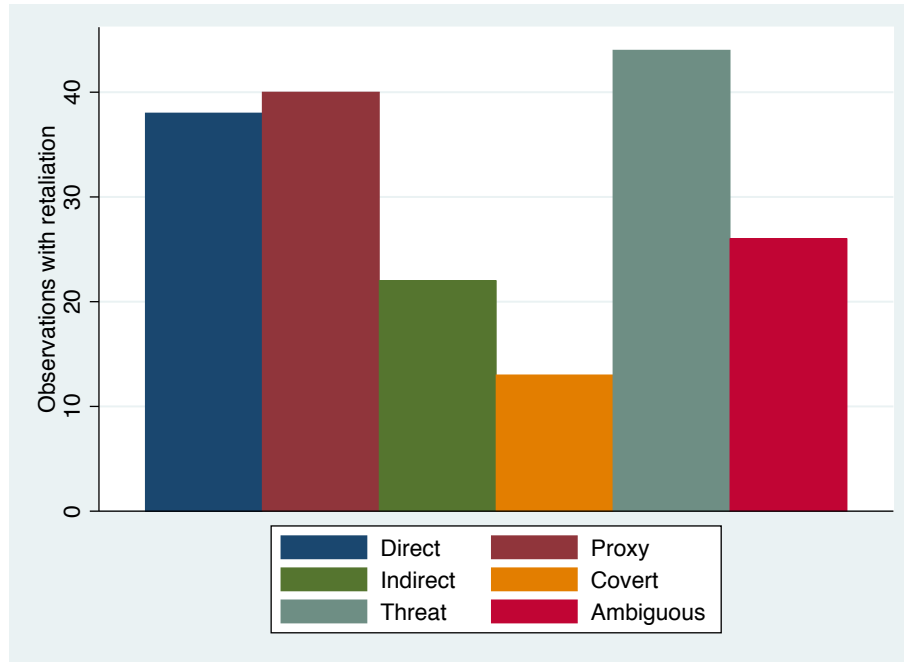
CWED also includes measures of other types of retaliation. Sometimes a domestic government targets an ally or the economic interests of a third party, so I include a variable for indirect retaliation. Governments may also use special forces to conduct covert operations, though because of strategic censoring, the covert retaliation variable should be used with caution. Governments often threaten retaliation to compel a third party to withdraw support for the rebels, so I include a variable for threat of retaliation. Lastly, I include a variable called ambiguous retaliation, where there is great uncertainty about either who conducted the military action against the intervener or for what reason it was conducted. While I do not include these variables in the analyses in this paper, the frequency in which these forms of retaliation are used suggest that domestic governments use a wide range of tools to deter, compel, or punish interveners.

3   Patterns of war expansion

CWED covers nearly every region of the world, but some countries and conflicts had more rebels and interveners than others. Afghanistan dominates the data. 39% of the disaggregated data is related to the civil war in Afghanistan, which is partly a product of UCDP coding it as a continuous conflict from 1979 to 2001.[3] The conflict with the next-most observations is the Angolan Civil War with 15 observations, and the sample mean is 3.94.
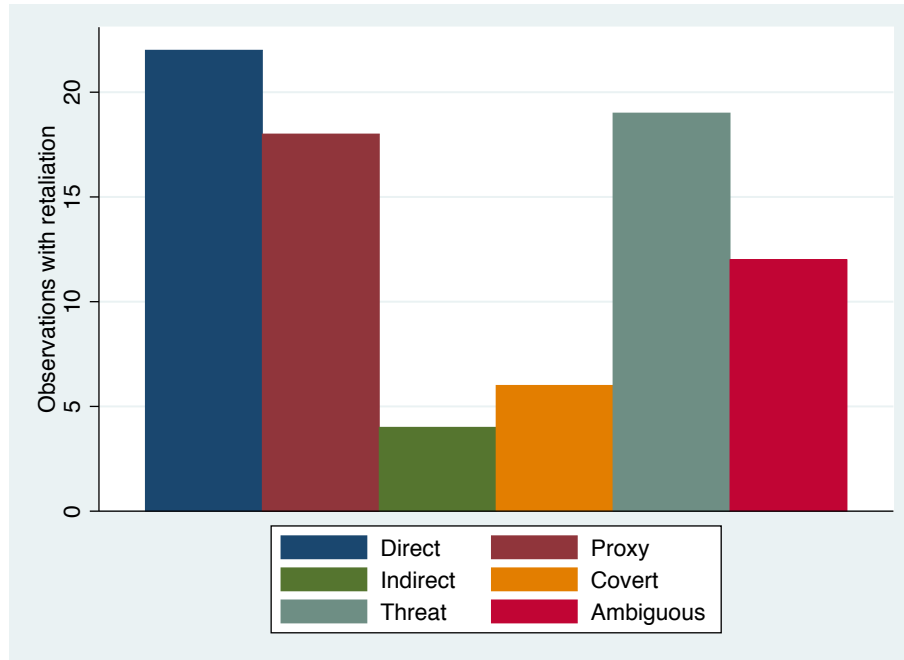
---

[3]Given that Afghanistan or the Soviet occupying force retaliated against several interveners across multiple periods, estimating models on the disaggregated data can yield biased estimates. However, because of missing data on economic covariates, the Afghanistan observations are dropped from the analysis in this paper.

Figure 1: Count of retaliations by type (conflict-recipient-intervener level).

The data makes clear that civil war expansion is quite common. Of the 185 observations in the dataset, 38 had direct retaliation (21%), 40 had proxy retaliation (22%), and 18 of those had both direct and proxy retaliation (see Figure 1). There are 22 observation with indirect retaliation (12%), and 13 with covert retaliation (7%)–both are likely undercounts, however, due to difficulties observing and attributing such actions. Furthermore, there are 44 observations with threats of retaliation (24%), of which 24 occurred in conjunction with direct retaliation. Lastly, there are 26 observations coded as having ambiguous retaliation (14%).

Figure 2: Count of retaliations by type (conflict level).

At the conflict level, the pattern is similar, with some exceptions. 47% of conflicts saw direct retaliation, while 38% saw proxy retaliation (see Figure 2). The difference in percentages across units of analysis can be attributed in part to the fact that many civil wars have multiple rebel supporters, but domestic governments rarely retaliate against all of them. Furthermore, proxy retaliation is relatively less common at the conflict level because proxy retaliation occurred in several conflicts with multiple rebel groups. Only 9% of conflicts resulted in indirect retaliation, while 13% had covert retaliation, and over 40% saw the government threaten retaliation. 26% of the civil wars had some instance coded as ambiguous.

Figure 3: Number of observations by count of retaliation types (disaggregated data).
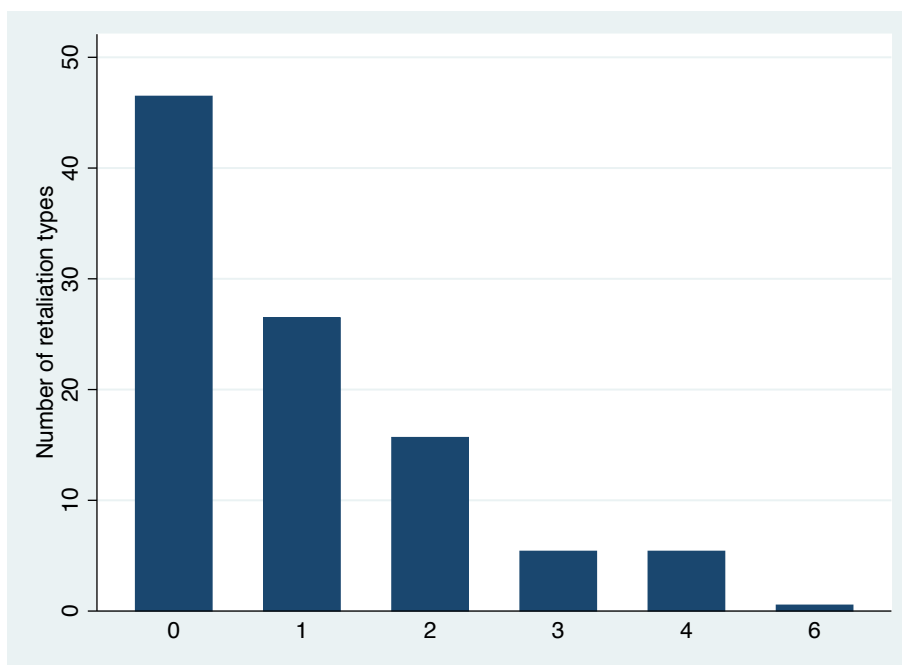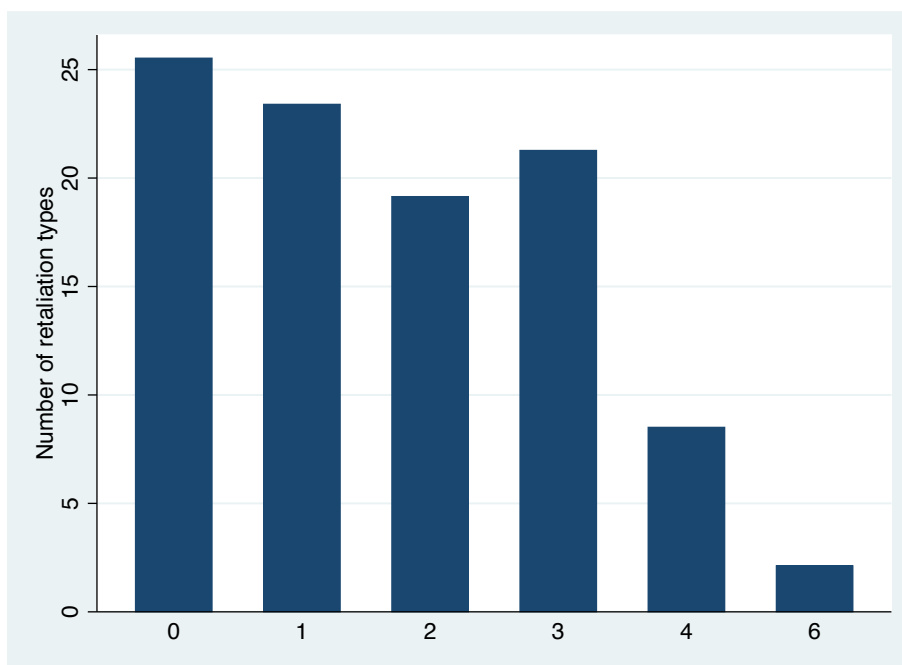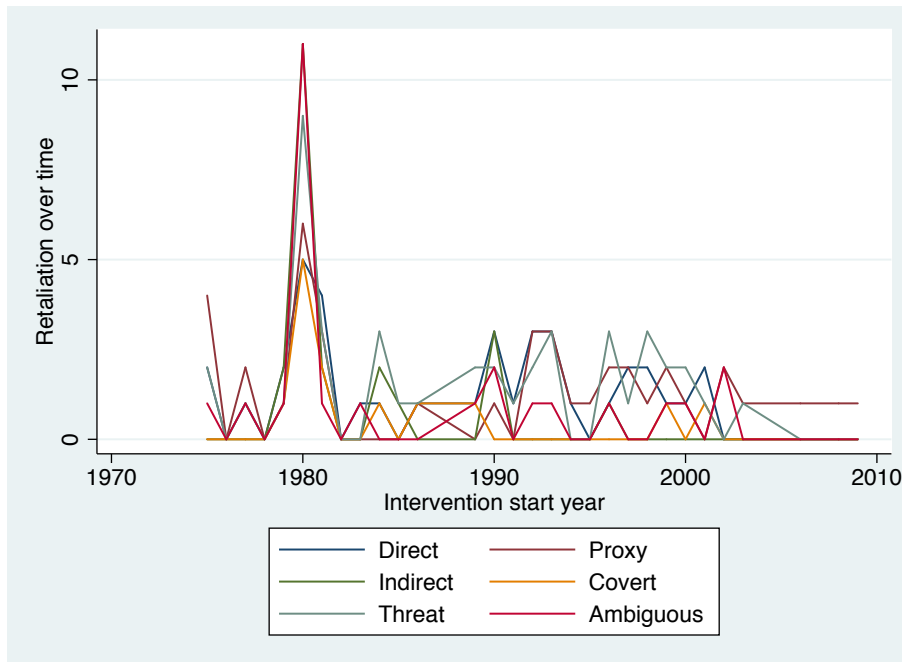

Figure 4: Number of conflicts by count of retaliation types.

Several observations have multiple types of retaliation. At the disaggregated level, only 86 have no retaliation (including ambiguous), while 49 had one and 50 had two or more types of retaliation. If we exclude ambiguous instances of retaliation, there are 97 observations without

9

retaliation (see Figure 3). Looking at the conflict-level data, most observations have more than one type of retaliation (see Figure 4). There are 12 conflicts with no retaliation, while 11 had one, and 24 had two or more types of retaliation. There is a great deal of variation in retaliation, much the same way there is variation in intervention. Domestic governments do not retaliate against every intervener, but when they do, they often resort to multiple types of retaliation.

Figure 5: Types of retaliation over time by the start year of the intervention.

Surprisingly, CWED shows no clear trends over time in the frequency or type of retaliation. Figure 5 shows that the only major spike was in 1980, which is entirely due to the start of intervention by several actors in the Afghan Civil War. Year-level data might yet uncover some trends, but as is, CWED shows no noticeable change in the pattern of war expansion after the end of the Cold War, though there are fewer instances of retaliation post-9/11.

CWED offers a systematic look at war expansion globally over a 35-year period, and as I show in the following section, it helps uncover new empirical patterns of civil wars and interstate wars. However, it has certain limitations. The time period covered is a function of the underlying UCDP data on external support, so it misses a large part of the Cold War period. Furthermore, the data cannot say much about the magnitude of retaliation. It does not dis-

10

tinguish between limited cross-border incursions and full-scale invasions, or between one-off military operations and years-long wars. Future data collection efforts should therefore focus on building more fine-grained data on specific conflicts or regions that map in time and space rebel support and retaliation.

4   Predicting intervention and retaliation

The decisions to intervene and retaliate are interdependent, so predicting civil war expansion depends on the cost-benefit trade-off for both third parties and the domestic government. As Langø (2021) argues, potential intervener face a strategic problem when deciding to intervene or not: they do not know whether the government will tolerate intervention or retaliate, thus launching an interstate war. Third parties must therefore weigh the benefits of helping rebels win against the risks of retaliation. The former depends on a variety of factors, such as affinity for the rebels and the stakes of the conflict, while the latter is a function of the likelihood and costs of retaliation. In this section, I focus on how the expected costs of a wider war can predict war expansion.

When civil wars expand, fighting intensifies and the warring parties pay the costs of a larger war. Langø (2021) predicts that a third party becomes more likely to intervene the higher the domestic government's escalation costs are, because the third party believes retaliation is less likely. In other words, increased escalation costs can deter retaliation. Because third parties are strategic actors, we should also expect to see retaliation be negatively associated with the government's escalation costs. Both expectations yield the following hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4.1 *Increased escalation costs for the domestic government increases the likelihood that a third party will intervene on the side of the rebels and decreases the likelihood that it will experience retaliation.*

Furthermore, a third party becomes less likely to intervene the higher its escalation costs are, because interstate war becomes increasingly costly. High escalation costs can therefore also

deter intervention:

Hypothesis 4.2 *Increased escalation costs for the third party makes it less likely to intervene on the side of the rebels.*

4.1 Research design

To test these hypotheses, I estimate a multinomial logit model of no rebel intervention, intervention but no retaliation, and retaliation using a dyadic design of every civil war paired with every possible rebel-sided supporter. While this is a highly inclusive sample of potential interveners, I account for distance between the state pairs (see below) to control for geographic obstacles to intervention and retaliation. Limiting the sample to nearby states would impose arbitrary assumptions about who can and cannot intervene, without a clear theoretical motivation. For instance, the Syrian Civil War has attracted intervention on both sides from several countries it does not share a border with, including Iran, Russia, United Kingdom, and the United States. Restricting the analysis to contiguous neighbors, or by some minimum distance cut-off, would potentially omit many relevant third parties.

While war expansion increases the level of destruction, operationalizing escalation costs is tricky. Wealthier countries have relatively more to lose, but they also have more resources to dedicate to war-fighting. Military strength is also a poor proxy for potential escalation. Larger militaries can cause more destruction, but also defend against attacks, so distinguishing between the offensive and defensive dimensions is difficult. Furthermore, military strength is also a determinant of the outcome of the conflict, so a measure such as the CINC score would conflate two separate parts of my theory. One way of capturing escalation costs is to measure what can be destroyed. Many recent and current civil wars show that urban warfare can be particularly costly in terms of resources and lives (e.g. Syrian Civil War). I therefore include continuous measures of the civil war country's and the potential intervener's urban population in the year prior to the civil war onset. These variables capture the potential destructiveness of war separate from power, and allow me to distinguish between the third party's sensitivity to

12

the threat of retaliation and the likelihood of retaliation as a function of the civil war country's sensitivity to war expansion.

I include a set of covariates that are associated with intervention and can affect either country's level of urbanization for both the civil war country and the potential intervener. A country's regime type can affect its economic development while also making it more or less likely another third party will support the rebels, so I include the *Executive constraint* variable (lagged) from the PolityIV dataset. Demographics can also affect urbanization and intervention, because they affect the costs of intervention and the likelihood of rebel victory. so I include variables for *ln(Population)* (lagged). Third parties also care about a civil war country's prosperity and military strength when deciding to intervene, while urbanization is often driven by economic factors, so I include variables for Gross Domestic product (*ln(GDP)*), GDP per capita (*ln(GDPpc)*), *Economic growth*, and their Composite Index of National Capability score *CINC* (all lagged). Furthermore, I include a dummy variable for whether the two countries are *Rivals* (Thompson, 2001). Heterogeneity in the sample poses threats to inference. Because patterns of intervention and demographics change over time, I account for temporal trends with decade dummies (with 1970s as the base category). Year-fixed effects would account for more unobserved heterogeneity, but the lack of variation in conflict onset years causes separation so several of the models do not converge with such controls.

I therefore estimate the following model using multinomial logistic regression with robust standard errors clustered on the civil war country:

$$\eta_{ijy} = \alpha_y + \beta_{1y}\text{Urban population (t-1)}_i + \beta_{2y}\text{Urban population (t-1)}_j$$

$$+ \beta_{3y}\text{Minimum distance}_{ij} + \beta_{4y}\text{Executive constraint (t-1)}_i$$

$$+ \beta_{5y}\ln(\text{Population) (t-1)}_i + \beta_{6y}\text{CINC (t-1)}_i + \beta_{7y}\text{Executive constraint (t-1)}_j$$

$$+ \beta_{8y}\ln(\text{Population) (t-1)}_j + \beta_{9y}\text{CINC (t-1)}_j + \beta_{10y}\ln(\text{GDP) (t-1)}_i \qquad (1)$$

$$+ \beta_{11y}\ln(\text{GDP) (t-1)}_j + \beta_{12y}\ln(\text{GDPpc) (t-1)}_i + \beta_{13y}\ln(\text{GDPpc) (t-1)}_j$$

$$+ \beta_{14y}\text{Growth (t-1)}_i + \beta_{15y}\text{Growth (t-1)}_j + \beta_{16y}\text{Rivals}_{ij} + \beta_{17y}\text{1980s}_i$$

$$+ \beta_{18y}\text{1990s}_i + \beta_{19y}\text{2000s}_i$$

4.2 Results

Because the third party (from here on, *T*) makes its decision based on its escalation costs and its beliefs about the domestic government's type (from here on, *D*), I expect that a larger urban population in the civil war country makes internationalized civil war more likely and interstate war less likely, while urbanization in the third party makes intervention less likely. In short, I find support for my hypothesis (for a full set of results, see Table 3 in the appendix).

Table 2: Urbanization and intervention and retaliation

	Expansion (direct)			Expansion (direct)		
	Civil war	Intervention	War expansion	Civil war	Intervention	War expansion
Urban population in D (t-1)	0	0.0000630***	-0.000165**	-0.0000630***	0	-0.000228***
	(.)	(3.39)	(-2.84)	(-3.39)	(.)	(-3.74)
Urban population in T (t-1)	0	-0.0000828**	-0.0000189	0.0000828**	0	0.0000639*
	(.)	(-2.94)	(-1.17)	(2.94)	(.)	(2.26)
Observations	7909			7909		

t statistics in parentheses

$^{*}\ p < 0.05,\ ^{**}\ p < 0.01,\ ^{***}\ p < 0.001$

I start by looking at *D*'s escalation costs. My main model shows a clear negative association between *Urban population in D* and the likelihood of retaliation relative to tolerating interven-

14

tion. The coefficient is highly statistically significant, suggesting a robust relationship. However, as Figure 6 shows, past a certain point, the probability of retaliation is practically null. This is most likely a function of there not being many civil war countries in the sample with very large urban populations, but it could also suggest that highly urbanized countries are uniquely unlikely to retaliate. I also find that highly urbanized countries are less likely to keep a third party out than experience an internationalized civil war (Figure 7). This could mean that third parties intervene in urbanized countries because the risk of escalation is lower than in countries with more rural populations.

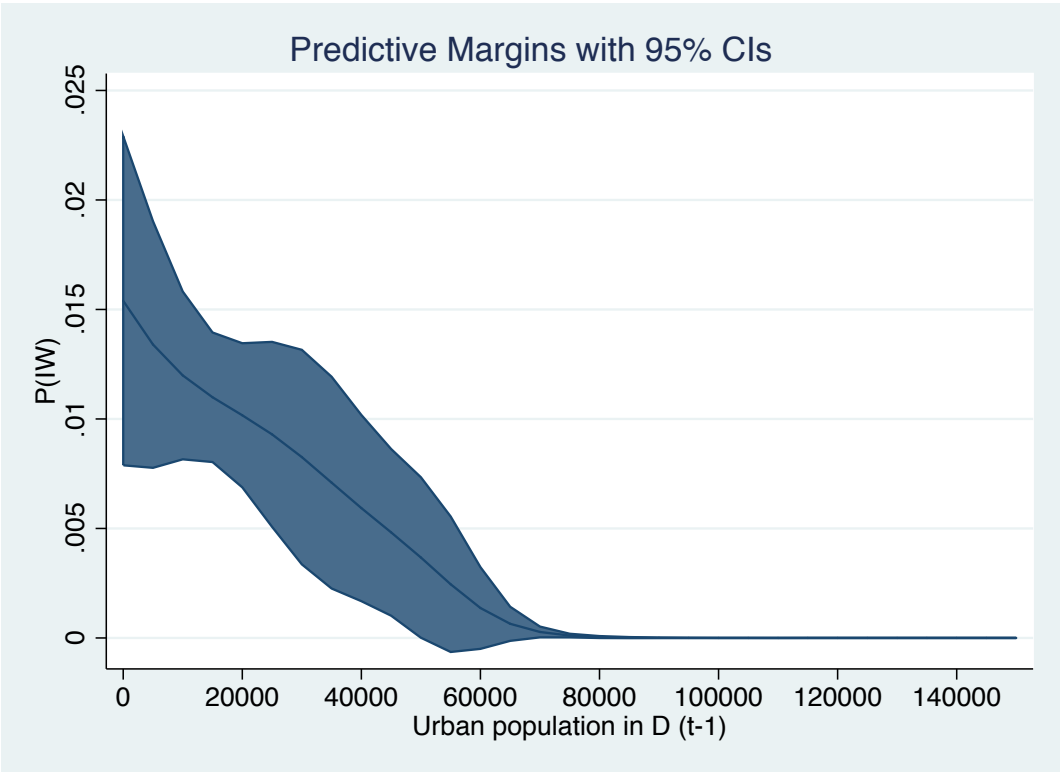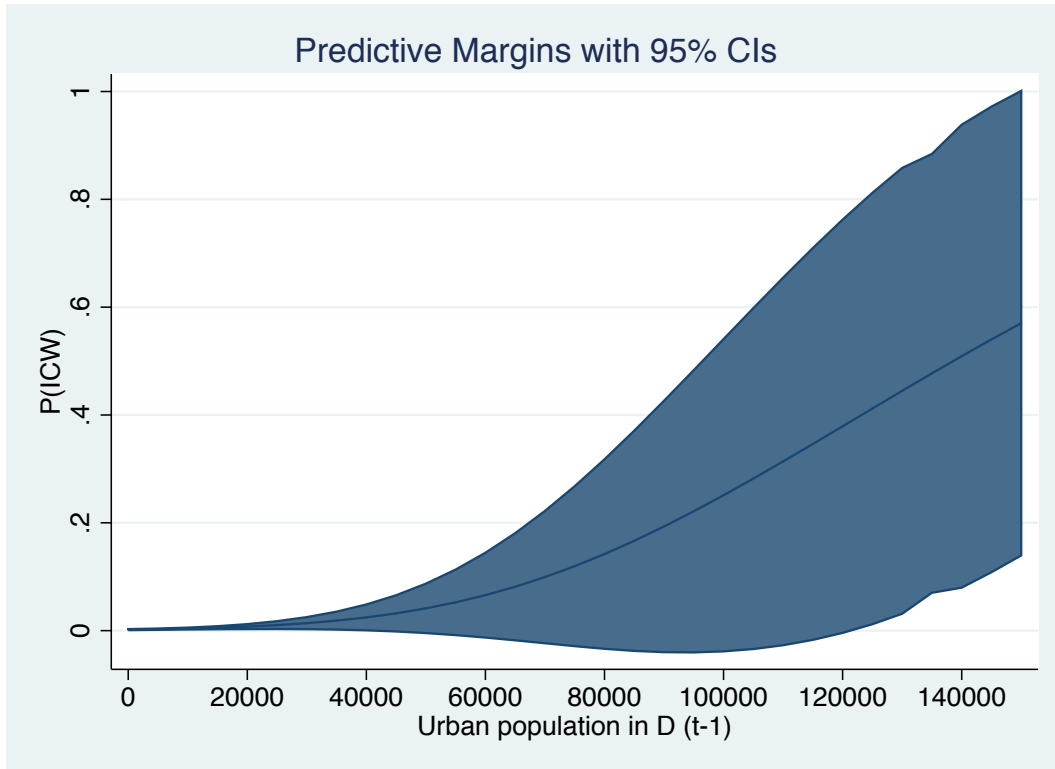Figure 6: Urban population in D as predictor of interstate war.

Figure 7: Urban population in *D* as predictor of internationalized civil war.

Predictive Margins with 95% CIs

Next, I look at *T*'s escalation costs. The results show that third parties with large urban populations are unlikely to intervene in civil wars (see Figure 8), in line with my theoretical expectations. I also find that third parties who intervene are more likely to experience retaliation than not as their urban population increases. While outside of the scope of my theory, this result implies that civil war governments are more likely to retaliate when they can impose costs on third parties. If the third party has no urban population to target, then the domestic government might deem war expansion not worth the costs.

Figure 8: Urban population in T as predictor of internationalized civil war.
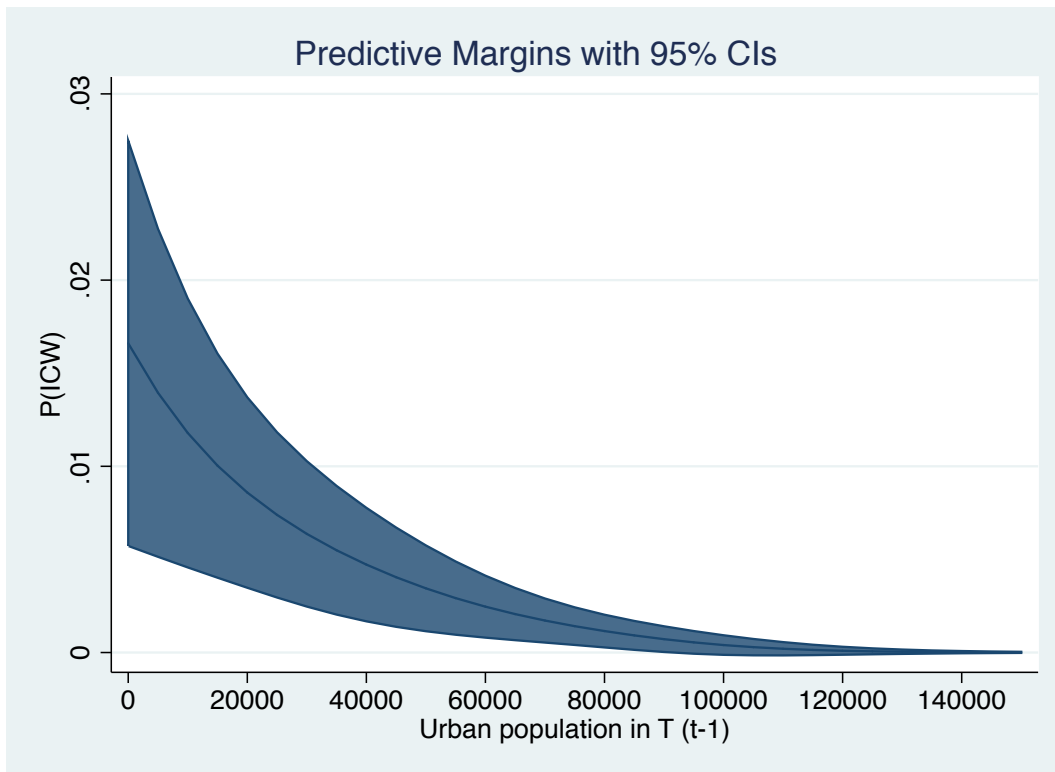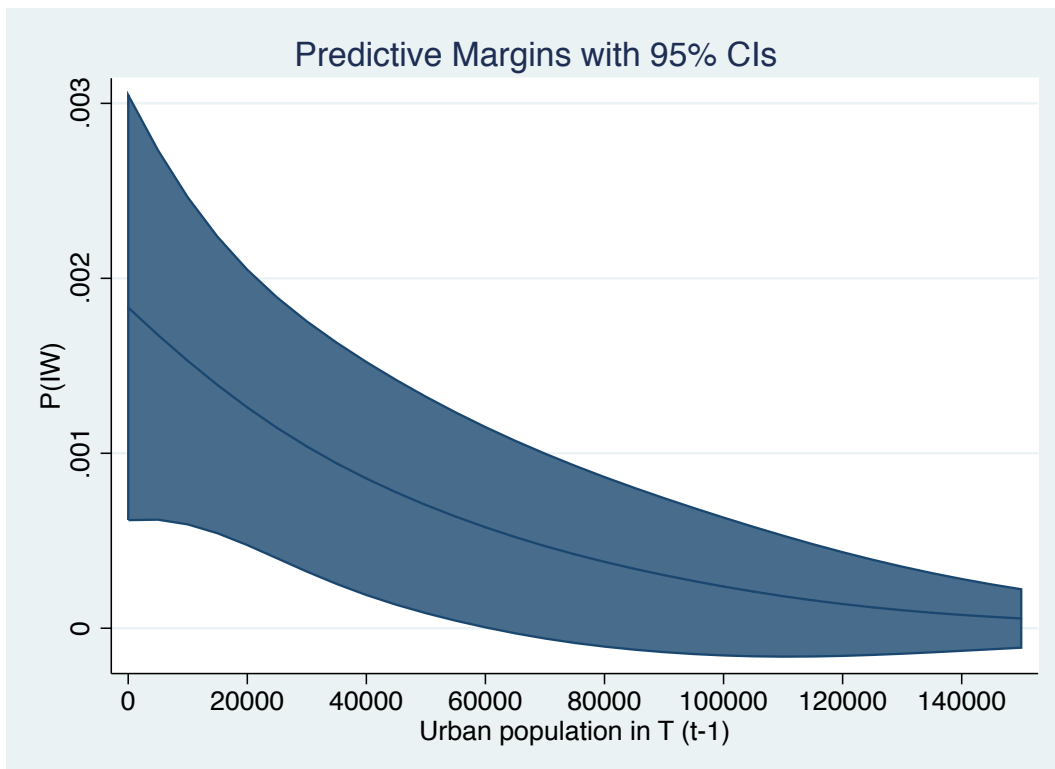

Figure 9: Urban population in T as predictor of interstate war.

In sum, I find robust and consistent support for the hypothesized relationship between escalation costs and the decisions to intervene and retaliate. Countries with larger urban populations are more likely to attract intervention, less likely to retaliate against rebel supporters, and less likely to intervene in civil wars. Third parties care about their own potential escalation costs, but also about the domestic government's escalation costs, because it shapes their beliefs about the likelihood of retaliation. Lastly, these results suggest a new way of operationalizing war costs and predicting conflict. Existing empirical models capture military strength by measuring realized and latent power, but decisions on war, and especially escalation, are also shaped by costs. Actors care about whether they can win, but also what they might lose.

5 Conclusion

This paper has presented a new dataset of civil war expansions. Governments vary in how they respond to third parties providing support for rebels, and there are various examples of intervention triggering significant military retaliation. CWED shows that this phenomenon is not only important, but also quite common. Nearly half of the civil wars with rebel-sided intervention saw the domestic government use force against a rebel supporter in the third-party territory, and in more than a third of the wars the government delegated retaliation to rebel groups. Often governments combined two or more forms of retaliation, which suggests that many wars are interconnected, and in some ways the product of the same processes.

I used this new dataset to test some existing hypotheses of intervention and retaliation and in the process uncovered new patterns of war expansion. Third parties intervene based on their own vulnerability to the costs of retaliation as well as the likelihood of retaliation by the domestic government. I use urban population as proxies for the escalation costs incurred by warring parties when wars expand, and I find that urbanized civil war countries are more likely to experience rebel-sided intervention and urbanized third parties are less likely to intervene. These results suggest that international models of civil war should consider both the benefits

and costs of intervention.

War expansion also has implications for how we think about and model civil war duration. Third party interventions may or may not prolong fighting (Balch-Lindsay and Enterline, 2000; Cunningham, 2010, e.g.), but war expansion can also affect whether fighting drags on or ends quicker. Retaliation can destroy the third party and knock out a key source of rebel power, or it can instigate a war of attrition between the two states. The relationship between intervention and duration is therefore complicated by war expansion. If the purported explanation for intervention is endogenous to interstate factors, such as interstate rivalry, then failing to distinguish between civil wars with and without expansion can result in biased estimates. Future research should examine how civil wars develop in both time and space.

References

Aydin, A. (2012). *Foreign Powers and Intervention in Armed Conflicts.* Stanford University Press.

Balch-Lindsay, D. and A. J. Enterline (2000). Killing time: The world politics of civil war duration, 1820-1992. *International Studies Quarterly 44*(4), 615–642.

Choi, S.-W. (2013). What determines us humanitarian intervention? *Conflict Management and Peace Science 30*(2), 121–139.

Cunningham, D. E. (2010). Blocking resolution: How external states can prolong civil wars. *Journal of Peace Research 47*(2), 115–127.

Findley, M. G. and T. K. Teo (2006). Rethinking Third-Party Interventions into Civil Wars: An Actor-Centric Approach. *Journal of Politics 68*(4), 828–837.

Gleditsch, K. S. (2007). Transnational dimensions of civil war. *Journal of Peace Research 44*(3), 293–309.

Gleditsch, K. S., I. Salehyan, and K. Schultz (2008). Fighting at home, fighting abroad: How civil wars lead to international disputes. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 52*(4), 479–506.

Högbladh, S., T. Pettersson, and L. ThemnÃľr (2011). External support in armed conflict 1975-2009: Presenting new data. In *52nd Annual International Studies Association Convention, Montreal, Canada, March*, pp. 16–19.

Langø, H.-I. (2021). *Intervention, War Expansion, and the International Sources of Civil War.* Ph. D. thesis, The University of Texas at Austin.

Maoz, Z. and B. San-Akca (2012). Rivalry and State Support of Non-State Armed Groups (NAGs), 1946-2001. *International Studies Quarterly 56*(4), 720–734.

Regan, P. M. (1996). Conditions of successful third-party intervention in intrastate conflicts. *Journal of Conflict Resolution 40*(2), 336–359.

Schultz, K. A. (2010). The enforcement problem in coercive bargaining: Interstate conflict over rebel support in civil wars. *International Organization 64*(02), 281–312.

Thompson, W. R. (2001). Identifying rivals and rivalries in world politics. *International Studies Quarterly*, 557–586.

6 Appendix

Table 3: Urbanization and intervention and retaliation

	Expansion (direct)			Expansion (direct)		
	CW	ICW	IW	CW	ICW	IW
Urban population in D (t-1)	0	0.0000630***	-0.000165**	-0.0000630***	0	-0.000228***
	(.)	(3.39)	(-2.84)	(-3.39)	(.)	(-3.74)
Urban population in T (t-1)	0	-0.0000828**	-0.0000189	0.0000828**	0	0.0000639*
	(.)	(-2.94)	(-1.17)	(2.94)	(.)	(2.26)
Minimum distance	0	-0.000703*	-0.0617	0.000703*	0	-0.0610
	(.)	(-2.52)	(-1.66)	(2.52)	(.)	(-1.65)
Executive constraint in D (t-1)	0	0.238*	0.0131	-0.238*	0	-0.225*
	(.)	(2.52)	(0.60)	(-2.52)	(.)	(-2.42)
ln(Population) in D (t-1)	0	-12.64*	-12.49	12.64*	0	0.151
	(.)	(-2.51)	(-1.57)	(2.51)	(.)	(0.02)
CINC D (t-1)	0	-96.61**	93.70	96.61**	0	190.3**
	(.)	(-3.02)	(1.58)	(3.02)	(.)	(2.96)
Executive constraint in T (t-1)	0	-0.00602	-0.0311*	0.00602	0	-0.0251
	(.)	(-0.76)	(-2.15)	(0.76)	(.)	(-1.43)
ln(Population) in T (t-1)	0	3.277*	-0.265	-3.277*	0	-3.543
	(.)	(2.44)	(-0.08)	(-2.44)	(.)	(-1.13)
CINC T (t-1)	0	51.02**	11.63	-51.02**	0	-39.39
	(.)	(3.12)	(0.80)	(-3.12)	(.)	(-1.76)
ln(GDP) in D (t-1)	0	12.24*	13.63	-12.24*	0	1.388
	(.)	(2.45)	(1.66)	(-2.45)	(.)	(0.18)
ln(GDP) in T (t-1)	0	-2.617*	0.500	2.617*	0	3.117
	(.)	(-2.19)	(0.16)	(2.19)	(.)	(1.05)
ln(GDPpc) in D (t-1)	0	-12.21*	-13.70	12.21*	0	-1.493
	(.)	(-2.47)	(-1.66)	(2.47)	(.)	(-0.19)
ln(GDPpc) in T (t-1)	0	2.318*	-0.577	-2.318*	0	-2.895
	(.)	(2.08)	(-0.17)	(-2.08)	(.)	(-0.92)
Growth in D (t-1)	0	-0.000401	-0.0104	0.000401	0	-0.0100
	(.)	(-0.01)	(-0.24)	(0.01)	(.)	(-0.18)
Growth in T (t-1)	0	-0.0337	-0.0363	0.0337	0	-0.00256
	(.)	(-1.26)	(-1.10)	(1.26)	(.)	(-0.06)
Rivals	0	1.999***	0.208	-1.999***	0	-1.791
	(.)	(3.29)	(0.23)	(-3.29)	(.)	(-1.81)
Constant	0	-70.45*	-110.7	70.45*	0	-40.27
	(.)	(-2.10)	(-1.66)	(2.10)	(.)	(-0.65)
Observations	7909			7909		

t statistics in parentheses

Coefficients for decade dummies omitted

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$