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## Rebel Violence in Syria Turning Population Firmly Against the Opposition

By [John Glaser](#)

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A growing number of Syrians in the embattled city of Aleppo harbor bitter resentment towards the violence brought by the Free Syrian Army, prompting many in the opposition [to suspect they miscalculated](#) in their campaign to win hearts and minds.

Until recently, most neighborhoods in Aleppo had been relatively insulated from the conflict. But disparate militias of rebel fighters have flooded to the city in a supposed last stand with the regime. The violence this has brought is causing much of civilian life to screech to a halt.

Reporting from Aleppo, the *Los Angeles Times* [interviewed](#) a father of seven in Aleppo who “is solidly opposed to Assad, but he fears the prospect of rebels who have filtered in from the suburbs seizing his neighborhood.”

“What [the rebels] did was wrong, coming in and forcing all these civilians to flee and live in schools,” he told the *Times*. “You came to protect civilians, but now you’re hurting them? It’s wrong what they did.”

Not only has the rebel offensive in Aleppo caused a new refugee and humanitarian crisis, but the rebels now face a [growing list](#) of accusations of grave human rights violations. Now many in the opposition fear this has hurt their chances to gain new adherents.

Meanwhile, the US and its allies have been pressed to find ways to frame their support for the rebel militias trying to overthrow the Assad regime. The opposition still represents a minority of Syria's 20 million people, so building a narrative of aiding freedom fighters battling for a supportive population has been difficult.

And now the rebels' ushering in of new violence and humanitarian crisis in Aleppo may have turned the population even more solidly against them.