Public Opinion and Foreign Policy:

Shifting US Public Opinion to Support Non-Violent Intervention in Syria

By Andrew Overton

Summary: In pursuit of freedom from a brutal dictator, the Syrian people have suffered untold amounts. Throughout this class, I struggled with what the United States do to help, particularly given the political constraints that the Obama administration is now placed under in regards to their Syria policy. This paper examines the relationship between public opinion and foreign policy in the US, and considers how nonviolent intervention from the US could provide help to the Syrian opposition and weaken Assad. Then, I propose two skeletal plans that could be deployed—one by the Obama administration and the other by concerned citizens—to move public opinion to support robust nonviolent US intervention.
Introduction

The Syrian civil war has been ravaging the Syrian people for over three years. The number of dead and misplaced are repeated daily in the press. More than 140,000 people have been killed, 2.5 million have been forced to seek refuge outside Syria, and another 6.5 million have been internally displaced. A conflict that began as a nonviolent resistance against a brutal dictator has now devolved into a complex civil war. In addition to the Assad regime and the Free Syrian Army, there are now multiple Islamic groups, including Islamic State of Iraq and Levant and Jabhat Al-Nusra that have taken over large swaths of the country. Despite these tragic numbers the conflict appears years from resolution unless the situation changes drastically on the ground.

Research shows four disheartening trends that do not bode well for the Syrian people. First, the average length of a civil war is ten years. Second, the length of civil wars has been steadily increasing since 1945.\textsuperscript{1} Third, civil wars with lots of factions—like in Syria—last longer on average than other civil wars.\textsuperscript{2} Fourth, civil wars tend to last longer than average when they do not end by negotiated settlement.\textsuperscript{3} All of these spell bad news for regular Syrians particularly because there has been little progress on the so-called Geneva track. A second round of peace talks between the Assad regime and the opposition in January and February demonstrated few concrete deliverables or positive steps besides getting the Assad regime and the Syrian National Coalition in the same room. In fact, no date for the resumption of talks was set.\textsuperscript{4} This is hardly a positive sign that a negotiated solution is in Syria's immediate future.

Since the end of the Geneva talks, the media and international community has shifted its

\textsuperscript{2} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{3} Ibid.
attention to Ukraine, where hostilities between Russia and Ukraine have brought both to the brink of war. With the world's attention elsewhere, Syria has taken a back seat and the foreign policy community inside the Beltway have offered no new ideas. A lack of creativity has been a problem that has plagued President Obama's Syria policy since the civil war broke out.

Marc Gopin provides some insight into what US diplomacy should look like and bemoans the lack of creative thinking that is so common in the international foreign policy community. “Diplomacy at its best should be about the artistic creation of the pragmatically possible in human relations,” Gopin writes.5 “Diplomacy requires a healthy dose of pragmatism that is combined with fundamentally optimistic human appetite for vision of what is yet to be.”6 But diplomacy in reality, Gopin argues, focuses too much on the problems and not enough on the solution. “Fixing what is broken,” he continues “has a habit of not fixing but being just fixated on what is broken and nothing more.”7 In my job at the British Embassy I work closely with the Middle East policy team, where I see a lot more pragmatism than optimism when it comes to Syria (Author's note: Please protect). The assessments from think tankers and other policy folks around town is even more pessimistic; it's almost as if think think panelists are competing over who can be the most depressing. New and inventive policy approaches are very rare indeed.

For the first two years of the war, the most common policy solution was US military intervention. The United States very nearly made that very policy change late last year. In September 2013, President Barack Obama, Defense Secretary Chuck Hagel, and Secretary of State John Kerry made robust arguments to Congress and the US public that the use of chemical weapons was abhorrent and required retribution. They spelled out a strong case for limited, targeted airstrikes against the Assad regime in retaliation for a August 21 chemical weapons attack against Syrian civilians. However,
President Obama made a last-minute decision to pursue congressional approval for the attacks, and President Obama quickly found that there was not sufficient public or congressional support. A Gallup poll at the time showed that 51 percent of Americans opposed and 36 percent supported the U.S. taking military action against Syria in order to reduce Syria’s ability to use chemical weapons. The support was higher among Independents and Republicans, who notably controlled the House of Representatives. Interestingly, in the period after Obama announced he would consult Congress a huge majority of calls and letters congressmen received from constituents during this time expressed strong opposition to military intervention.

Obama's electoral math was poor and the vote was going to be much closer than he thought. Then, as public opposition to strikes rose, it became clearer that the votes in Congress were not there. Suddenly caught in a bind, Russia offered Obama a way out. The Russians pushed Assad to agree to a deal which meant the surrender and destruction of Syria's chemical weapons arsenal. The deal was formalized later in September, when the UN Security Council agreed unanimously to a resolution that called for the speedy elimination of Syria's chemical weapons Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW).

Satisfied with the result of the deal, President Obama took US military intervention in Syria off the table. In a speech to the nation, Obama said:

“America is not the world's policeman. Terrible things happen across the globe, and it is beyond our means to right every wrong, but when with modest effort and risk we can stop children from being gassed to death and thereby make our own children safer over

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9 Ibid.
the long run, I believe we should act.”

It's unlikely that the targeted, limited strikes that Obama advocated for would have made a difference on the ground in Syria. However, because he failed to get congressional approval and failed to convince the electorate, he essentially ended any hope of overt US military involvement in Syria. His remarks also point to a lack will or desire to respond to atrocities. In a democracy, elected officials must listen to their constituents or suffer the consequences. And once the people have spoken, they cannot be ignored.

So where does that leave US involvement in the Syrian war? Nine months after the chemical weapons deal, 92.5 percent of chemical weapons have been shipped out of the country or removed, albeit after many missed deadlines. However, little has actually changed on the ground. Reportedly shipped out or destroyed The number of Syrian refugees continues to balloon, while their fellow countrymen and women inside Syria live in constant fear of death by barrel bomb or sniper fire. While Western diplomats continue to pursue the Geneva diplomatic track, surely the US can find intervention methods that are non-lethal. The remainder of this paper will explore those potential non-violent, less considered routes.

Next Steps??

As the number of lethal actors in Syria grows, the war grows more complicated. The longer a conflict goes on, Michael Nagler argues, the more violence feeds itself and the more the conflict escalates in intensity—“intensity measured not by the number of weapons but the degree of dehumanization, the single most telling parameter of hostility.”

According to Nagler, nonviolence also exists in degrees, so in a drawn-out conflict like the

Syrian civil war, the degree of nonviolence you need to counter the violence is much higher. “The longer you wait, the more soul-force you need to apply,” Nagler says. Syria requires a great deal of “soul-force,” but what is the most effective way to apply it?

Marc Gopin raises some important questions for individual peacemakers to consider when intervening nonviolently in another country. US policymakers should consider these very same questions when weighing their nonlethal options in Syria. How does the US measure what is an acceptable risk? How does the US measure how much good comes from cooperating with the Assad regime versus the cost? How much does the US put American lives at risk?

Gopin also offers some ethical guidelines for intervention that the US should adhere to as it considers non-violent options. First, do no harm and “studiously avoid damage while supposedly doing good.” Second, embrace consequentialism and evaluate the morality in your actions. Finally, don't lose site of the long-term objective; “the emphasis is on stimulating and building the structural foundations of the good society, the open society.” Too often the focus in Syria is on removing Assad, and not enough attention is paid to setting the foundation for a vibrant, strong civil society.

Approaching Syria with these questions and principles at the forefront will seem radical to most policymakers, but frankly, the electoral realities offer few other options. A radical, nonviolent approach to intervention might be just what is needed. Plus, it could do some work to repair the US's damaged image in the Middle East. As Nagler said,

“When you respond with courage and respect under duress, it raises your image, humanizes yourself in the opponents' eyes—and helps, in however small a way, to raise the awareness of humanness in the global culture. This elevated awareness, in turn, defuses some of the world's violence, Pick any conflict—in the Mideast, in the Balkans,

15 Ibid.
17 Ibid.
18 Ibid.
in Africa, in America: the kind of unreasoning hate we see erupting around the world would not arise if our general worldview were not so dehumanized.”

This discussion about nonlethal support for the Syrian opposition is well and good, but what would such support look like? In *From Dictatorship to Democracy*, the handbook that toppled so many regimes during the Arab Spring, Gene Sharp focuses almost exclusively on how dictators can be toppled from within through nonviolent means. Sharp believes that most of the nonviolent resistance should come from within the country. Unfortunately, the conflict has devolved into violence. However, Sharp does provide some insight into what nonviolent steps the international community can take to support the Syrian opposition and strip Assad of the international legitimacy he has left.

The main role that the US and the international community can play, Sharp says, is to "mobilize world public opinion against the dictatorship, on humanitarian, moral, and religious grounds.” More concrete options include diplomatic, political, and economic sanctions against the dictatorship, which can take the form of “economic and military embargoes, reduction in levels of diplomatic recognition or the breaking of diplomatic ties, banning of economic assistance and prohibition of investments in the dictatorial country, expulsion of the dictatorial government from various international organizations and from the United Nations bodies.” Additional support Sharp recommend include financial and communications support for the opposition. These suggestions may seem simple, but when scaled up to a level that only the United States is capable of could provide some valuable assistance to the much-aligned moderate rebels and remove some of the tools that international legitimacy afford the regime. The public aversion to increased involvement in Syria—lethal or otherwise—remains the biggest hurdle to overcome on the path to supporting the Syrian people.

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21 Ibid.
22 Ibid.
Understanding US Public Opinion

There are two main theories considering the role of public opinion in democracy: realist and liberal theory. Realist theory posits that humans are motivated by passions and therefore are unreliable. Alexis de Tocqueville, the French political scientist best know for his studies of and travels through America, said that “democracies obey impulse rather than prudence.” On foreign policy matters, in particular, realists argue that the public are largely ill informed and because they can be so easily led astray their opinions fluctuate wildly. Realists conclude that public opinion is a barrier to coherent foreign policy and that only informed elites with an understanding of national interest should determine foreign policy.

Liberal theory, on the other hand, argues that public opinion is at the center of effective policy. Liberals believe that in democracies public opinion constrains the foreign policy of elected leaders in a helpful way. Democracies are more likely to be peaceful because the electorate bear the cost of the war, while monarchs and dictators, they argue, do not usually have the interests of the electorate in mind when making foreign policy decisions. British Foreign Minister Ernest Bevin put it best, “the common man is the greatest protection against war.”

These theories come to different conclusions about whether the public plays a constructive role in the foreign policy process. Realists argue that the public is a source of emotional and shortsighted thinking that can work against a nation's best interest. Liberals believe that public opinion is a force for enlightenment and a necessary condition for a coherent foreign policy. They do agree on on point, however, the public has influence and power.

26 Ibid.
27 Ibid.
28 Ibid.
US public opinion plays a critical role in the foreign policy process for two reasons: accountability and political capital. First, research demonstrates that the public takes foreign policy issues and accomplishments into account when choosing between candidates.²⁹ Those elected official, particularly presidents, with a perceived weak foreign policy are punished in elections. Second, in order to implement policy—whether domestic or foreign—presidents and elected officials need political capital. For presidents approval ratings are a key benchmark of the amount of political capital they can expend, and like all capital it is not endless. According to Knecht and Weatherford, “Unpopular foreign policies can quickly erode political capital and weaken the prospects for the administration's foreign and domestic agendas.”³⁰

For better or worse, politicians concerns about public opinion provide an avenue and best opportunity to influence US Syria policy. The best and fastest way to influence US public opinion is through the media. Research shows that while “the press may not tell the public what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.”³¹ And when a foreign policy crisis arises the media tells the public to pay attention. By nearly a 2-1 ratio, more TV news airtime is devoted to foreign policy crises than non-crisis.³²

Foreign policy crises (Gulf War, Kosovo, Desert Strike, Iran hostage crisis etc) generally receive sustained media coverage throughout the “life” of the crisis. As the crisis continues, coverage slowly rises until a policy decision is made. Then attention slowly tapers off during the implementation process.³³ The level of attention during a military crisis depends on the level the US military is involved; the higher the level of military involvement, the higher the media coverage and the higher the public attention.³⁴

³⁰ Ibid.
³¹ Ibid.
³² Ibid.
³³ Ibid.
³⁴ Ibid.
Non-crises (Star wars, Kyoto Protocol, Apartheid, SALT II, NAFTA, etc.) have a different cycle of public attention. They typically only receive a bump in media coverage when a policy decision is made and then public attention immediately begins to peter out. This can be attributed to the fact that the flow of information of non-crises is largely dependent on the government itself, so a congressional or presidential decision on a non-crises can cause this sudden spike in coverage.35

Despite the comparative lack of attention, these non-crises decisions are often as important as crisis decisions. The global significance of treaties like NAFTA and the Kyoto Protocol are immeasurable, but non-crises only receive selective attention because they are longer and have no definitive conclusion. The matters also seem remote and irrelevant to the US public. In addition, they typically involve complex subjects which most Americans do not understand and can't be bothered to understand to detail.36 Frankly, non-crisis are just less “sexy” to the media and the general public.

There are two important lessons to draw from Knecht and Weatherford's research. First, government leaders have both the means and incentives to manipulate public opinion. By using the bully pulpit, particularly a non-crisis issue, a president can garner public attention on an issue. Second, the ebbs and flows in public opinion offer more and less presidential autonomy on a foreign policy issue. The more engaged with an issue the electorate is, the more responsive the president is to public opinion. Likewise, the less engaged the public is, the more freedom the president has to craft policy free from public scrutiny.37

These lessons reveal two distinct routes that could lead to a shift in public opinion regarding US involvement in Syria. The first would be a top-down approach, initiated by the Obama administration. The second would be a bottom-up public relations campaign aimed to make Syria a priority for the Obama administration. The next section will outline two skeletal plans to shift public opinion on Syria in order to implement Gene Sharp's recommendations.

35 Ibid.
36 Ibid.
37 Ibid.
Top-Down Public Opinion Approach

In his September 10, 2013 address President Obama expressed his “deeply held preference for peaceful solutions” and acknowledged that the United States' “ideals and principles, as well as our national security, are at stake in Syria.”\(^{38}\) If those are truly the beliefs of President Obama and his administration than there are certainly steps, outlined by Gene Sharp, the US can take to maintain its ideals and principles and help bring down a dictator that has been killing his people for over three years.

Since that speech in September, the Syrian war has slowly moved down the list of priorities for the Obama administration. Violence in Syria has become the status quo, and it appears that Syria has moved to a “non-crisis situation”—media and public attention to Syria is very limited. This is coupled by the recent escalation of tensions in the Ukraine that has taken up most of the media and public's bandwidth for foreign affairs. This makes the timing perfect for the United States to take nonlethal steps to weaken the regime and empower the moderate rebels. Knecht and Weatherford demonstrated that visibility of the White House decision process influence public attentiveness.\(^{39}\) If done properly, President Obama can do so with public opinion on his side and little political capital expended.

Sharp says that the international community can impose military and economic sanctions against the dictator. The US has done nearly all it can on this front, however there are still several steps the US can take to reduce Syria's diplomatic relations and provide financial and communications help to the moderate rebels. If the United States is serious about shifting public opinion and making a difference in Syria, I recommend that the United States follow these steps in quick succession.

1. Eliminate Assad's International Legitimacy


Despite the appalling brutality the Assad regime has brought against its own people, his regime is still recognized in many international forums, most notably the United Nations. Recognition at the UN gives the regime a significant level of international legitimacy and power, which the regime has become adept as using to its benefit.

Samantha Power, US Ambassador to the United Nations, should call an emergency meeting of the UN Security Council to introduce a Security Council resolution that suspends Syria from the United Nations. Passage of such a resolution would have two important repercussions. First, it would eliminate one of Syria's main propaganda tools Bashar Ja'afari, Syria's Ambassador to the UN. Ja'afari is frequently quoted in print stories where he refers to the rebels as terrorists and generally spreads the regimes lies. Second, the United Nations would no longer have to go through the Syrian regime in order to deliver humanitarian aid. Th UN could instead deliver aid directly or use the Syrian Opposition Coalition's Assistance Coordination Unit.

Currently, the regime has used humanitarian aid as a tool in the conflict by ensuring that Syrians in pro-regime areas receive humanitarian aid, but those Syrians in rebel-held areas are denied food and medical supplies. Security Council Resolution 2139, passed in February, called for the “rapid, safe and unhindered humanitarian access for UN humanitarian agencies and their implementing partners, including across conflict lines and across borders.” But since the resolution passed there has been little progress on the ground. Multiple reports from UN Secretary General Ba Ki Moon acknowledge the failure of the resolution. Suspension of the Syrian government from the UN would enable the international community to deliver aid to those most in need.

Russia's veto power on the Security Council is unlikely to yield a positive result for the US, but because this diplomatic move has no precedent it is likely to garner widespread media coverage in


print, broadcast and online, and Ambassador Power's remarks at the Security Council are likely to feature prominently in that coverage. Is Power lays out a forceful, compelling, and cogent argument for why the Assad regime no longer has international legitimacy and must be suspended from the UN, Americans may begin to pay attention to Syria again.

Bringing Americans attention to Syria is not enough. While the United States has the moral upper hand and the media spotlight is on Syria, President Obama should use his bully pulpit to hammer home why the Syrian regime is no longer legitimate. A short, commanding statement to cameras on the back of Samantha Power's remarks the next day from the Obama would ensure continued coverage.

2. Empower the Opposition

The next step in this plan addresses Gene Sharp's suggestion that foreign countries offer communications and financial support to the nonviolent opposition. The opposition in Syria has turned violent, so the situation is different. However, the administration has drawn a line (publicly at least) that it only provides nonlethal support to the opposition, so the principle still largely applies (Author's note: the CIA has been covertly providing small arms to the moderate opposition since September and in April the first American missiles were delivered to the opposition.)\textsuperscript{42} \textsuperscript{43}

The day following, Obama's address to the nation, Secretary of State John Kerry should announce that the United States will provide vastly more robust communications and intelligence support, along with medical supplies, to the moderate rebels. In another well publicized, well executed press briefing at Foggy Bottom, Secretary Kerry should explain carefully how Assad is brutally killing the moderate regime and the citizens in regime-controlled areas. Outlining Assad's military strategy of targeting those areas controlled by the moderate rebels as a way to frighten Syrians from supporting the


rebels will resonate with an American audience. Explaining that additional communications support and unprecedented intelligence sharing will warn rebels of impending attacks will also highlight the US's concerns over the loss of life in Syria. Secondly, the United States should provide an unprecedented amount of medical aid to the moderates and the rebel-held areas. After ending diplomatic ties with the Syrian regime and demonstrating at the UN that the Syrian regime has no legitimacy, the US should no longer be obligated to go through the regime to deliver humanitarian aid.

Just like Ambassador Power's announcement, Secretary Kerry's should be followed by a presidential press conference. Media coverage will follow the president's actions forcing ordinary Americans to hear Obama, Kerry, and Power share harrowing tales of Syrians being slaughtered. But by offering solutions and positive steps, the administration will build public support for its arguments.

As Knecht and Weatherford found, in non-crisis situations policy changes are the best way to attract public attention. Announcing Syria policy changes over several days will ensure that Syria takes up the entire media bandwidth. Following Sharp's recommendations will allow the US to frame the debate differently. By not taking any controversial and lethal steps, suddenly the debate over Syria is about what the US can do to alleviate the suffering and not about whether the US is about to enter another Iraq War.

I predict that if the Obama administration followed these steps, the debate that would rage in the press and in the work corridors across the country would be about how much more the US should do. These steps would boost Obama's approval rating, providing him the political capital and flexibility to further increase support to the opposition if he so chose. Perhaps additional nonlethal support would provide a significant boost to the cost tolerance of rebels, which research shows helps bring an end to civil wars.44

The Bottom-Up Approach

For better or worse, the public has a critical role to play in the foreign policy process. Although less common and more difficult to execute than the top-down approach, foreign policy solutions that bubble-up from the grassroots level can have a powerful impact. One of the most successful foreign policy public support efforts in recent memory was the Save Darfur campaign of 2006 which built a diverse but united group of allies that called for humanitarian intervention in Darfur.45 Through TV commercials, media stunts, divestment campaigns, celebrity endorsements, and old fashioned campaigning, Save Darfur was able to elevate the crisis in Sudan to a US foreign policy priority. A similar approach could be taken towards Syria. I recommend that those concerned humanitarians and passionate Syrian activists here in the US follow the steps I outline to build public support campaign for increased US involvement in Syria.

1. Build a Wide Coalition

The first step is to establish a 501(c)(4) tax-exempt nonprofit organization, which is allowed by US law to inform the public of politically sensitive issues and attempt to influence policymaking related to the Syrian conflict. Given that the objective is to engender broad support for greater, nonviolent efforts to end the conflict, the organization will avoid advocating in support of or in opposition to controversial policies, including military engagement or supply of additional weapons to rebels. The organization should focus on awareness and leave such policy discussions to the policymakers and advocates. Instead, the goal will be to provide policymakers political space to plan, support and execute more robust and creative options.

The next step is to recruit individuals, humanitarian organizations, and religious and faith group with a shared, humanitarian interest in ending the Syrian conflict to join under the 501(c)(4) umbrella. Religious organizations are often an over-looked public opinion asset. Christian churches and Jewish synagogues issued several statements and pronouncements condemning the apartheid in South Africa. This helped build a moral opposition to the South African apartheid regime and support for additional US action against the apartheid regime all while maintaining a general opposition to military involvement. Broad-based support across American civil society will be critical. Religious, humanitarian and faith-based groups already have massive networks that are willing and able to mobilize quickly.

2. Create A Message That Will be Heard

As far as delivering a message and making the public care about the Syrian people, statistics alone have not had an impact. Numbers are too impersonal and difficult to comprehend. Facts and figures should be accompanied by video footage or pictures that illustrate the mass suffering this conflict has wrought. In fact, comparing Gallup polling numbers from before and after the August 21 chemical weapon attack reveals that the horror of those attacks had a significant impact on public opinion. In late May 2013, a Gallup poll indicated that 68 percent of Americans opposed U.S. military action in Syria to end the conflict, even if all diplomatic efforts failed, while 24 percent were in favor and 8 percent had no opinion. As previously noted, after the chemical weapons attack opposition had fallen to 51 percent—still a notable majority, but a significant reduction (17 percent) in public opposition nonetheless. Clearly, the American public does respond to the suffering of Syrians. The goal of this campaign would be to make their suffering more apparent and more tangible.

Focusing the message on children can be especially powerful because they are the most vulnerable

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47 Ibid.
in this conflict. No matter their background, children transcend politics. Images of suffering children will have to be chosen carefully so that they accurately depict their suffering, but without being so disturbing that viewers avoid engagement with the campaign or feel that the campaign is exploitive.

3. Deliver that Message

The campaign should manifest itself in several forms: traditional media, social media, and old-fashioned grassroots organizing. The public response will be, in part, the mechanism by which policymakers are given the political imperative to support robust, nonviolent intervention. Calls to action should include: 1) urging people to contact their congressmen and the White House to express their concern over the ongoing conflict and to urge more robust U.S. efforts to end it; 2) asking people to sign a petition on Whitehouse.gov; 3) organizing and joining public rallies in support of more U.S. engagement; and 4) sharing engaging and visual media content on their social media profiles. Many of these efforts are already happening in small, uncoordinated ways, but by bringing all these efforts under one umbrella, the general public will be forced to take notice.

Conclusion

During the course of this course in Turkey I was constantly challenged by my peers, my instructors, and the Syrians I met to think about what this experience meant for me and what it meant for the United States. Throughout every lecture, every classroom visit, and every late-night conversation, I would constantly ask myself and those around me, “What can the United States realistically do to help the Syrian people?”

Many of the Syrians I met were frustrated and angry with the United States and the West for what they perceived as lack of concern for the Syrian people. The moderate Syrian activists I met felt that the United States over promised and under-delivered support. The pinnacle example, of course, being when President Obama promised repercussions if the Syrian regime used chemical weapons. When evidence emerged that the regime had used chemical weapons, President Obama called off a
planned military strike at the last minute, opting instead for a deal that would secure the removal of Syria chemical weapons stockpile.

I certainly understood and appreciated the frustration and anger I heard, but I could see the fuller picture. The United States is a democracy after all, and when Obama sought congressional approval, the people spoke out overwhelmingly against military action and further involvement in Syria. Obama still has the authority to intervene in Syria, but his hands are tied to a great extent without public support.

Suddenly, I realized the tunnel vision that the US had when it came to its policy in Syria. The focus is entirely on how the US can help the rebels militarily—either through direct intervention or by providing arms to the opposition. This debate is largely moot because public opinion is against further involvement. As we consider what the United States can realistically do to help the Syrian people, it is critical that US public opinion be in favor—or at least ambivalent—of increased action. This paper demonstrates how powerful public opinion can be in the foreign policy process. The two skeletal approaches outlined in this paper would raise the profile of Syria, build moral legitimacy for nonviolent action, and make a strong case to the general public that Assad's regime is illegitimate and the moderate opposition deserve a voice in the future Syria.
Works Cited


