

Chapter 1 : Send a US Ambassador to Damascus | HuffPost

FLYNT LAWRENCE LEVERETT fl10@blog.quintoapp.com Professor and founding faculty member, School of International Affairs, Penn State, with affiliate appointments in Asian studies and law; also.

State Department , and before that he served as a CIA senior analyst for eight years. Professional life Professor Leverett graduated with the degrees of B. His areas of professional expertise include U. Middle East and Persian Gulf policy, international energy affairs, and international security. He has testified before Congress, and has appeared on numerous major television news-oriented broadcasts. After the government announced official election results, millions of Iranians took on the streets in a peaceful protest against the rigged presidential election. In a New York Times op-ed co-authored with his wife Mann Leverett, Flynt described the Iranian opposition movement as weak and not representing "anything close to a majority. Such reviews are conducted as a precaution to prevent leaks of classified information. Diplomatic Options Toward Iran. In a statement to the online publication Talking Points Memo , he disputed the official justification for the decision. The White House is demanding, before it will consider clearing the op-ed for publication, that I excise entire paragraphs dealing with matters that I have written about and received clearance from the CIA to do so in several other pieces, that have been publicly acknowledged by Secretary Rice , former Secretary of State Colin Powell , and former Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage , and that have been extensively covered in the media. Bibliography Books and reports Leverett, Flynt Looking Back and Looking Ahead. Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research. Leverett, Flynt; Leverett, Hillary Mann Video Leverett, Flynt References Pennsylvania State University School of International Affairs, official website faculty profiles, last accessed 9 May , [http: The New York Times](http://The New York Times). Retrieved 1 January Federation of American Scientists.

Chapter 2 : 13 results in SearchWorks catalog

Flynt Leverett is a senior fellow and director of the Global Energy Initiative in the American Strategy Program at the New America Foundation. Most recently, Leverett was a senior fellow at The Brookings Institution's Saban Center for Middle East Policy.

July 29, Japan and the Middle East: Currently, diplomatic relations between Tokyo and Damascus are good and have not been affected by the dispatch of Japanese troops to Iraq on a humanitarian mission. Syria is considered an important element in any comprehensive Middle East peace deal because Israel currently occupies the Syrian Golan Heights territory. If the US decides it wants to enter into dialogue with Damascus, Tokyo could play an important role. Syria has said that it thinks Japan should play a greater role in the Middle East peace process as well as assume a larger role in the reconstruction of Iraq. This article very briefly examines issues that presently face Syria in regard to the peace process and how these might influence Japanese involvement in it. If it does move more in that direction, then I think you are right. Players like the EU, Japan, and other parties are going to have difficulty with the US if it moves further in this direction. With regard to their involvement, and how much they might react, it would very much depend on their individual initiatives. You have mentioned the fact that any military intervention [by the US in Syria] could cause chaos. It would be much more than chaos that could happen in the region, it would be a whole new intafada, because those who are today promoting peace in the region are governments that understand the words "situation" and "the position of the weak," and "the position of the Arabs in the world. Until then, not only peace would suffer in the region, the nations would suffer and the people would suffer. What do you think about this? You are correct, I think. When I talked about regime change as a policy option, I explained and laid out some reasons why I thought that that would not be a balanced policy. I did not address the potential region fallout of what would in essence be an American invasion of Syria. I do not think it would work that well in terms of the US achieving its policy goals towards Syria. If you look in a lighter prism at what the impact would be on the region and on US standing in the region. I think that it would be extremely negative if the United States took that kind of military action against Syria and that is another reason why I would not recommend that as a policy option. You have talked about Syria reopening a peace negotiation channel with Israel as a possible position [for Syria]. Then you spoke about withdrawing from the Golan Heights, but Dr. Leverett, you will remember that what blocked the last talks was not the withdrawal from the Golan Heights to the international borders, but the Syrians were adamant about the need to withdraw to the 4th June [] boarder. Do you feel from your knowledge of Syria that there is now more flexibility regarding this issue? I think that the talks between Syria and Israel did ultimately breakdown over the withdrawal issue. The Syrian position reportedly was that you had to have withdrawal to before the 4th June boarder. The really interesting question was, what was that boarder? It is not as if there was some agreed upon definition of what the pre-4th June boarder was and how close that boarder was to the international boundary which delineated it and about which there was a common understanding. In the end, the Syrians were never presented with an offer from Israel that would have even met the definition of withdrawal to the international boarder. The offer that President Clinton took into that hotel room in Geneva in the spring of with Hafez al-Assad authorized by the Israeli Prime Minister of the time, Mr. Barak, actually would not have called for an Israel withdrawal even to the international boundaries. So, I think in the end, the withdrawal issue was really what killed this particular track. My own sense is that Bashar [al-Assad, the current Syrian President], is very much bound by those red lines on the issue as his father [the late President Hafez al-Assad]. Can we come with a pre-June line that would allow the Syrians to plausibly portray it as a complete withdrawal from the Golan and would also address Israeli security needs and its interests in having access to Lake Tiberius water? Yes, I think we could. Is there the political will on both sides to do that now? I have my doubts. Japan has given its full support to President George W. Japan is a country that is highly respected in the region and has helped the region a lot. I think the people of the Middle East are very politically savvy and they understand that probably Japan has perhaps been subjected to pressure. So, people will forgive Japan for that. People are very politically savvy and understand the nuances

and the balance of power. So, I hope this will not damage or change our relations with Japan. They have been active in the Middle East and they are doing a good job in many areas. He said Syria understands the dispatch of the Self-Defense Forces to Iraq for humanitarian assistance. Syria believes constructive dialogue is the best way to ensure comprehensive peace in the Middle East. He also urged Tokyo to help Syria in its difficult dialogue with the US because Japan enjoyed "special links" with Washington. The ambassador said Israel should respect UN Security Council resolutions related to the Palestinian issue, including Resolution , which calls for Israel to withdraw from areas occupied in the war. He is also the author of the recently published and highly acclaimed "Inheriting Syria:

Chapter 3 : GLOCOM Platform - Special Topics - Social Trends

Flynt Leverett writes,. Israel's air strike against the Ain Sahab camp near Damascus last Sunday dramatically underscores the failure of the Bush administration to deal effectively with Syria.

Transcript This is a rush transcript. Copy may not be in its final form. Before that, he was senior C. We welcome you to Democracy Now! Thank you very much. What are you concerned about? Hezbollah is a very multi-faceted organization. It is, in many ways, a legitimate Lebanese political movement. At the same time though, Hezbollah is the terrorist organization that before September 11th had killed more Americans than any other terrorist group in the world. What do you mean it has a terrorist network more extensive than al Qaeda? What proof do you have of that? There is substantial intelligence information, much of which has been discussed publicly by U. The Hezbollah is a worldwide organization that in many respects does quite legitimate activities – social service kinds of activities, religious proselyzation – things that no one would really have any objection to. But intertwined with that network, in Lebanon, in the region, and literally around the world, there is a support network for international terrorist activities that is closely tied to Iranian intelligence. We were just talking about John Bolton and about his nomination to be U. Ambassador to the United Nations. What about what he said about Syria? They have Scud missile brigades. Beyond that, I think there is a lot of speculation. People talk about a possible nuclear program. Maybe Syria was one of the customers of the A. Similarly, on the biological weapons front; I mean, certainly given the dual-use nature of much contemporary pharmaceutical and biomedical technology, you could say that Syria has infrastructure that could be applied to a biological weapons program. Flynt Leverett, why did you leave the Bush administration? I left for a couple of reasons. I came to that conclusion for a couple of reasons. One was, in the road map, which I worked on very hard, there is really an unwillingness on the part of the administration to say very much about the parameters for resolving the key final status issues – status of Jerusalem, final boundaries, this kind of thing – and I thought that was really essential if we were going to move forward in this area. Secondly, the administration had promised everyone it would put out the road map before the end of , before the Iraq war; and then when Prime Minister Sharon called early elections in Israel, they decided not to do that. The argument that was made was: What can I say? I lost that argument. But I also felt in general the way that the administration was handling the war on terror was going badly off track. I thought Iraq was acting as a distraction, as a drain on critical resources that were still needed in the fight against al Qaeda; and I thought that our whole way of approaching state sponsors of terror, like Syria, like Iran, was not really grounded in a very effective strategy, and the administration took a position which essentially ruled out a kind of carrots-and-sticks diplomatic engagement with these states to try and get them out of the terrorism business. I was wondering if you can comment. Do you feel that there is a crackdown on campus, that professors who are critical of Israeli policy are finding it hard to operate? I think this is an issue which draws out passions on all sides; and in some cases it is unfortunate people who take a certain position which some would see as insufficiently supportive of Israeli interests end up being labeled as anti-Semitic. Some people who take positions which others would see as overly supportive of Israel are criticized as being anti-Arab, anti-Palestinian. What do you think would be fair? Those are the basic compromises that I think have to undergird any final status settlement that would meet the minimum requirements of both sides. And I think that, you know, there are other ways to deal with the Palestinian refugee issue: Repatriation to the state of Palestine, settlement in third countries, various types of compensation. I mean, this is an issue that Israeli and Palestinian negotiators have worked on for a long time. I think there are solutions out there to it that would meet the minimum needs of both sides. The book that you have now written is called *Inheriting Syria*. He has written the book *Inheriting Syria*: So, very briefly, the effects of the neoconservative ascendancy, are they still in it, Paul Wolfowitz in particular, and today the whole issue of him becoming President of the World Bank. I know there are some who are arguing that the administration is trying to chart a more centrist course, the voices of the neoconservative camp are more muted than they were during the first term. It is, in the end, his policy. Final question on Syria. I would like to have you back in to talk extensively about the history of Syria

and Bashar Assad. But how much control does Bashar Assad have over his own government, the son of the long reigning ruler there? I think he does have a substantial amount of control. I think he does make the key decisions. He picks and chooses when he is prepared to have a disagreement with one or more elements in the so-called hold guard. He is prepared to do things against their wishes or against their preferences. But he wants to avoid, I think, an across the board confrontation with the old guard. So he is kind of picking and choosing where he wants to take a different course, where he wants to try and push something new and where he is prepared to hold back and, in a sense, be hemmed in. Well, I want to thank you very much for being with us. Flynt Leverett, his forthcoming book is called *Inheriting Syria*: Please attribute legal copies of this work to *democracynow*. Some of the work s that this program incorporates, however, may be separately licensed. For further information or additional permissions, contact us. Next story from this daily show.

table of contents about the authors iv introduction 1 flynt leverett fighting binladenism 13 shibley telhami and james steinberg promoting reform in the arab world

Share via Email Critics of Syria have in the past compared the tale of the Assad dynasty to that of the Corleone family in *The Godfather*. In a National Geographic article this month that infuriated the Syrians to the extent that their Washington ambassador issued a point-by-point rebuttal, Bashar is cast as Michael Corleone. Michael Corleone promised to change things and make the family legit, much like Bashar who was "neither stained with blood nor corrupted by radicalism or incompetence" and promised change to Syria as the "Damascus Spring" arrived with his inheriting the presidency in. Like Corleone, however, Bashar has failed so far to fundamentally change the authoritarian character of the Syrian state. The Damascus Spring was followed by a Damascus Winter, as the bitter winds of regime change swept the region during the Bush years. Yet Syria survived and ever since the Baker-Hamilton report recommended engaging with Syria, the west has been desperately trying to make Damascus an offer it cannot refuse – abandon Hezbollah, Hamas and Iran and come in from the cold. However, much like attempting to restart a marriage after years of acrimonious divorce, engagement is proving stilted. One of the conclusions in the series of briefing papers produced by the International Crisis Group ICG this month suggested that if Syria can endure the isolation brought upon it by the Bush-years, the regime will ask why it should change at all. Ian Black asked in October whether Syria sees itself as "in the cold" and in need of "the west" considering that its relations with Iran, Turkey and powerful proxy groups are so strong, and that relations with Saudi Arabia have just been patched up. Recent events were a display of this emboldened Syria. Back in the country that former CIA-man Flynt Leverett described as "a comparatively small, internally conflicted, economically underperforming, and resource-poor Arab state" was forced to make a humiliated withdrawal of its military from Lebanon. Four years and a multitude of assassinated prominent Lebanese figures later, over the weekend a line of Lebanese politicians from all the various sect "families" made their way to Damascus to pay their respects to President Bashar al-Assad over the death of his brother Majd Assad. Some argue that this more secure regime may be more likely to enact significant change. So what hope is there for change in Syria? Lebanese president Michel Suleiman had to delay his visit to Damascus due to meetings with President Obama in advance of Lebanon taking up its place as a temporary member of the UN Security Council. Obama, frustrated with his outreach to Iran and unable to effectively pursue an Israeli-Palestinian peace process, may be tempted to see what Suleiman thinks of the prospect of improved US-Syrian relations. According to the ICG report Obama "turned an old page without settling on a new one". There is still no US ambassador in Damascus, an insult that will mean Syria will be unlikely to make any real concessions. In addition the Americans have stayed quiet whilst in Iraq Maliki has launched into a series of tirades against Damascus, accusing the Syrian government of being linked to recent large scale bombings, this despite the American military recognising improved security along the Iraqi-Syrian border. Obama should send an ambassador to fully engage US diplomatic channels in order to better assess whether there is any hope of Syria opening up, rather than press for significant change at this time. A "slowly slowly" approach is by no means a visionary one but it may be the best option on the table at this time.

Chapter 5 : Iran's Man in Washington - by Lee Smith

In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: Over the course of successive administrations, Democratic and Republican, the United States has defined an ambitious policy agenda toward Syria. This agenda has had both negative and positive dimensions. On the negative side, Syria has.

Search research, experts, topics, or events Open search Lee Smith Flynt Leverett is fielding questions from an audience at the New American Foundation for a panel titled What the Iranian People Really Think, and the crowdâ€™s at least the Iranian part of itâ€™ is starting to get hostile. When Leverett cites poll numbers suggesting that Mahmoud Ahmadinejad most likely won Iran's heavily contested June presidential election, the Iranians sitting near me in the glass-box conference room direct a chorus of groans and sarcastic laughter toward the podium, where the year-old think-tank celebrity sits with his hands folded in front of him. During the question-and-answer portion of the evening, the voices of the Iranian questioners tremble with anger. What do you know, they ask, about Iran or its people and how the Islamic Republic treats them? Leverett handles the questions with a confidence born of being one of the most influential Iran experts in Washingtonâ€™ a position that he has earned despite having neither an academic background in the field nor the ability to speak Farsi. Leverett's wife and colleague, Hillary Mann Leverett, a neatly dressed, seven-months-pregnant brunette who sits in the front row and watches her husband, is a bona fide Iran expert who served on the Iran desk of George W. But Flynt Leverett subscribes to the realist school of foreign policy, which holds that knowing the internal mechanisms of a regime and the particular characteristics of a language and culture are largely irrelevant to understanding its geopolitical actions. Despite their fondest hopes, the Iranian opposition members in the audience aren't going to return to a newly democratic Iran any time soon because, as Leverett has explained in a string of recent articles including a New York Times op-ed , the current Iranian regime isn't going anywhereâ€™ so we better deal with it. In Leverett's opinion , the White House has made a hash of engagement with Iran, and the mullahs appear to respond better to his overtures than they do to requests from the Obama administration: We do not have a visa, Leverett explained to me in an email. Which as I am sure you have heard is a cumbersome process. Still, it's quite a coup. Access equals influence in Washington, and the fact that Leverett gets to go to Tehran, an itinerary envied by policymakers and access-peddlers, underlines his status as one of the most important Iran experts in town. The curious dance between Washington's Iran experts and the foreign government whose actions they are supposedly analyzing has parallels in the ways that totalitarian governments like the Soviet Union and Mao's China manipulated Western public opinion by only granting access to scholars and policy hands who would toe the party line. Similarly, the Iranian government today decides who in the West will be granted the kind of access that will allow them to speak with authority about the regime to Washington. Western scholars and policy wonks alike understand that access to the regime is a form of currency that can make you powerful, or rich, or both. Washington's ambitious and talented, its romantic opportunists looking to attach themselves to a beautiful cause, and those eyeing fat commissions for opening Iran's energy resources to U.S. Yet unlike Maoist China or Soviet Russia, both closed societies, Iran is a divided country where crowds have protested in the streets for over half a year. The regime there is split into two dueling camps. In addition to representatives of the democratic opposition, Washington hosts a team of experts who advocate the party line of Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjaniâ€™ lets call them the reformersâ€™ who are critical of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad and Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, the supreme leader, but, unlike the democratic opposition, have no wish to bring down the system. But a second team of experts supports Ahmadinejad and Khamenei, and no one makes their case better than Leverett. Flynt has a good understanding of how that government works, says his New America colleague Steven Clemons. He sees Khamenei as the guy that matters. What he believes is that Khamenei is a shrewd calculating operator who moves Iran's strategic interest. Leverett's colleagues were happily surprised by the invitation. New America has been designated twice by the regime as an institution off-limits and I didn't want us to be on the list, Clemons told me. I was pleased as punch. The opposition camp has been critical of Leverett for his collaborations with Mohamed Marandi, director of Tehran University's Institute for North American Studies and the son of

Khameneis personal physician, who appears to have facilitated Leveretts upcoming visit. The University of Tehran is the institution which has applied for our visas, Leverett explained to me. Leverett was offended when I asked if the Revolutionary Guard had played a role in his invitation, and yet theres little doubt that his co-author is personally and professionally close to the regimeâ€”and publicly justifies some of its most brutal actions. Since the June elections, Marandi has been the Ahmadinejad governments key spokesperson in the English-language media, and he recently defended the regimes sentencing opposition members to death. His true occupation may be even more unsavory. He passes himself off as an academic, but hes with the Ministry of Intelligence, says Ramin Ahmadi, co-founder of the Iran Human Rights Documentary Center and a professor of medicine at Yale. Of course, if you need to make the case that you have a genuine channel to the regimes inner sanctum, its hard to do better than to partner with a hard-core regime man like Marandi. In the realist view, Leveretts strong stomach and lack of sentimental attachments is proof that he is coming from the right place. Flynt comes from a very strong national-interest point of view and emphasizes energy security, says David Frum, a former Bush speechwriter and a frequent guest at dinner seminars at the Leveretts Northern Virginia home. Theyre background dinners, usually about eight to 10 people, weapons experts, energy experts, Iranian nationals, with varied points of view on the Middle East, he says. While Frum explains that Leveretts domestic politics are on the conservative, not liberal, side, it is also true that Leveretts fame and acceptance in Washington policymaking circles rests on the fact that he was lionized by liberals for his opposition to the Bush administrations Iran policy. The story of Leveretts rise and fall and rise embodies the upside-down weirdness of the aftermath of the Sept. Its safe to say that in less turbulent times, and under a less controversial president, no one would have ever heard of Flynt Leverett. Born in Memphis, Tennessee, Leverett earned a bachelors degree from Texas Christian University, earned a doctorate in politics from Princeton, honed his Arabic-language skills in Damascus, and joined the CIA during a period when the agency was not especially known for running agents, or paying much attention to Iran. In , after a decade at the agency, Leverett landed a plum position on the State Departments Policy Planning Staff, then headed by Richard Haass, and was subsequently named senior director for Middle East affairs on the National Security Council staff. In the interagency process that coordinates policymakers in the bureaucracies across Washingtonâ€”defense, state, White House, CIAâ€”Leverett earned a reputation for committing what are known as process fouls. Thats when you intentionally exclude other policymakers, says a former senior-level Defense Department official. Leverett did that to us all the time, withholding a paper and cutting us out of the debate because he feared, rightly, we were going to disagree with him. But it was Leveretts disagreements with the president that, in his account, compelled him, as he wrote in , to leave the administration. However, as another former member of the Bush NSC staff explained, Leverett did not leave his post by choice. The job of a director on the NSC staff is bureaucratic, says the former Bush official. If theres a deputies meeting, you take notes. When you get a letter from a foreign government, you log it in and draft a response. Leverett continually missed deadlines and misplaced documents, and the NSC Records office had a long list of his delinquencies. His office was notoriously messyâ€”documents were strewn over chairs, windowsills, the floor, and piled high on his desk. For Condoleezza Rice, then the national security adviser and a famously well-organized clean desk type, repeatedly missing deadlines and losing important letters was simply not tolerable behavior for an NSC officer, and Leverett was told to leave. Returning to the CIA briefly before retiring from government service in the spring of , Leverett moved on to the Brookings Institution, and then the New America Foundation, as he began to reinvent himself as an Iran expert with the help of his wife. Hillary Mann Leverett claimed that after rotating back to the State Department from the White House in April she had received a fax from a Swiss diplomat acting as an intermediary on behalf of the Iranians, offering what the Leveretts would come to call the Grand Bargain. According to the Swiss fax, she said, the Islamic Republic would cease support for terrorist organizations, terminate its nuclear weapons program, and recognize Israel if the United States would in turn guarantee that it had no designs to topple the regime. So why didnt the Americans bite? As the Leveretts explained in a series of interviews and their own articles, including, most famously, a op-ed in the New York Times published with redactions ordered by the Bush White House, it was because of Bush and the neoconservatives, who intended to lead the United States to war

again. As the missed Grand Bargain became another proof of Bush's incompetence, Leverett and his wife found themselves the center of a great deal of positive attention among reporters, talk-show hosts, and Democratic politicians. The couple was profiled in *Esquire*, and Flynt enjoyed a guest spot with Jon Stewart. The problem is that it wasn't the neocons who dismissed the plausibility of the offer; rather it was Flynt Leverett's putative allies, including then-Secretary of State Colin Powell and his deputy, Richard Armitage. Other staffers don't remember it at all. As a former colleague on the NSC staff recalls, this historical document arrives and Condi Rice and Stephen Hadley don't remember it, and only Flynt does. It was either a concoction of the Swiss ambassador, or of the Swiss ambassador and the Leveretts together. Even as the legend of the Grand Bargain has been discredited, the tale's narrative describing a sensible, realistic Iran eagerly courting a stubborn Washington, with the Leveretts in the middle of things served its purpose. It not only identified the couple as critics of the Bush administration, it also certified them as experts about the Iranian regime and as instruments through which the regime might influence Washington.

Chapter 6 : Project MUSE - The Road Ahead

Engaging Damascus (pp.) Flynt Leverett Over the course of successive administrations, Democratic and Republican, the United States has defined an ambitious.

Chapter 7 : Flynt Leverett | Revolv

Flynt Leverett is currently a senior fellow at the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institute and author of the forthcoming book *Inheriting Syria: Bashar's Trial By Fire*. We.

Chapter 8 : Flynt Leverett - Wikipedia

Engaging Damascus / Flynt Leverett Reengaging Riyadh / Flint Leverett. The war on terror? and the battle in Iraq provided the framework for George W. Bush's first term in office.

Chapter 9 : Flynt Leverett | Penn State Law | University Park, Pa.

Dr. Flynt Leverett, Visiting Fellow about engaging Syria primarily in the context of the Syrian source of increasing friction between Washington and Damascus.