

New Executive Order Criminalizing Antiwar Movement

By [Global Research](#)

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Editorial note

This executive order goes beyond that enacted on July 17th with regard to Iraq.

Essentially, it allows the seizure of assets of “certain persons” who oppose the Siniora government of Lebanon.

The wording is extremely broad. It can be applied to anybody who might be opposed to the Siniora government, which is backed by the US, Israel and NATO, or “who contribute to instability in the region and constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States”.

It applies to persons who “contribute to the deliberate breakdown in the rule of law in Lebanon, including through politically motivated violence and intimidation, ... or to infringe upon or undermine Lebanese sovereignty contribute to political and economic instability in that country and the region and constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, and I hereby declare a national emergency to deal with that threat,”

It is presented in media reports as being directed against Syria. In effect, it allows for asset seizure of any organisation within the US which actively opposes the Lebanese government. This includes numerous organisations of the Lebanese diaspora, which oppose US and Israeli military aspirations in Lebanon. In substance, this executive order criminalises antiwar activities as well as humanitarian organisations, which work with groups inside Lebanon, which oppose the Siniora government.

Global Research, 6 August 2007

Bush targets Syrian aims with executive order supporting Lebanon

WASHINGTON — The United States intends to freeze the financial assets of anybody deemed an opponent of the government of Lebanese Prime Minister Fuad Siniora. President George Bush has signed an executive order that authorized the Treasury Department to freeze the financial assets of anyone deemed harmful to the Siniora government. The Aug. 2 order includes those who want to undermine Lebanese democracy or institutions.

“I, George Bush, President of the United States of America, determine that the actions of certain persons to undermine Lebanon’s legitimate and democratically elected government

or democratic institutions, to contribute to the deliberate breakdown in the rule of law in Lebanon, including through politically motivated violence and intimidation, to reassert Syrian control or contribute to Syrian interference in Lebanon, or to infringe upon or undermine Lebanese sovereignty contribute to political and economic instability in that country and the region and constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security and foreign policy of the United States, and I hereby declare a national emergency to deal with that threat," the executive order said.

This is the latest measure of the administration against pro-Syrian opponents of Siniora, believed to be planning an alternate government. In June, Bush banned entry to the United States of anyone working to undermine the Lebanese government.

The executive order did not list any individuals or companies. Instead, the president directed the freezing of U.S. assets of enemies of the Siniora government.

Bush defined eligibility for U.S. sanctions as those who have taken or pose a "significant risk of taking, actions, including acts of violence, that have the purpose or effect of undermining Lebanon's democratic processes or institutions, contributing to the breakdown of the rule of law in Lebanon, supporting the reassertion of Syrian control or otherwise contributing to Syrian interference in Lebanon, or infringing upon or undermining Lebanese sovereignty." "Any transaction by a United States person or within the United States that evades or avoids, has the purpose of evading or avoiding, or attempts to violate any of the prohibitions set forth in this order is prohibited," the order said.

Bush directed the treasury secretary and secretary of state to implement the order, which would ban U.S. banks and companies from doing business with those under sanctions. Under the order, the treasury secretary would submit reports to Congress on compliance of the executive order.

Officials said the Treasury Department has identified those eligible for sanctions. They said a list would be drafted over the next few months.

"I think we could see significant pressure by Syria meant to dismantle the Siniora government," an official said. "This is our warning to them."

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