

## US Will Cut Aid to a Hezbollah Run Lebanon

The Jerusalem Post is [reporting](#) that the United States will end aid to Lebanon if Hezbollah takes power.

A high-ranking American diplomat said that the US will not give any aid to Lebanon if Hezbollah is to lead the country's new government, Asharq al-Awsat reported on Sunday morning. The diplomat reportedly said that a Hezbollah-led government will prevent Congress from agreeing to cooperate with Lebanon.

In addition Asharq al-Awsat is [reporting](#) that Hassan Nasrallah will not allow Saad Hariri to return as prime minister.

The Turkish source told Asharq Al-Awsat that after Saudi Arabia announced it was halting its efforts in this regard, Ankara – along with Qatar – sought to "secure communication between the [Lebanese] leaders, however the conservative position of Hezbollah with regards to the return of Prime Minister Saad Hariri was a huge obstacle that was difficult to circumvent, especially as the Hezbollah Secretary-General Hassan Nasrallah held an extreme position [with regards to this]."

Also, Walid Jumblatt, head of the Druze Party, is now supporting "Syria and the resistance (Hezbollah)".

Please read all of the cited articles for more important information.

**Analysis.** At this moment all of the Lebanese factions appear to be doing their best to avoid a return to civil war. The parties are well aware that Hezbollah, possibly with aid from Syria, can militarily dominate Lebanon. Hezbollah appears to be somewhat wary of the Enterprise battle group being committed to assist or extract the UNFIL and western nationals living in Lebanon. This would be especially true if Hezbollah staged another display of intent to take over Beirut as they did earlier in the week.

Beyond the situation in Lebanon, there is obviously increasing instability in the entire Middle East. Tunisia is a mess. Egyptians were caught trying to smuggle their [gold](#) out of Egypt. There have been reports of rioting in southern Jordan supposedly over economic issues. As Ryan reported earlier there were terrorist bombings in Aleppo, Syria. And Moqtada al-Sadr has [plans](#) for Iraq.

London, Asharq Al-Awsat- A Iraqi political source in the city of Al-Najaf has stated that Al-Sadr movement's Leader Muqtada al-Sadr "is preparing to be Iraq's Hasan Nasrallah and play a major influential role" and warned that "partisan struggles for the political leadership of Iraq's Shiites will take place in Al-Najaf, Karbala, and other central Euphrates and southern cities."

The source which spoke to Asharq Al-Awsat on the condition of anonymity by telephone from Al-Najaf said that "the leader of Al-Sadr movement is holding in his family's home in Al-Hananah quarter, intensive meetings with leaders of his movement in an effort to put their affairs in order and resolve some conflicts and struggles inside it, especially between those wearing turbans and those not wearing them (Mullahs and non-mullahs). The first are asserting that they are the ones who protected the Trend and its permanence while the others believe they were the ones credited with making the Trend a political movement."

And to top it all off the Iranian nuclear talks fell apart as was pretty well assured to happen.

I have little doubt that Iran is behind all of these problems. Ever since the subsidies were removed in Iran, we have recited a litany of the really bad effects of that move. I don't have any independent way to judge just how close the Iranian people might be to open revolt. It is possible to infer from the reports of anti-government activity that there is the possibility that in time there could be a revolt. How serious the threat is may possibly be reflected in the various moves to destabilize the rest of the Middle East. This may be why Moqtada al-Sadr returned to Iraq. It is probably part of the reason that Nasrallah is so hard over on the Special Tribunal for Lebanon other than he may himself be indicted. Whatever timetable the Iranian mullahs may have had to move against the Sunni states and Israel may have been accelerated by the sanctions and especially the sanctions on refined products.

At the moment Lebanon is center stage. We should know perhaps by Monday if Lebanon will descend into civil war or not. Once that fire is lit it may not be possible to put it out without a much wider conflict.