

## Iraqi MP accuses British Forces in Basra of “Terrorism”

By [Global Research](#)

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Text of interview with Fattah al-Shaykh, member of the Iraqi National Assembly representing Basra area, from Baghdad, by Ali al-Zufayri, Al-Jazeera presenter in the Doha studio, broadcast live by Qatari Al-Jazeera satellite TV on 20 September

[Al-Zufayri] Mr Fattah al-Shaykh, how do you assess this raid operation, which might be the first of its kind, to liberate British soldiers from a police centre?

[Al-Shaykh] In the name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. In fact, we, all the Iraqi people and the government, were pleased when we heard yesterday that the sons of the Iraqi people in the steadfast and mujahid city of Basra were alert and tried to detain two American [as heard] soldiers yesterday who wanted to foment sedition, stir up disturbances and sow the seeds of terrorism in Basra. Those soldiers were disappointed. The Iraqi people captured them and handed them over to the Iraqi government. This shows that –

[Al-Zufari, correcting him] Mr Fattah, they were two Britons.

[Al-Shaykh] Excuse me, yes, they were two Britons. This shows that the sons of the Iraqi people are completely committed to protecting their country, whether in Basra, Al-Najaf, Al-Sadr City, Samarra or anywhere else. Apart from what the UK forces are doing, this was frankly considered a violation. They claim that they are forces that enjoy international cover and that they can do what they want and can ravage Iraq. As for how the UK forces acted, they encircled the Major Crimes building and opened fire on citizens. This is a flagrant violation of human rights and this per se is terrorism, whether conducted by the UK forces, the US forces or all the foreign occupation forces. These forces that claim that they came to liberate Iraq have to respect Iraq and the Iraqi people. Regardless of the UK forces' actions carried out against the sons of our people in Basra, I reiterate that this is a flagrant violation against the sons of the Iraqi people.

[Al-Zufari] We would like to get a clearer understanding of the issue. What do you think the UK soldiers were doing wearing civilian cloths? The UK forces did not comment on their presence in that place?

[Al-Shaykh] What would they say? Do you expect them to say that they are terrorists, British intelligence members working to stir up disturbances in Basra? Basra has been volatile for four days. I, personally, was a guest in Basra two days ago. I could see that the UK forces were always provoking the Iraqi people in Basra. There are indiscriminate arrests and pressure. Shaykh Ahmad al-Fartusi [a leader of the Al-Mahdi Army in Basra ] and his aides were arrested as a result. Moreover, they began giving excuses about him and said that

there were charges levelled against al-Fartusi. Yesterday, when we - five members, including the spokesman, of the Independent National Bloc - met Patrick (Toppin), representative of the British embassy in Baghdad, he said that he asked us to be patient and not to stir up disturbances. While we were at the Conference Palace, a telephone call was received from Basra on that two UK soldiers were trying to stir up disturbances. Explosive materials were found in their car and they opened fire on one of the citizens, breaking his legs. Moreover, the Iraqi police began assuming their role in the right manner [to contain the situation], but the British forces this time are trying to violate even the Iraqi law and mistreat the Iraqi police who defused this sedition.

[Al-Zufari] Mr Fattah, there is an important point here related to the extent of the relation and the coordination between the Iraqi police, the Iraqi forces and the UK forces. The incident probably indicates that they failed to coordinate and exchange information. The UK forces maybe filed a request [for the soldiers' release]. What kind of argument do you think this incident would raise with regard to the relation between the Iraqi and UK forces, specifically in Basra?

[Al-Shaykh] The Iraqi forces always receive orders from the Iraqi officials and this is their duty as policemen or National Guard members, may God reward them well for carrying out their duties perfectly. However, what the UK forces are doing is not necessarily known by the Iraqi forces or coordinated with them through exchange of information. There are occupation forces, armoured vehicles, tanks and military aircraft in Basra. Moreover, there are members of the British intelligence present in Basra especially, since Basra is currently a sensitive and important area in Iraq. There are members of the Central Intelligence Agency [CIA] and Mossad [word indistinct], as well as many institutions in this city. What happened is not due to the lack of coordination, but a scandal took place when the anniversary of the birth of the expected Imam Al-Mahdi, may God hasten his honourable appearance, is commemorated. Almighty God exposed the true image of the occupier. In Karbala, a foreign member was trying to detonate his car among visitors yesterday. This shows a great deal of grudge they harbour. I say that if the situation continues as is, I expect that the 1920 Revolution will erupt again against the Britons in the south.

[Al-Zufari] Fattah al-Shaykh, member of the Iraqi National Assembly representing Basra area, from Baghdad, thank you very much.

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