

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Iranian missiles strike Asad and Erbil bases in Iraq

UT-3 candidate calls for Utah delegation to assert constitutional authority to avert war.

DRAPER, UT 7th January 2020 —

I condemn all military attacks that result in death of our troops, and especially those that result in the deaths of civilians the world over. On January 7, Iran launched more than a dozen ballistic missiles at the al-Asad and Erbil military bases in Iraq. My heart breaks for the families of service members stationed at these bases; initial reports are that there are no U.S. casualties, and I pray that there are no casualties reported later.

Iran launched these attacks in retaliation for the U.S. assassination, in Iraq, of Iranian Major General Qassim Suleimani on Friday. President Donald Trump's rash decision to assassinate Suleimani resulted, on Sunday, in the Iraqi parliament voting unanimously to expel U.S. troops from their country and Iran declaring it will no longer abide by a 2015 agreement to suspend uranium production. And on Monday, a countless sea of Iranians united in the streets of Tehran to mourn the death of Suleimani. Our impeached president's actions so far have made the world more dangerous for U.S. troops and citizens. If President Trump escalates this conflict on Wednesday, as he has threatened to, we will effectively be at war with Iran. After Tuesday's attack, the Foreign Minister of Iran, Javad Zarif, wrote, "We do not seek escalation or war, but will defend ourselves against any aggression." I ask Representative John Curtis, other elected leaders of the Republican party, and the entire Utah congressional delegation to publically call for President Trump to end these hostilities without retaliation. In Utah, and across the nation, we the people do not want a war with Iran.

I stand with presidential candidate Mark Charles in asserting, "The foreign policies of the United States need changing. The history of our country is rooted in colonialism, enslavement and terror, but we narrate our history through the mythological lens of exceptionalism... And because our nation has never learned to acknowledge who we were, we are now incapable of being honest with what we have become." Our impeached president is not granted unlimited power by Article II of the Constitution. The authority to declare war is given instead, in Article I, to the legislature; so I call on our elected representatives to exercise their constitutional authority to restrain President Trump from escalating these hostilities any further. Regarding the President's brazen language on Saturday, Mr. Charles wrote, "When President Trump publicly threatened (on Twitter) the historic and cultural sacred sites of Iran as military targets, he not only spoke like a war criminal, but he spoke like a person who has no relatives — no kinship, no ties to the sacredness of land nor to the story of any people. When you have no relatives, not only do you have no honor, but you have no ability to feel shame." I hope — I believe, I pray — that President Trump will cease these hostilities when he addresses the nation on Wednesday morning. If he doesn't, I ask good people to join me on the streets of Salt Lake City in protest.

Your brother in peace,

Russ Fugal — candidate for U.S. House seat of Utah's Third Congressional District

Committee to Elect Russel Fugal www.Fugal2020.com — press@fugal2020.com

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