



# Activist Blames Snowden for Rise of ISIS

*Kassig murder 'more blood on the hands of Edward Snowden,' Cliff Kincaid claims.*

By [Steven Nelson](#)

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Conservative activist Cliff Kincaid told a small audience at the National Press Club on Monday that exiled whistleblower Edward Snowden helped cause two wars.

“We believe Edward Snowden is responsible in part for the rise of Putin’s Russia [and] the rise of ISIS,” Kincaid told 20 or so attendees, referring to Russian President Vladimir Putin and using an acronym for the Syria- and Iraq-based Islamic State group.

The religious fanatics’ recent murder of U.S. humanitarian worker Peter Kassig - who took the name Abdul-Rahman when he converted to Islam - is “more blood on the hands of Edward Snowden,” he said.

Kincaid offered little evidence to support any of his allegations, including that Snowden-supplied information was given by Putin to the Islamic State group, which is fighting to topple the Russian-allied government of Syria.

But, Kincaid said, citing former officials, he’s convinced the U.S. was unable to anticipate wars in the Middle East and eastern Ukraine because of what he called an “espionage operation” by the former National Security Agency contractor.

Kincaid, director of the conservative advocacy group Accuracy In Media’s Center for Investigative Journalism, said he wanted to push back against what he sees as treason and condemned the investigative journalists who reported on NSA phone and Internet surveillance programs.

“These journalists should have been arrested,” he said of writer Glenn Greenwald and filmmaker Laura Poitras.

At times rambling, the speaker chided fellow conservatives for supporting Snowden, who is living in Russia after the U.S. cancelled his passport, and suggested libertarian groups including the Cato Institute and Students for Liberty are acting in the interests of international communists and/or the Russian government.

“Russian influence can be felt through some of the libertarian organizations backed by the Koch brothers,” he said. Kincaid blasted Sen. Rand Paul, R-Ky., as an “ardent supporter of Edward Snowden and appeaser of Putin.”

Paul [has endorsed](#) prison time for Snowden and [attacked](#) President Barack Obama for being insufficiently tough with the Russian leader.

Many event attendees seemed supportive of Kincaid. A woman expressed concern that the U.S. government had been infiltrated by the Muslim Brotherhood. Another was indignant that Greenwald spoke at a Council on American-Islamic Relations event.

Kincaid spoke favorably about the McCarthy-era House Un-American Activities Committee, which infamously investigated citizens' political leanings, and said Congress should again pursue such probes. In a blog post promoting the event, he called for the creation of congressional committees "to investigate internal security problems," including how "a libertarian ideologue like Snowden, a financial contributor to Ron Paul's 2012 campaign for president, got security clearances in the first place."

Kincaid shared a podium with Martin Edwin Andersen, a Justice Department whistleblower who objected to Snowden's decision to break the law. After the event, Andersen stressed he does not share many of Kincaid's beliefs.

The Senate is voting Tuesday on cloture for the USA Freedom Act, which would end the NSA's automatic bulk collection and in-house retention of American phone records and implement other reforms. A different version of that bill, inspired by Snowden's leaks, passed the House in May. Three appeals courts are evaluating the legality of the phone record program, which a federal judge found in December "almost certainly" violates Americans' Fourth Amendment rights.