

Trump's Gabbard Pick is a Spy Scandal in the Making



By Cliff Kincaid

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Trump admits he made a lot of mistakes in his first term. But the biggest by far in his second term has been the nomination of “former” socialist Democrat Tulsi Gabbard as Director of National Intelligence (DNI). At her Thursday confirmation hearing, Republicans joined Democrats in attacking her proposed pardon for former CIA/NSA analyst Edward Snowden, who defected to Russia through Chinese Hong Kong.

At least seven members of the committee asked her about Snowden.

Those Republicans included Senator Todd Young, a former Marine Corps intelligence officer, who couldn't understand why she doesn't consider the traitor to be a traitor. His [exchange](#) with her is worth watching.

In a major speech several years ago, former Republican Senator Jon Kyl called Snowden “this generation's Alger Hiss,” a reference to the State Department official who was convicted of perjury in 1950 for denying he was a Soviet spy and served 44 months in prison.

Gabbard had proposed a congressional resolution in 2020 “expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Federal Government should drop all the espionage charges against Edward Snowden.”

Yet, as noted in a previous column, President Trump himself had called Snowden a “traitor” and a “spy” who should be executed. Lt. General Michael T. Flynn, his former national security adviser, had [declared](#) in congressional testimony that Snowden’s disclosures did “grave damage to the Department of Defense and go far beyond the act of a so-called whistle blower.” He added, “I have no doubt that he has placed the men and women of our armed services at risk and that his disclosures will cost lives on our future battlefields.”

Trump’s Secretary of State Marco Rubio said about Snowden, “I think he’s a traitor worthy of federal prison.”

In the hearing on Thursday, however, she adamantly refused to call Snowden, now a Russian citizen, a traitor.

Extremely mind-boggling was the performance of Senator Tom Cotton, who defended Gabbard and in [his opening statement](#) at the hearing didn’t even mention the Snowden case.

However, after a bipartisan House Intelligence Committee issued a [report](#) in 2016 on what Senator Tom Cotton called “the traitorous activities of Edward Snowden,” [he said](#), “Their report makes clear that Edward Snowden was an egotistical serial liar and traitor whose unauthorized disclosures of classified information have jeopardized the safety of Americans and allies around the world. Snowden’s close and continual contact with Russian intelligence services speak volumes. He deserves to rot in jail for the rest of his life.”

The report highlighted the fact that “The vast majority of documents Snowden removed were unrelated to electronic surveillance or any issues associated with privacy and civil liberties” and that “Since Snowden’s arrival in Moscow, he has had, and continues to have, contact with Russian intelligence services.”

Snowden has been charged with violating the Espionage Act.

Our book, [Blood on His Hands](#), examines the disclosures and concluded it was no accident that the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the rise of Islamic groups like ISIS, the growing Chinese military threat, and U.S. Intelligence Community confusion over the release of COVID-19 followed his defection to Russia through China.

Gabbard admits Snowden “broke the law” but still claims he is a legitimate whistleblower. That is a lie.

My book includes a chapter by Martin Edwin Andersen, the first national security whistleblower to be given the U.S. Office of Special Counsel’s “Public Servant Award.” Andersen has written that Snowden is not a legitimate whistleblower and that he illegally “leaked massive amounts of national security information” and then fled to Russia, a police state where “real whistleblowers and investigative journalists alike are under continuous threat.” Andersen had worked as an assistant professor of national security affairs at the National Defense University and a lecturer at the U.S. Naval Academy.

In an [interview](#) I conducted with national security expert Fred Fleitz in 2016, when Obama was being pressured to pardon Snowden, he said he had “no doubt” that Snowden was a “mole” in the U.S. intelligence community who “has been working for Russian intelligence for a long time.”

Fleitz is now Vice Chair for the Center for American Security at the pro-Trump America First Policy Institute.

Fleitz had told me that the Islamic state (ISIS) terrorist group had “increased its electronic security measures after the Snowden leaks” because “they learned what western intelligence services were capable of” and that, as a result, Snowden “is responsible for the deaths of hundreds, if not thousands of people,” in Islamic terror attacks. He cited a series of ISIS terror attacks in France, including the Normandy church attack in July 2016, in which an elderly

priest was stabbed in the chest and his throat was slit, and the Nice, France, truck attack in July 2016, in which at least 84 people were killed and hundreds more were injured.

In the case of Snowden's illegal disclosures, former CIA officer Bob Baer had said, "ISIS has been reading Snowden," a process that enabled the terrorist group to evade NSA monitoring, capture and behead Americans, rapidly expand, and then take over large areas of territory in the Middle East.

The innocent Americans killed by ISIS were James Foley, Steven Sotloff, Peter Kassig, and Kayla Mueller.

Very disappointing has been the coverage of Breitbart, which carried a headline highlighting what its reporter Alex Marlow had claimed – that "Tulsi Gabbard Is a Threat to the War Machine Because She Wants a Safer and More Peaceful World."

This is ridiculous on its face. How can world peace be achieved if the Russians steal our secrets and ISIS kills Americans as a result?

Another bizarre headline came from John Solomon's "Just the News" site. It proclaimed, "Trump's outsider nominees ran the Senate gauntlet and emerged unscathed."

Gabbard's performance was so bad on the Snowden matter that several media outlets said her nomination was in danger.

Solomon made no mention of how Snowden's disclosures helped Russia and Islamic terror groups.⁸

National Review ran a [column](#) by Bernard Hudson, *Tulsi Gabbard Is Right for Director of National Intelligence*, raising questions about his tenure as head of the Central Intelligence Agency's Counterterrorism Center.

When my group America's Survival held a news conference on the Snowden matter in 2014, we released a statement by Lt. Gen. Ion Mihai Pacepa, the highest-ranking official ever to have

defected from the former Soviet bloc. He had served as acting chief of communist Romania's espionage service and top adviser to President Nicolae Ceausescu.

He [noted](#) that the NSA has been infiltrated by Russian spies before and that Snowden "turned up in Moscow, following in the steps of three other NSA cryptologists: Bernon Mitchell, William Martin and Victor Norris Hamilton. All three had unsuccessfully asked to leave Russia soon after their defection. After the Soviet Union collapsed, Hamilton surfaced in a Russian mental hospital. He had been missing for more than 20 years, but no one in the whole world noticed his disappearance. Let's hope that Snowden, who also damaged the security of our country, will have the same fate."

When NSA analysts William Martin and Bernon Mitchell defected to Russia in 1960, President Eisenhower labeled them as traitors and former President Harry Truman said they should be shot. Investigations revealed that both young men had been members of the Communist Party and homosexual lovers.

The Gabbard pick is a spy scandal in the making. It brings back all the debunked claims about Trump being a Russian agent, even though he once [called](#) for the execution of Edward Snowden as a "traitor" who had "given serious information to China and Russia."

Analyst Trevor Loudon [believes](#) a communist-inspired "influence operation" has targeted Trump's inner circle, making another Russia-gate scandal entirely possible, even probable. In an [interview](#) on my Rumble TV show, Trevor suggested that, if she gets the job, the scandal will be timed to blow up right before the next midterm elections, giving Democrats a major opportunity to derail Trump's agenda.

Trump should withdraw the nomination and conduct an immediate investigation into who recommended her and why.

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