



Written by [R. Cort Kirkwood](#) on March 17, 2026

U.S. Counterterror Chief Quits Over Iran War. Says Trump Deceived by Israel Lobby, Media Propaganda

[Joe Kent](#), President Trump's top counterterrorism advisor, quit his post today because of the war the United States is waging on Iran at the behest of Israel.

In his resignation letter, Kent, director of the National Counterterrorism Center, told Trump that Israel and its "powerful lobby" pushed Trump to attack Iran, which did not pose an "imminent threat" to the United States.

The usual chickenhawk neoconservatives who don't fight the wars they advocate attacked Kent. So also did Trump, as is his custom when someone disagrees with him. Kent is a "weak" man, Trump said of the former Green Beret, and anyone who opposes war with Iran, he continued, is not smart.



AP Images
Joe Kent

After much reflection, I have decided to resign from my position as Director of the National Counterterrorism Center, effective today.

I cannot in good conscience support the ongoing war in Iran. Iran posed no imminent threat to our nation, and it is clear that we started this... pic.twitter.com/prtu86DpEr

— Joe Kent (@joekent16jan19) [March 17, 2026](#)

Kent Quits

"I cannot in good conscience support the ongoing war in Iran. Iran posed no imminent threat to our nation, and it is clear that we started this war due to pressure from Israel and its powerful American lobby," Kent wrote:

I support the values and the foreign policies that you campaigned on in 2016, 2020, 2024, which you enacted in your first term. Until June of 2025, you understood that the wars in the Middle East were a trap that robbed America of the precious lives of our patriots and depleted the wealth and prosperity of our nation.

In your first administration, you understood better than any modern President how to decisively apply military power without getting us drawn into never-ending wars. You demonstrated this by killing Qasam Solamani and by defeating ISIS.

That all changed when Trump began his second term, Kent wrote. Early on, "high-ranking Israeli



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officials and influential members of the American media deployed a misinformation campaign that wholly undermined your America First platform and sowed pro-war sentiments to encourage a war with Iran."

That "echo chamber was used to deceive" Trump "into believing that Iran posed an imminent threat to the United States, and that should you strike now, there was a clear path to a swift victory."

Kent called those claims from the pro-war lobby a "lie" and "the same tactic the Israelis used to draw us into the disastrous Iraq war that cost our nation the lives of thousands of our best men and women."

"We cannot make this mistake again," Kent wrote.

Kent reminded Trump that he deployed 11 times for combat missions, and is a "Gold Star husband who lost my beloved wife Shannon in a war manufactured by Israel." Kent's wife [was killed](#) in a suicide bombing.

"I cannot support sending the next generation off to fight and die in a war that serves no benefit to the American people nor justifies the cost of American lives," he wrote.

Attack Kent

As he did with GOP Representative Thomas Massie of Kentucky and former GOP Representative Marjorie Taylor Greene of Georgia, Trump attacked Kent for sticking to America First principles.

"I always thought he was weak on security," Trump told reporters:

Very weak on security.... It's a good thing that he's out because he said that Iran was not a threat? Iran was a threat, every country realized what a threat Iran was.

Trump said the "greatest military scholars" backed his decision to attack Iran:

When somebody is working with us that says they didn't think Iran was a threat, we don't want those people.... They're not smart people, or they're not savvy people. Iran was a tremendous threat.

NOW - Trump says it's a "good thing" that Joe Kent resigned over the Iran War: "When somebody is working with us that says they didn't think Iran was a threat—we don't want those people." pic.twitter.com/f4e3PFhtyz

— Disclose.tv (@disclosetv) [March 17, 2026](#)

Ben Shapiro claims that Joe Kent resigned from his position as Director of the National Counterterrorism Center because of "brain rot" and says his resignation letter is full of "conspiracy theories" about Israel.

Why? Because he and President Trump say so. pic.twitter.com/oHVW11dYyy

— Zach Costello (@ZachCostello_) [March 17, 2026](#)

"This stuff is brain rot," neoconservative chickenhawk Ben Shapiro wrote of Kent's letter. "His ideology



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is the same as that of Tucker Carlson, the guy who says that the war is disgusting and evil and who has been busy sexting with the mullahs.”

Another chickenhawk, radio talker Mark Levin, thinks “DOJ should open a criminal investigation to determine if Kent leaked any classified information.”

As well, Levin wrote on X, Kent is “the SOB who leaked my meeting last year with POTUS to Qatarlson?” meaning Tucker Carlson. “And Gabbard didn’t fire him?” Levin presented no evidence that Kent disclosed Levin’s meeting with Trump.

DOJ should open a criminal investigation to determine if Kent leaked any classified information. <https://t.co/SvQJYbfknQ>

— Mark R. Levin (@marklevinshow) [March 17, 2026](#)

This is the SOB who leaked my meeting last year with POTUS to Qatarlson? And Gabbard didn’t fire him? <https://t.co/Jp16spUHgm>

— Mark R. Levin (@marklevinshow) [March 17, 2026](#)

GOP Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina is equally pleased that an opponent to the unconstitutional war with Iran is gone.

“Kent is echoing the Democratic talking points, which are devoid of fact or evidence,” Graham wrote on X:

Hopefully, the person replacing Mr. Kent will have a better understanding of the threats presented by the Iranian regime.

Mr. Kent said that Iran posed no imminent threat to the United States. Clearly, he did not go to work enough.

[The AIPAC Tracker reports](#) that Graham has received more than \$4.6 million from the Israel Lobby.

The resignation of Joe Kent as the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center could not have come at a better time. In his statement, explaining why he’s resigning in protest, Mr. Kent is echoing the Democratic talking points, which are devoid of fact or evidence....

— Lindsey Graham (@LindseyGrahamSC) [March 17, 2026](#)

Kent’s Military Record

Unlike the chickenhawks Levin and Shapiro, Kent, 45, wore the uniform of his country. As his soon-to-be-removed official biography says, Kent deployed 11 times to the Middle East and “other high-threat regions.”

He served with the [75th Ranger Regiment](#) and [Army Special Forces](#). He received the Bronze Star with 10 Oak Leaf Clusters. Kent retired from the Army in 2018 and served as a paramilitary officer in the CIA’s Special Activities Center.



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Joe Kent

Joseph Kent serves as the Director of the National Counterterrorism Center (NCTC). In this role, Kent leads the U.S. counterterrorism and counternarcotics enterprise and serves as the principal counterterrorism advisor to the President.



Kent is an Oregon native and a graduate of Norwich University in Strategic Defense Analysis. He served in the U.S. Army for 20 years, where he completed 11 combat deployments in the Middle East and other high-threat regions. During his time in the Army, he served with the 75th Ranger Regiment, Army Special Forces and U.S. Army Special Operations Command, and received numerous military commendations, including six bronze stars. After retiring from the Army in 2018, he served as a paramilitary officer in the CIA's Special Activities Center.

While Kent was fighting the Middle East, Levin and Shapiro were spewing pro-war commentary from air-conditioned offices. Former Air Force lawyer Graham — known as “Lady G” in Washington, D.C.’s “LGBTQ” salons — was flouncing about Capitol Hill advocating war.

“They are going to lie about Joe Kent and try to discredit him,” Taylor Greene wrote on X:

Do not believe the lies! Joe Kent is a great American hero deployed 11 times and a Gold Star Husband! He’s right!

They are going to lie about Joe Kent and try to discredit him. Do not believe the lies! Joe Kent is a great American hero deployed 11 times and a Gold Star Husband! He’s right! <https://t.co/bkePMlCitp>

— Marjorie Taylor Greene 🇺🇸 (@mtgreenee) [March 17, 2026](#)



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