

Obama endorses DSA's Ocasio-Cortez, along with CIA Democrats

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Last week, Barack Obama endorsed several hundred Democratic Party candidates running in key state and congressional midterm races around the country. “Today, I’m proud to endorse ... Democratic candidates who aren’t just running against something, but for something,” declared the former US president.

Most politically significant among Obama’s endorsements was Democratic Socialists of America member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who is running for Congress in New York. In response to Obama’s endorsement, Ocasio-Cortez tweeted a courteous “Thank you, [Barack Obama]. Time to bring it home this November. Help us organize for healthcare, housing, education, and justice for all.”

This effective reverse endorsement by Ocasio-Cortez for Obama, whom she has never criticized, is also a declaration of solidarity with the Obama administration’s policies. The administration oversaw the bailout of Wall Street and a massive transfer of wealth to the corporate and financial elite; an attack on health care fraudulently packaged as a reform; the deportation of 3 million immigrants, more than any president before him; and eight years of unending war, including drone assassinations and the expansion of the intelligence apparatus’ spying on the population.

Obama’s support for Ocasio-Cortez makes it absolutely clear, if further confirmation was necessary, that the DSA is nothing more than a subsidiary of the Democratic Party. It is an instrument created to expand the Democrats’ electoral base by convincing young people who would otherwise not vote for the Democrats that this right-wing, militarist party is moving to the left.

Alongside Ocasio-Cortez, Obama endorsed several candidates with long histories in the US State Department, military and intelligence agencies. Among

them is Elissa Slotkin, a former Central Intelligence Agency official running in Michigan’s 8th Congressional District; Max Rose, a former Army platoon leader running in New York’s 11th Congressional District; and Abigail Spanberger, another former CIA officer, running in Virginia’s 7th Congressional District.

These figures and others, whom the *World Socialist Web Site* has identified as the “CIA Democrats,” represent the largest bloc of candidates being fielded by the Democratic Party in the upcoming midterm elections. If the Democratic Party wins control of the House, this group will hold the balance of power in Congress.

Since the election of Trump, the Democrats have sought to oppose Trump on the most right-wing basis possible. They have worked to demobilize mass hatred of the administration’s anti-working class, militarist and anti-immigrant policies and direct opposition behind the anti-Russia campaign, including demands for greater military intervention in the Middle East. This has been combined with the promotion of the politics of racial and gender identity, pitched to privileged layers of the upper-middle class.

The politics of the DSA, Sanders and the like is not in conflict with this right-wing agenda, but rather in conformity with it. The job of figures such as Ocasio-Cortez and the rest will be to provide political cover for the pro-war, pro-austerity and anti-democratic policies of the CIA Democrats, while working to strengthen the grip of Wall Street and the military over political life.

Since winning the nomination in New York’s 14th Congressional District in June, Ocasio-Cortez has already called for votes for right-wing candidates, while tweeting her solemn condolences at the passing of Senator John McCain, a vicious warmonger and war

criminal, in August.

In addition to Ocasio-Cortez, Obama endorsed “progressives” such as Ayanna Pressley, running for a congressional seat in Massachusetts, as well as the gubernatorial campaigns of Ben Jealous in Maryland and Andrew Gillum in Florida. Pressley has been endorsed by Ocasio-Cortez and other groups like the Justice Democrats and Democracy for America that orbit the Democratic Party, while both Jealous and Gillum have been endorsed by the Sanders wing of the Democratic Party and various trade unions.

The new list follows earlier endorsements of candidates for state and federal office in August, whom he described as “diverse, patriotic, and big-hearted.” In September, Obama gave a speech at the University of Illinois campus at Urbana-Champaign in which he excoriated the sitting Republican President Donald Trump and congressional Republicans as “radical” and “not normal” while urging Republicans to adopt a tougher foreign policy on Russia.

The logical conclusion to be drawn from his recent list of selections is that Ocasio-Cortez, Pressley and his other picks *do* possess the traits he finds lacking in Trump and the Republicans.

In the aftermath of the 2016 presidential election, Obama infamously referred to the conflict between the Democrats and Republicans as “an intramural scrimmage,” with all sides on the “same team.” No matter how bitter their tactical conflicts, this assessment is in fact true. Both parties represent the corporate and financial elite.

In the case of the DSA, its relationship to the Democratic Party establishment does not even rise to the level of a “scrimmage.” They are merely the Democratic Party’s second-string, called up to play an assigned position. Or, to use another metaphor, they are political actors, petty-bourgeois careerists who put on a left face, the better to deceive the audience and distract attention from what is actually going on.

Those who may be attracted to the DSA under the mistaken impression that it represents a socialist alternative should draw the necessary conclusions.



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