

Abigail Spanberger: CIA Democrat for Virginia's 7th District

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Abigail Spanberger is a former CIA agent running as the Democratic candidate for Congress in Virginia's 7th Congressional District. She is seeking to defeat and replace the Republican incumbent Rep. Dave Brat.

The 7th Congressional District is a large sprawling area spanning Culpeper and Nottoway Counties. It includes a large portion of Richmond suburbs, with otherwise mainly rural areas. The district has a population of 775,000, 72 percent of which lives in urban areas, with a median income of \$73,580.

Spanberger spent eight and a half years as an agent for the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA), working both overseas and at home. The CIA has long ago taken its place as one of the most hated organizations in human history. It is reviled by the vast majority of the world for toppling democratically elected governments, supporting fascist coups and political massacres, allying itself with the most reactionary elements of society, including Al Qaeda, and carrying out sadistic, medieval-style torture on its victims.

Spanberger's campaign is one component of an entirely new and unprecedented phenomenon within American capitalist politics: the open takeover of one of the two main corporate-controlled parties by the military-intelligence apparatus. The creation of this new political force, designated by the *World Socialist Web Site* as the "CIA Democrats," has all the hallmarks of an intelligence operation. The first article of the series by the same name warns: "If the Democrats capture a majority in the House of Representatives on November 6, as widely predicted, candidates drawn from the military-intelligence apparatus will comprise as many as half of the new Democratic members of Congress. They will hold the balance of power in the lower chamber of Congress."

Spanberger has received the unequivocal official

support of the Democratic Party establishment, including from prominent figures such as former President Barack Obama, former Vice President Joe Biden, Virginia Senators Tim Kaine and Mark Warner, Virginia Governor Ralph Northam, and many others. She also has the backing of a vast array of political action committees (PACs), including Foreign Policy for America, an organization which expresses the strategic aims of the anti-Russian campaign being waged by the Democrats and the military-intelligence apparatus. This PAC has led the charge to introduce draconian sanctions against Russia, in addition to backing legislation in Congress preventing Trump from removing already existing sanctions.

The tag line on the front page of Spanberger's campaign website reads: "Former CIA Operative, Girl Scout leader, ready to represent Virginia's 7th District in Congress." The biographical section states ominously: "Abigail took an oath to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic. That oath didn't come with an expiration date." In other words, Spanberger is still "on duty," both as a candidate and, if she wins next Tuesday, as a congresswoman.

Spanberger worked within the CIA as a "case officer," a term now used interchangeably with "operations officer." The agency's official webpage describes the position as an agent involved in "clandestinely spotting, assessing, developing, recruiting, and handling non-US citizens with access to foreign intelligence vital to US foreign policy and national security decision makers." The Directorate of Operations, the office to which Spanberger reported, "strengthens national security and foreign policy objectives through the clandestine collection of human intelligence (HUMINT), and by conducting covert

action as directed by the President.”

Before working for the CIA, Spanberger worked for the US Postal Inspection Service. This division essentially works as an internal police force within the US Postal Service. In this capacity, she focused on cases of money laundering and narcotics.

Whereas most capitalist politicians are only indirectly affiliated with the intelligence apparatus—and usually keep such ties quiet—Spanberger, like Elissa Slotkin in Michigan, has made the most of her previous role as a CIA agent. It is her main qualification for office. As Niles Niemuth, the Socialist Equality Party candidate for Congress in Michigan’s 12th Congressional District, noted in his assessment of Slotkin, Spanberger “puts herself forward, not as a representative of a party, let alone an advocate for any specific program, but as a representative of the military-intelligence apparatus.”

The Democratic Party and corporate-controlled media promote Spanberger on just this revolting basis. “In all my years in politics, I can say that Abigail is the only former CIA Operative and Girl Scout Leader that I have had the good fortune to endorse,” Biden gushed in his official endorsement.

Warner echoed this sentiment: “Her dedication to serving her country as a CIA officer has prepared her to now serve as an effective, common-sense legislator who can work across the aisle to achieve positive results for the people of the 7th District.” Northam’s endorsement outmatched Warner’s only in its glorification of militarism: “Abigail’s service as a CIA officer exemplifies the honor, integrity, and selflessness that central Virginians deserve in their next representative.”

Spanberger’s approach is carefully measured, attempting to deflect attention away from the fascistic policies of the Trump administration while presenting herself as a more competent alternative to Brat. In lieu of a political program, she emphasizes her “level-headedness,” as well as her commitment to “bipartisanship” and “service” to her country.

She has been cautious in mentioning Trump at all, largely preferring not to refer to him by name. Her only criticism of the administration, unsurprisingly, has been on the basis of its political infighting with rival factions within the intelligence agencies. In a recent interview on Bloomberg News, she stated, “I think the attacks that the president has made on the intelligence

community [are] very unfortunate... I do hope we see a place where we have leadership in Washington who are seeing the value in the intelligence produced by our hardworking men and women in the intelligence communities.”

“For me it’s about changing the conversation and really working to make sure that even if on one side the rhetoric and anger is really intense, that we’re not volleying back with the same anger and intensity,” Spanberger told the *Washington Examiner*. This statement reflects fears within the ruling class that the bitter internal divisions that exist within the capitalist state may explode onto the mass arena, which could threaten a social upheaval.

The 7th District has long been dominated politically by the Republican Party, which has moved further and further to the right during the past two decades. Dave Brat, a three-term incumbent, typifies this shift. He is an ultra-rightist and anti-immigrant racist who ousted then House Majority Leader Eric Cantor in the Republican primary in 2014. His response to being challenged by a CIA agent has been to denounce her as weak on terrorism because she taught briefly, before joining the CIA, at a Saudi-funded Islamic school in northern Virginia. In other words, he has sought to outflank this representative of “Murder Inc.” from the right.



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