

Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez funds the CIA Democrats

Eric London
4 April 2021

On Friday, *Politico* reported that New York Democratic Congresswoman and Democratic Socialists of America member Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez transferred \$160,000 in campaign funds to a slate that includes “CIA Democrats”—right-wing congressional Democrats with intelligence and military backgrounds. *Politico* reported that the contributions were unsolicited and were aimed “to help keep the House majority ahead of a tough cycle.” While *Politico* only lists Conor Lamb of Pennsylvania, Elissa Slotkin of Michigan and Carolyn Bourdeaux of Georgia by name, it appears based on the report that Ocasio-Cortez donated \$5,000 to each of 32 “frontline” candidates selected by the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee in high-profile midterm races.

This list of “frontline” candidates includes many prominent CIA Democrats whom the *World Socialist Web Site* has identified as having been former representatives of the Pentagon and intelligence agencies. In 2018, the WSWWS published a three-part series by Patrick Martin detailing efforts by the military-intelligence agencies to flood the Democratic Party with loyal operatives.

Beneficiaries of Ocasio-Cortez’s financial support include Elissa Slotkin (a former CIA agent), Conor Lamb (Marine captain and military prosecutor), Tom Malinowski of New Jersey (an assistant secretary of state under Barack Obama), Abigail Spanberger (CIA operations officer) and Elaine Luria (Navy commander), both of Virginia, Mikie Sherrill (Navy pilot in the Middle East) and Andy Kim (adviser to the US military command, Afghanistan and Iraq director for the National Security Council), both of New Jersey and Jared Golden of Maine (Marine infantryman).

Slotkin and Lamb have indicated they will return the donations for fear their Republican opponents will

associate them with Ocasio-Cortez.

Ocasio-Cortez’s financial support for the CIA Democrats is another lesson in the futility of all efforts to transform the capitalist Democratic Party into a vehicle for progressive social reform.

By transferring funds given to her by left-wing supporters into the war chests of the CIA Democrats, Ocasio-Cortez provides an example in financial terms of the fundamental *political* dynamic of right-wing Democratic Party politics. Far from moving the Democratic Party to the left, figures like Ocasio-Cortez merely trap left-wing social opposition, disarm it, and transform it into political capital for the very establishment they claim to oppose.

Her support for the CIA Democrats undermines her claim to represent opposition to war. She is providing direct political support to individuals responsible for the US-led wars that have devastated broad swaths of the Middle East and killed over one million people in the last two decades alone.

Aside from working as a CIA agent, Elissa Slotkin was the Iraq director for the National Security Council under Barack Obama, serving as senior assistant to John Negroponte in his final government job, as director of national intelligence, with overall responsibility for all 19 US intelligence agencies.

Ocasio-Cortez’s support for a former top aide to Negroponte is significant, since Ocasio-Cortez has attempted to present herself as a defender of the rights of immigrants, even blaming “imperialism” for forcing millions to flee their homes.

Negroponte was US ambassador to Honduras from 1981 to 1985, overseeing US-backed death squad *contras* in the civil wars in Guatemala, El Salvador and Nicaragua. He is an American war criminal, responsible for facilitating genocidal campaigns against

Central American workers and peasants.

In the 2001 Senate hearings, Connecticut Senator Chris Dodd said, “Based upon the Committee’s review of State Department and CIA documents, it would seem that Ambassador Negroponte knew far more about government-perpetrated human rights abuses than he chose to share with the committee in 1989 or in Embassy contributions at the time to annual State Department Human Rights reports.”

In 2018, Negroponte issued an endorsement of his protégé’s congressional campaign: “I have seen Elissa [Slotkin] lead under extreme pressure, working on some of the toughest security challenges our nation faces. I am supporting Elissa in her run for Congress, because I believe at this time, we need more elected leaders like her—mission focused, results oriented, who put the security of our country before politics.”

Ocasio-Cortez also contributed to Conor Lamb, a former military officer and federal prosecutor. In July 2018, as the Trump administration took children out of the hands of their parents to enforce its fascistic “zero tolerance” policy, Lamb was one of several Democrats who voted for a resolution introduced by far-right Republican Clay Higgins praising Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). The resolution praised “the brave men and women who enforce our Nation’s immigration laws” and opposed calls to defund or abolish the American Gestapo agency.

The support provided by Ocasio-Cortez to Abigail Spanberger is particularly significant. In November 2020, it was the ex-CIA officer Spanberger who launched a vicious denunciation of socialism, blaming figures like Ocasio-Cortez for Democratic losses in the congressional elections. In a recorded call among House Democrats at the time, Spanberger said, “We need to not ever use the words ‘socialist’ or ‘socialism’ ever again.”

After the Democratic National Convention in 2020, Ocasio-Cortez, Senator Bernie Sanders and other “left” Democrats explained that socialist-minded voters must support the right-wing Biden campaign, promising that after his election, Ocasio-Cortez and others would fight against the right-wing of the Democratic Party.

Ocasio-Cortez advisor Corbin Trent explained at the time:

“Right now what you’re seeing is that we’ve got a common goal to beat Donald Trump, but come January,

we maybe have a different goal. They won the nomination, so they get to pick the game plan. Now, that doesn’t mean that they get to pick the game plan in the midterms, when we start primarying their a..es. And it don’t mean that they get to pick the game plan when we start recruiting for 2024 and we primary their a..es.”

This was also a fraud. Instead of fighting the right wing of the Democratic Party, Ocasio-Cortez is supporting it financially and politically. Chris Hayden, spokesman for the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee, thanked her for the recent contributions: “We appreciate Rep. Ocasio-Cortez’s ongoing commitment to a Democratic majority.”

In a March 19 interview with the DSA’s magazine *Democratic Left*, Ocasio-Cortez attacked socialist critics of the Biden administration, calling them “privileged” and “bad faith actors.” She said socialist opponents of the president are denigrating “Black and brown and undocumented” people by dehumanizing immigrants, “calling the people who are now protected from deportation ‘no one.’” In so doing, she shields the CIA Democrats from political criticism, while continuing to present herself as a socialist.

This exercise in bad faith politics typifies the historical role of the Democratic Party, which is to swallow up and then destroy any left-wing political movement that might threaten the capitalist system. A genuine socialist movement will only come in opposition to and independent of the two-party system.



To contact the WSWS and the
Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact