

War hawk Liz Cheney campaigns for CIA Democrat Elissa Slotkin

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In a campaign swing through the Midwest, one week before the November 8 midterm elections, right-wing Republican Representative Liz Cheney gave her support to two Democratic congressional candidates, Representative Elissa Slotkin, running for reelection in Michigan, and Representative Tim Ryan, who is running for an open Senate seat in Ohio.

Both Slotkin and Ryan are identified with militarist policies directed against the targets of American imperialism. Slotkin, one of the “CIA Democrats” profiled by the WSWS in 2018, was a CIA agent in Iraq during the Bush administration, then the Iraq director on the National Security Council in both the Bush and Obama White House. She then moved to a top post in the Pentagon.

Ryan is one of the most right-wing figures in the House Democratic caucus, and his Senate campaign is focused on anti-China propaganda. He has made vitriolic attacks on his Republican opponent, J. D. Vance, author of the anti-working-class memoir *Hillbilly Elegy*, because the millionaire author has invested in companies doing business in China.

Cheney appeared in Michigan Tuesday, standing side by side with Slotkin at an election rally in East Lansing, in the 7th Congressional District. East Lansing is home to Michigan State University. More than 600 people attended at the gym of East Lansing High School, in what the Slotkin campaign called “an evening of bipartisanship.”

In her first-ever endorsement of a Democratic candidate, Cheney said, “While Elissa and I have our policy disagreements, at a time when our nation is facing threats at home and abroad, we need serious, responsible, substantive members like Elissa in Congress.

“If we want to ensure the survival of our republic, we

have to walk away from politics as usual,” Cheney said. “We have to stand up, every one of us, and say we’re going to do what’s right for this country. We’re going to look beyond partisan politics.”

She added, “As a nation today, we are facing an ongoing assault by the former president and by people that are spreading his lie.”

Slotkin has a slight lead in the polls over Republican state Senator Tom Barrett in a district that voted narrowly for Trump in 2016 and narrowly for Biden in 2020. The contest is the most expensive congressional race in the country, costing an estimated \$34 million in a constituency with a population of under 800,000. Outside groups allied to the Democratic and Republican parties have poured in money, and Slotkin, whose family founded HyGrade Foods, maker of Ballpark Franks, has access to considerable resources.

In response to Cheney’s endorsement, Slotkin echoed statements by Biden calling for a strong Republican Party. “There is nothing we cannot handle when we work together,” Slotkin said. “But here’s the thing, I’m a Democrat. I can’t fix the Republican Party for them. Only they can do that. And until then, with your help, we are going to make clear that when they put up extreme candidates up and down our ballot, we will beat them...”

She gave effusive praise to the daughter of the war criminal Richard Cheney, a principal architect of the Afghanistan and Iraq wars when he was vice president in the George W. Bush administration, to say nothing of his role as Secretary of Defense in the first Gulf War under Bush’s father.

Liz Cheney herself was a strident warhawk, working in the State Department under several Republican administrations, as well as serving for a few years as a right-wing pundit on Fox News, before moving back to

Wyoming, the largely rural state where her father had been congressman from 1979 to 1989. She won the House seat for herself in 2016.

It is not just the investigation into January 6 that brings Cheney and Slotkin together. They are in fundamental agreement on the war policies of American imperialism, demonstrated by their fervent defense of the US military intervention against Russia in the war in Ukraine.

Significantly, Slotkin's Republican opponent, Tom Barrett, has used this pro-war alliance to make an appeal to antiwar sentiment, while at the same time pledging loyalty to Trump and his campaign of election denialism, claiming the 2020 election was rigged by the Democrats.

He told a campaign event in Howell, Michigan, "Elissa Slotkin and Liz Cheney prove that the political establishment has an unquenchable thirst for military engagement abroad."

Barrett is himself an Iraq War veteran, who retired from the Army this year after a 22-year career. He denounced Cheney and Slotkin, both members of the House Armed Services Committee, for failing to hold the Biden administration accountable for the disastrous US withdrawal from Afghanistan last year.

"I'm proud of my service to my country, and I never expected a day in my life after deploying for Dick Cheney's war that his daughter would come to my district in the closing days of this campaign to endorse my opponent in the race that is going to decide which party is going to control Congress," Barrett said Monday.

"We have establishment warhawks like Liz Cheney and Elissa Slotkin that are standing together today because I oppose their senseless thirst for more foreign entanglements," he said. "Congresswoman Slotkin says she would engage with China to fight a war with American troops in Asia. It's no surprise that the Cheney family would join her."

Cheney is on her way out of the Republican Party, after having been defeated for the Republican nomination for her safe congressional seat in Wyoming by a pro-Trump challenger. She has said that if the Republican Party nominates Trump for president in 2024, she will leave the party officially and become an independent.

As the Republican vice chair of the House Select

Committee investigating the attack on the Capitol on January 6, 2021, Cheney has been one of the main targets of Trump in his effort—largely successful—to purge all of his opponents from the Republican Party.

Eight of the 10 Republican representatives who voted for Trump's impeachment over the January 6 attack have either retired from Congress or been defeated in primaries, leaving only two on the November ballot, and only one who is favored to win.



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