

POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

Mastriano: threat to democracy

If Republican gubernatorial candidate Doug Mastriano is elected governor, he says he will decide who wins future elections.

In Pennsylvania, the governor chooses the secretary of state, who is the state's chief election official.



Commentary by
Thomas Hylton

Among other responsibilities, the secretary of state certifies the winner of the presidential election.

Mastriano boasted that as governor, he would appoint a secretary of state (he already has someone in mind that he won't name) "who's delegated from me the power to make the corrections to elections, voting logs, everything.

"I could decertify every machine in the state with, you know, with the stroke of a pen."

Mastriano, a state senator from south-central Pennsylvania, further said the Republican-dominated legislature should have the right to decide which electors to send to Washington if they don't like the ones the voters have chosen.

This would be the end of democracy. Yet Mastriano is deadly serious.

Back in 2020, Mastriano was Pennsylvania's leading election denier. Biden had won 80,000 more votes than incumbent Donald Trump, but Trump challenged the results in federal court.

The presiding judge, Matthew Braun, a Republican and conservative Federalist Society member, wrote that Trump's campaign presented "strained legal arguments without merit and speculative accusations." He dismissed the case.

That did not deter Mastriano.

A few days later, Mastriano appeared on the podcast of right-wing activist Steve Bannon (recently convicted of contempt of Congress). "We're going to take our power back," Mastriano pro-

claimed. "We're going to seat the electors."

Mastriano then introduced a resolution in the General Assembly to direct the secretary of state to withdraw the certification of Biden's victory and appoint new electors.

When that resolution failed, Mastriano paid several thousand dollars of his campaign funds to bus protestors to Washington for the Jan. 6 "Stop the Steal" rally in which President Trump exhorted the crowd to march to the Capitol and physically disrupt Congress from counting the electoral vote (which they did).

Mastriano was one of the crowd at the Capitol, but he didn't actually enter the building.

Can you imagine the damage this man could do as governor?

Mastriano has extreme right-wing views on other issues.

He says climate change is junk science.

He's opposed to masks and vaccinations in spite of a pandemic that has killed more than a million Americans.

He says women who violate a proposed abortion ban after six weeks should be charged with murder.

But as troubling as these beliefs are, his potential ability to make voting irrelevant is the most frightening.

This man must be defeated at the polls while voting still counts.



DOUG MASTRIANO encouraged the insurrectionists in Washington on Jan. 6, 2021.