



Written by [Steve Byas](#) on August 28, 2022

Media Attacks Mastriano Over “Confederate Uniform” Photo

CBS News is repeating a story first published by Reuters attempting to smear Doug Mastriano, the Republican candidate for governor in Pennsylvania. It appears that Mastriano, who retired from the U.S. Army with the rank of colonel, committed what CBS considers the grave sin of posing in a faculty photo at the Army War College as a Confederate soldier.

Three years before Mastriano retired — after serving 30 years in Europe, Iraq, and Afghanistan — the faculty at the Department of Military Strategy, Plans and Operations of the Army War College were given the option of donning clothes for a photograph depicting some historical figure. Mastriano opted to wear a Confederate army uniform.



AP Images
Doug Mastriano

While this may seem like a non-story to most reasonable people, Mastriano’s Democratic opponent Josh Shapiro and the left-wing media that see this as an opportunity to help the Shapiro campaign pounced on it as though it means that Mastriano is a racist. Shapiro accused Mastriano of wearing “the uniform of traitors who fought to defend slavery.” He added that the photograph was “deeply offensive,” and that Mastriano is “unfit to be governor.”

Of course, neither Shapiro nor the liberal media who are feigning horror at the photograph were all that concerned when Democratic Governor Ralph Northam of Virginia was revealed to have posed either in blackface or in a Klan outfit. Apparently, Northam got a pass because he was a Democrat.

And the story by CBS is no simple unbiased and nonpartisan “news story,” but a one-sided attempt to torpedo the campaign of state Senator Mastriano. CBS decided it was important to write that “[Mastriano] has spread Donald Trump’s lies about widespread election fraud in the 2020 presidential election and was a leading proponent in Pennsylvania of Trump’s drive to overturn the result.” And if that were not enough, CBS added, “He was also in the crowd outside the U.S. Capitol during the Jan. 6, 2021, attack by Trump supporters after attending the ‘Stop the Steal’ rally nearby.”

This is clearly guilt by association. Attending a rally — a right protected by the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution — is not a crime, even if it is down the road from someone else who did commit a crime at the U.S. Capitol. If that is the criteria for having committed a crime, then someone who happened to be present at a protest march in the summer of 2020 was guilty of a crime when violent protesters attacked cops and burned down buildings. One might not agree with the subject of their protests, but the First Amendment does not say that someone has the right to peacefully assemble for only left-wing causes.

The Army War College (AWC) predictably has removed the photo, saying “it does not meet AWC



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values.” Of course, AWC “values” are whatever their superiors in the White House deem them to be.

Jenna Ellis, a legal advisor to the Mastriano campaign, rebuked the media, saying, “Media MELT DOWN that Mastriano apparently once posed as a civil war historical figure for a photo. And? He has a Ph.D. in HISTORY.” Ellis added, “The left wants to erase history. Doug Mastriano wants us to learn from it.”

One thing that the media and Mastriano’s Democratic opponent could learn is that very few Confederate soldiers — about one million in the course of the Civil War — fought to defend slavery. Less than 10 percent owned any slaves at all, and it is difficult to believe they would risk death or dismemberment in battle to make sure their wealthy neighbor kept his slaves. Even soldiers who had a few slaves were probably not fighting to keep slavery, any more than the average Union soldier went to war to end slavery.

The average Confederate soldier fought to defend his homeland from invasion by Union armies. One can argue the issue of whether the Southern states should have seceded, but once a soldier’s state did leave the Union, he had a choice to make. He could either fight the invaders or allow the invaders to ravage his homeland.

Both President Abraham Lincoln and the Congress explicitly stated at the beginning of the Civil War that they had no purpose to abolish slavery in Southern states where it was protected by law, but were simply invading them to force them back into the Union. If the purpose of the invasion were to abolish slavery, then troops would have had to make war upon Union states in which the institution of slavery was still legal — Maryland, Delaware, Kentucky, and Missouri.

When Lincoln took office in March 1861, more slave states — eight — were still in the Union than out — seven. Only after Lincoln called for 75,000 volunteers to invade the seven seceded states did four more states — Virginia, North Carolina, Arkansas, and Tennessee — choose to secede.

These are historical facts, and the Democratic candidate for governor of Pennsylvania and his allies in the media are either ignorant of them or are simply lying for what they hope is a political advantage. Probably a little bit of both.



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