



Media, a President, and His Generals: How the Media Shaped Civil-Military Relations During the Mexican War

By Matthew N. Metzel

BiblioScholar. Paperback. Book Condition: New. Paperback. 62 pages. Dimensions: 9.7in. x 7.4in. x 0.1in. The topic of civil-military relations during the Mexican War resurfaces as an interesting historical study in the aftermath of President Obama's recent decision to relieve General McChrystal of command in Afghanistan. This review of U. S. civil-military relations during the Mexican War reveals a media wedged between President Polk and his battlefield generals. From 1846 to 1848, newspaper reports repeatedly interrupted clear communication between Polk and his military officers by exposing real and imagined seeds of distrust that emerged from dissimilar political affiliations. Ultimately, the media influenced Polk's perception that both General Scott and General Taylor sought to exploit military achievements in pursuit of Presidential aspirations. Trends in this dysfunctional relationship include the President's reliance on editorials to gauge the performance and loyalty of his Whig officers. Recent events between President Obama and General McChrystal demonstrate several similarities to the Polk scenario and provide insight for addressing tension within the system of civil-military relations. Although direct application of lessons learned from the Mexican War is not appropriate, there is value in making certain general assumptions and recommendations. These in turn offer national security practitioners a deeper understanding...



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