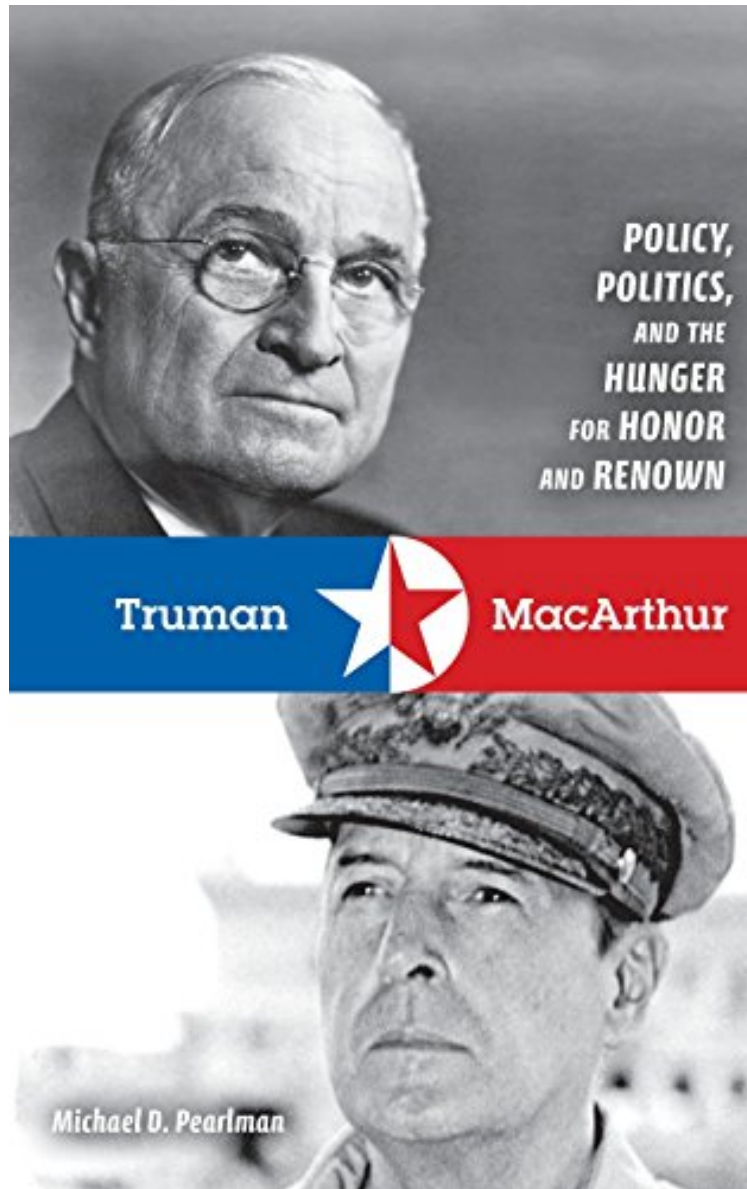


(Get free) Truman and MacArthur: Policy, Politics, and the Hunger for Honor and Renown

# Truman and MacArthur: Policy, Politics, and the Hunger for Honor and Renown

*Michael D. Pearlman*

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**Michael D. Pearlman : Truman and MacArthur: Policy, Politics, and the Hunger for Honor and Renown**  
before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Truman and  
MacArthur: Policy, Politics, and the Hunger for Honor and Renown:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Positive opinion on Truman and MacArthur book by Michael D. Pearlman  
By Jo Ballantyne  
The book is well written and is enjoyable to read. I never read much about MacArthur, but I did know that President Truman removed him from his post. MacArthur showed total his total arrogance to his president.  
3 of 7 people found the following review helpful. Very critical of Truman  
By 1.  
According to Michael Pearlman, Truman was one of the main reasons that MacArthur felt free to criticize the government and advance into North Korea and past Pyongyang. Truman had an overly romantic view of war and thought that his heroes Hannibal and Lee were constrained by civilian leaders. This view of military leadership made it possible for MacArthur to support the KMT government contrary to secretary of state Dean Acheson's wishes. Truman gave MacArthur further reign in Korea by letting him cross into the North Korean border and then close to the Yalu river. MacArthur was only stopped and eventually removed by Truman when after the Chinese invasion he suggested that KMT troops should become involved in the Korean War to a member of the Republican party, Joseph Martin. Truman felt that MacArthur was getting involved in domestic politics in which generals should avoid. The only weakness of this book is that the last fifty pages of the dragged on, but this is essential reading for those like John McCain and Robert Kaplan, who believe that the military alone should dictate military strategy.  
0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. What Took So Long?  
By John T. Kuehn  
First I need to add full disclosure-- I gave this book a very good review in Military Review, the professional magazine for the US Army several years ago and for that full review you can go to the Military Review website. It is open to the public."Truman and MacArthur focuses on relationships--between people, between institutions of the government, and between nations. In this engaging narrative of the collision of President Harry Truman with General Douglas MacArthur, author Michael D. Pearlman uses Truman and MacArthur's relationship to highlight the larger relationship between civil and military institutions in U.S. polity and the tension that naturally results. Pearlman shows how the Cold War intensified this tension and, in part, led to the most famous civil-military conflict in American history when Truman fired MacArthur in 1951. The author also makes a good case that the wonder of MacArthur's relief has more to do with why it did not happen much earlier."Why Truman did not is counterintuitive. Truman believed in second chances, he believed the President should not try to micro-manage the commander in the field (based on his study of military history, especially the Civil War), and so it was Truman's concept of civil military relations and respect for MacArthur, not a lack of respect or micromanagement, that kept him from relieving MacArthur earlier. The book makes all this very clear.  
John T. Kuehn, Professor of Military History, Fort Leavenworth KS  
Here is the opening of that review (it is public domain):

Truman and MacArthur offers an objective and comprehensive account of the very public confrontation between a sitting president and a well-known general over the military's role in the conduct of foreign policy. In November 1950, with the army of the Democratic Peoples Republic of Korea mostly destroyed, Chinese military forces crossed the Yalu River. They routed the combined United Nations forces and pushed them on a long retreat down the Korean peninsula. Hoping to strike a decisive blow that would collapse the Chinese communist regime in Beijing, General Douglas MacArthur, the commander of the Far East Theater, pressed the administration of President Harry S. Truman for authorization to launch an invasion of China across the Taiwan straits. Truman refused; MacArthur began to argue his case in the press, a challenge to the tradition of civilian control of the military. He moved his protest into the partisan political arena by supporting the Republican opposition to Truman in Congress. This violated the President's fundamental tenet that war and warriors should be kept separate from politicians and electioneering. On April 11, 1951 he finally removed MacArthur from command. Viewing these events through the eyes of the participants, this book explores partisan politics in Washington and addresses the issues of the political power of military officers in an administration too weak to carry national policy on its own accord. It also discusses America's relations with European allies and its position toward Formosa (Taiwan), the long-standing root of the dispute between Truman and MacArthur.

. . . the author has researched his subject extensively, frequently displays a fine sense of irony, and has produced probably the best study of this subject to date. February 23, 2009 (The Weekly Standard)[T]he book is among the best civil military histories to come out in the last 10 years . . . . It deserves a wide, adult readership and has my highest recommendation for military and civilian professionals of all stripes. September-October 2009 (Military) . . . this book is something of a rarity among academic publications these days: great man history, history from above. Truman and MacArthur is a reminder of just how compelling such history can be?especially in the hands of someone who knows what he is about. Michael Pearlman certainly fits the description. Summer 2009 (PARAMETERS : US Army Senior Prof Jrnl) . . . a well-researched, familiar story which provides historians with a comprehensive look into the swirl of controversy surrounding Truman's decision to remove MacArthur from command in Korea. October 2008 (Thomas W. Zeiler Journal of Military History) Michael Pearlman's timely study of the Truman-MacArthur controversy is a carefully researched and original work of scholarship that expertly illuminates the treacherous terrain of civil-military relations in the United States. Fall 2009 (Pacific Affairs) Michael Pearlman's timely study of the Truman-MacArthur controversy is a carefully researched and original work of scholarship that expertly illuminates the treacherous terrain of civil-military relations in the United States. Fall 2009 (Pacific Affairs). . . a first-rate research

effort by a distinguished historian, writing in a lively style . . . of considerable value and interest to students of the period. August 2008 (Naval War College) Pearlman's thoughtful, comprehensive survey of the intertwined relationship of "policy, politics, and personality" offers fresh insights into US military strategy, Truman's controversial Far Eastern policy, the politics of McCarthyism, and the internal and public debate over Truman's Korean War policy. Based on extensive research into accessible primary sources and the relevant secondary literature, this skillful . . . monograph is a welcome addition to the burgeoning literature on Truman's presidency and, as importantly, on the bitter political debate over Truman's limited war strategy in the conduct of the Korean War. . . . Recommended. March 2009 (Choice). . . represents a useful addition to the literature on the Korean War. (Journal of American History) Drawing on a lifetime of study and research, Michael Pearlman expertly analyzes the relationship between President Harry S. Truman and General Douglas MacArthur during the Korean War, demonstrating how policies, politics, and personalities entwined to shape their confrontation. He deftly places that confrontation within the context of grand strategy, military operations, history, culture, and domestic politics, portraying with verve and color the panorama of conflict in East Asia during a critical period of American history. (Colonel (Retired) Donald W. Boose, Jr. author of U.S. Army Forces in the Korean War.) Pearlman understands far better than most the underlying and widespread consequences of the clash between two highly motivated and somewhat egotistical giants. He rightly places the debate between MacArthur and Truman into the larger context . . . of the questions of civilian and constitutional authority, much like those being raised now about the war in Iraq. (Paul Edwards Director, Center for the Study of the Korean War) From the Publisher "Pearlman understands far better than most the underlying and widespread consequences of the clash between two highly motivated and somewhat egotistical giants. He rightly places the debate between MacArthur and Truman into the larger context . . . of the questions of civilian and constitutional authority, much like those being raised now about the war in Iraq." --Paul Edwards, Director, Center for the Study of the Korean War