



Written by [Thomas R. Eddlem](#) on June 23, 2010

CFR Gen. Petraeus Replaces CFR Gen. McChrystal

President Obama announced June 23 that he had “accepted the resignation” of Afghanistan theater commander Gen. Stanley McChrystal and will replace him with Gen. David Petraeus, who commanded the Bush-era “surge” in Iraq. The resignation was forced, essentially Washington-speak for “firing,” and a direct result of an interview McChrystal and his staff gave to Rolling Stone magazine. In that interview, McChrystal criticized President Obama as “unprepared” for their first meeting, said that U.S. Ambassador to Afghanistan Karl Eikenberry had “betrayed” him, and generally ridiculed Vice President Joe Biden.



President Obama [stressed](#) that he was firing McChrystal because of the interview:

The conduct represented in the recently published article does not meet the standard that should be set by a commanding general. It undermines the civilian control of the military that is at the core of our democratic system. And it erodes the trust that’s necessary for our team to work together to achieve our objectives in Afghanistan.

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McChrystal’s press spokesman offered his resignation several days earlier. The *Rolling Stone* article [mentioned](#) that “before President Obama put him [McChrystal] in charge of the war in Afghanistan, he spent five years running the Pentagon’s most secretive black ops.”

This is the second Afghan theater commander President Obama has fired. Obama fired Gen. David D. McKiernan in June 2009 and replaced him with McChrystal. Both McChrystal and Petraeus are [members](#) of the interventionist-oriented Council on Foreign Relations (CFR), a group of about 4,000 members who amount to a virtual *Who’s Who* in politics, finance, and academia.

Many news outlets are busy comparing Obama’s firing of McChrystal to Truman’s firing of Gen. Douglas MacArthur during the Korean War. Because this is Obama’s second command change in Afghanistan, the firing may not make Obama look decisive or appear as an impressive commander-in-chief. But it may be similar to the Korean War result in that the United States may be once again fighting a war where victory is not the goal (or, for that matter, no longer even definable).

Photo: Gen. David Petraeus



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