

Examining Perspectives: Mexican Perspective

The following selection is excerpted from a Mexican textbook on the annexation of Texas and the US Intervention in Mexico, as presented in a book titled *As Others See Us*. This book gives students and teachers the opportunity to understand US history from a different perspective. Note: this is not the only perspective which Mexican people hold about the war.

Texas was annexed to the United States by the treaty of April 12, 1844, despite the protests of our [the Mexican] government and even though the treaty was rejected by the American Congress. Thereupon the annexation of the territory [Texas] was proposed in the House and approved on March 1, 1845, which forced our Minister in Washington to withdraw. The Texans, backed by the American government, claimed that its boundaries extended to the Rio Bravo del Norte [Rio Grande], whereas in fact the true limits had never passed the Nueces River. From this [boundary dispute] a long controversy developed [during which negotiations were carried on] in bad faith by the Americans.

They ordered troops to invade places within our territory, operating with the greatest treachery, and pretended that it was Mexico which had invaded their territory, making [Mexico] appear as the aggressor. What they were really seeking was to provoke a war, a war in which the southern states of the Union were greatly interested, in order to acquire new territories which they could convert into states dominated by the slavery interests. But since the majority of the people of the United States were not pro-slavery nor favorable of a war of conquest, President Polk tried to give a defensive character to his first military moves, foreseeing the opposition which he would otherwise encounter. Once he obtained a declaration of war, Polk made it appear that he wanted nothing more than peaceful possession of the annexed territory. When at last the city of Mexico was

captured, he made his fellow countrymen understand that they would receive no other indemnity for the expenses of war and the blood spilled than a cession of territory. Thus Polk would achieve the goal he sought from the outset....

The Mexican War was a brilliant move astutely planned by the United States. The magnificent lands of Texas and California with their ports on both oceans, the gold deposits soon to be discovered in the latter state, and the increase in territory which made possible the growth of slave states compensated [the United States] many times over the costs in men and money of the unjust acquisition....

Mexican Territory Acquired by the United States, 1848

