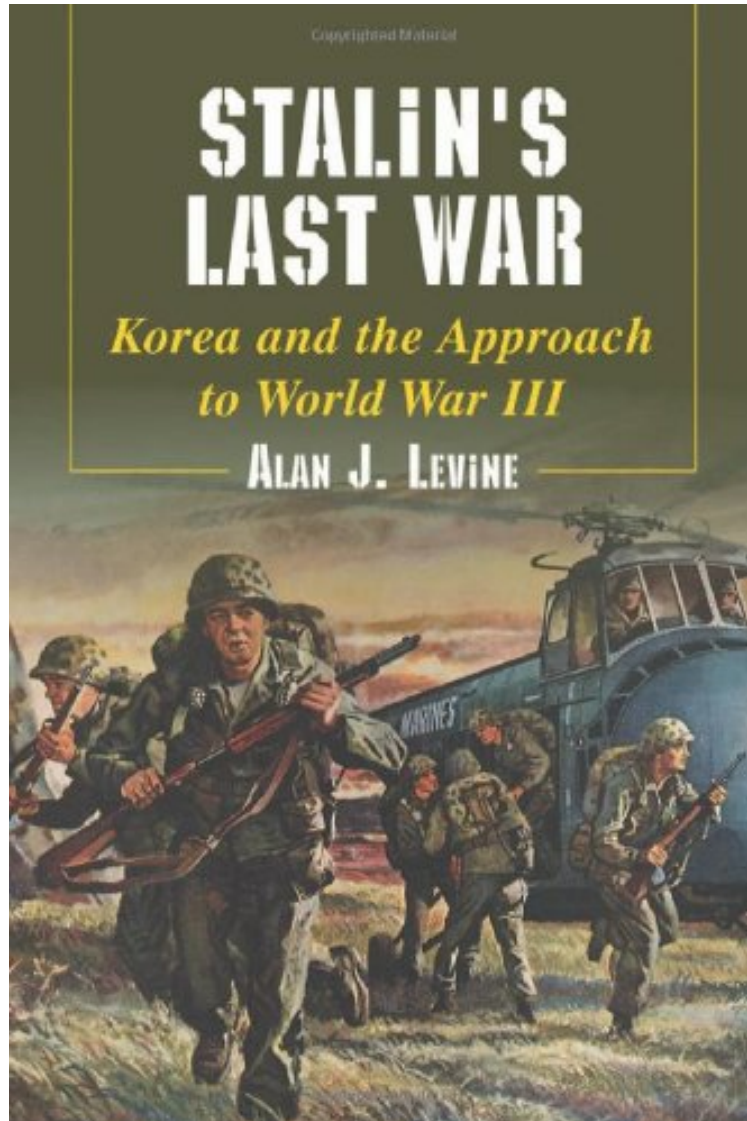


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Stalin's Last War: Korea And The Approach To World War III

Alan J. Levine

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Alan J. Levine : Stalin's Last War: Korea And The Approach To World War III before purchasing it in order to gage whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised Stalin's Last War: Korea And The Approach To World War III:

9 of 9 people found the following review helpful. Concise Overview of the Korean War and the early days of the Cold WarBy Dave SchranckMr Levine has written a terrific primer on the post WWII period that shows the machinations of Stalin in his attempt to defeat the West on his drive for World domination. Korea was just one small move on Stalin's worldwide chess board for he wanted to complete taking control of Eastern Europe, Greece, Turkey and Iran as well as

Southeast Asia. He would use China and the other Communist satellite countries in his attempt to sow discord and intimidation among the Western Allies and diffuse the US standing and power around the world. By 1950, Stalin had the Bomb and figured he could intimidate and test Truman into not intervening in Korea. And if the US did intervene, it would disperse their attention and resources away from Europe, allowing Stalin to take over Europe. If Truman allowed South Korea to be annexed then that would be the signal for Stalin to speed up his agenda. In addition to the post WWII political events, the book covers the Korean War and it does so in a military sense as well as how the country fits in with Stalin's other worldly plans. Besides Stalin, the major players in the book are: Mao, MacArthur, Truman, Ridgeway plus a host of smaller personalities. The overview of the Korean War is quite good and briefly covers all the key engagements and events. It covers the unexpected assault of the NKPA and their quick surge through the south, the Pusan perimeter, Inchon landings, the drive to the Yalu, the CCF's unexpected counterattack that drove the UN forces back below 38th parallel and the tortuous negotiations and so much more. Mao has the second largest part in this story for he had his own aggressive plans and knew the US would be a deterrent. He wanted to defeat the Americans in his own back yard where he had most of the advantages. With the US defeated in Korea, Mao could be free to take over Taiwan and Indochina and maybe even Japan. After WWII, Truman was completely involved in domestic policy and was slow to respond to the Communist threat but did react with the invasion of South Korea. The Truman administration and especially MacArthur believed China would just sit back and allow the UN forces to overrun North Korea and unite Korea into a democratic state. This clearly shows our inexperience in foreign affairs as well as underestimating Communist China. Throughout post WWII era, the Korean War and until his death in 1953, Stalin was obsessed in defeating the US in order to conquer much of the world. Mr Levine writes an informative, insightful story on all the moves and countermoves these superpowers made as their rivalry escalated. (It's too bad FDR had not survived to see the relationship his good friend "Uncle Joe" nurtured with the US). There are no maps or pictures but there is a scholarly Notes section and Bibliography. The Bibliography alone is worth the cover price; if further reading is desired you'll have an ample choice from this impressive list. If an overview of the Korean War or coverage of the early days of the Cold War is desired, this is an ideal choice to read.

Often referred to as "The Forgotten War," the Korean War was the only post-World War II combat between major powers. According to evidence provided in this study, it was also a crucial episode of the Cold War--more crucial, perhaps, than the war in Vietnam. This military and political history of the Korean War endeavors to give a fresh and less than fashionable account of the war. Utilizing both immediately postwar impressions and newly available evidence from Communist sources, it places the events in Korea into the larger framework of the early 1950s period of the Cold War. Beginning chapters discuss the escalation of early Cold War-era world events, from the final days of World War II to the first days of the Korean War, and detail the inevitability of Western intervention in the Korean conflict. The chapters that follow supply a broad account of the military aspect of the war, focusing on its "grand strategy," what is now known of the Communist side in Korea, the problems and achievements of the South Korean forces, and the often underestimated war in the air. Considerable attention is also given to matters in Europe and elsewhere, such as German rearmament and the Japanese peace treaty, that are revealed to have been not far removed from Korea. The author espouses several original theories regarding Stalin's interpretation of the Korean conflict as a preliminary phase of World War III and the probability that the Communists did intend to extend the war beyond both the confines of Korea and the armistice negotiations of 1951. Concluding commentary attributes the end of the first phase of the Cold War to the Korean armistice, but the nature of the remaining phases to the polarization of powers that was intensified by the fight for ideological dominance in Korea.

"refreshing...well worth the reader's time" --Military About the Author Alan J. Levine teaches history at Borough of Manhattan Community College. He lives in Bayside, New York.