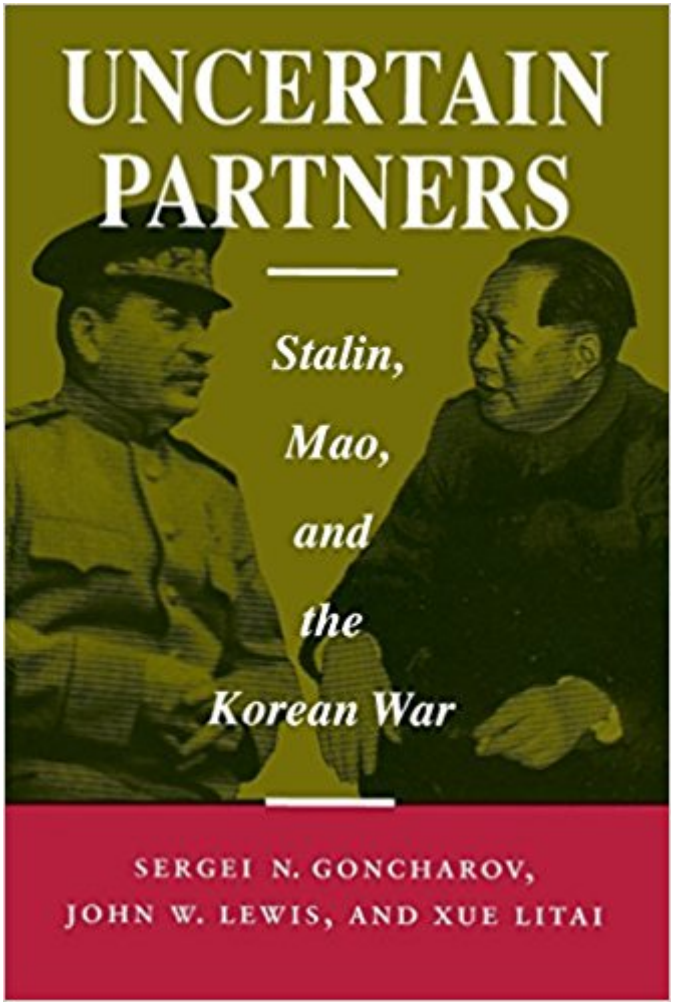
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Uncertain Partners: Stalin, Mao, And The Korean War (Studies In Intl Security And Arm Control)



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Synopsis

Uncertain partners tells for the first time the inside story of the creation of the Sino-Soviet alliance and the origins of the Korean War. Using major new documentary sources, including cables and letters between Mao Zedong and Stalin, and interviews with key Russian, Chinese, and Korean participants, the book focuses on the domestic and foreign policy decision-making in all three countries from 1945 through October 1950. The authors examine the complex relations between Stalin, Chiang Kai-shek, and Mao during the last year of the Chinese civil war and the emergence of the Cold War. They show how the interplay of perceptions, national security policies, and personalities shaped those relations and were used by the North Korean leader Kim Il Sung to win backing for the invasion of South Korea. The authors also examine the Sino-Soviet alliance, drawing on hitherto unknown secret protocols and understandings and the records of high-level planning that led to the invasion and to the Chinese intervention in Korea. The book is illustrated with 42 photographs and two maps and is the fourth volume in the series, Studies in International Security and Arms Control, sponsored by the Center for International Security and Arms Control at Stanford University.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This major scholarly study sheds important new light on the origins of the 1950-1953 Korean conflict and the Cold War in Asia. Featuring primary source material that includes cable communications

between Josef Stalin and Mao Zedong and texts of secret agreements between their governments, the book reveals that in late 1949 Moscow and Beijing were confronted with North Korean leader Kim Il-sung’s determination to attack the South; that the June 1950 invasion was directly assisted by Stalin and reluctantly backed by Mao at the Soviet dictator’s insistence; that Mao had his own forces deployed to intervene on behalf of the North Koreans weeks before the September 1950 Inchon landing. The authors conclude that the decision to declare war against South Korea and later against the U.S. cannot be ascribed soley to Kim’s adventurism, pressure from Stalin, or a conspiratorial agreement among the three communist leaders. The armed conflict came about "in bits and pieces," they argue. "It was reckless warmaking of the worst kind," and much of the documentation is published here for the first time. Goncharov is a member of the Russian ministry of foreign affairs; Lewis is a professor of Chinese politics at Stanford; Xue Litai is a research associate at Stanford. Photos. Copyright 1993 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This title, the first using newly available resources from China and Russia, represents the opening of a new era in the study of Sino-Soviet relations and their effect on international politics. The credentials of the authors are of the highest: Goncharov is a member of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, while John Lewis and Xue Litai (co-authors of China Builds the Bomb , Stanford Univ. Pr., 1988) are at Stanford University. Together they examine the delicate relations among Stalin, Chiang Kai-shek, and Mao and their approval of Kim Il Sung’s invasion of South Korea in 1950. The use of three different ways to transliterate the Chinese resources presents a problem, as does the mixture of footnotes and endnotes. These drawbacks are offset by several strong points, including the extensive references and the translations of primary documents, which appear in the appendix. Strongly recommended for any library supporting graduate programs in Sino-Soviet relations.- John Sandstrom, Houston P.L.Copyright 1994 Reed Business Information, Inc. --This text refers to the Hardcover edition.

This is a very good book about exactly what the title says. It’s well written. I learned a lot.

Slow to start but ends well

Busy people need to know the right things to read.This book is compelling and relevant to current issues as Russia, China, Japan, North Korea, Taiwan, and the US are jockeying for position in Asia

in the post Cold War years. Lewis and his co-authors examine the relationships, strategy and concerns of the key players, particularly Stalin, Mao and Kim during the post WWII years through the beginning of the Korean War. The authors, using documents made available recently from Russia and China, examine in detail these interactions, the negotiations of a new Sino-Soviet treaty and the flow of events which resulted in the particular balance between those powers in the Korean War. However, they also provide an excellent Summary chapter which tracks their key observations.The events discussed in this book are 50 years in the past. However, the political orientation of that region, originally achieved in a kind of local balance, has frozen while the major players have ev! ! olved into significantly different entities and all of the personalities have changed. This means that the strain on the relationships of the NE Asian region is becoming increasingly acute as the pressures for realignment to a new balance increase.The exercise of tracking the interplay of these strategists during the dynamic developments of the late 1940s, their concerns and priorities, sharply orients the mind to the delicate issues of balance which still exist. I recommend this book, and particularly the Summary chapter, to those who need to have the underpinnings of the NE Asian region in mind during the coming years of dynamic re orientation of the region. A clear understanding by policy makers might even result in a new balance which favors peace, democracy, stability and productive market relationships while respecting and responding to the immovable demands of territorial sovereignty, and national security required by each of these entities.Gary Stradling

Interesting book. Focuses on the evolving relationship of Mao & Stalin. Both men had immense egos. Fascinating to understand that at one time even Mao had to rule thru consensus. Stalin by 49 rules thru fear, having already had shot anyone whose consensus didn’t jive with his. But the title is misleading. The decision for war in Korea is only a factor in the last couple of chapters. These chapters are fascinating, to the point one wishes the book contained more info on the Korean war and less on the political relationship that developed from 45-49 between these two evil men.

In an overall sense, this is an outstanding book. Uncertain Partners deals with many of the issues surrounding the nations of China, Russia, and Korea immediately following WWII. The authors, a Russian presidential advisor and two Stanford political scientists, reveal and report about many of the confidential documents of Stalin, Mao Zedong and Kim Il Sung. These documents, never before seen previous to the 1990s, describe the inner-workings and deep-seeded relationship between Stalin and Mao. In many ways, Stalin and Mao were uncertain partners. The authors makes the

reader understand that Mao was simply a puppet of Stalin and his form dictatorial communism. For a greater understanding of this partnership, I would undoubtably recommend this book. Concerning the topic of Russian and Chinese relations, this book has to have profound implications. With that in mind, it's a must read.

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