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China Crosses the Yalu: The Decision to Enter the Korean War

Allen S. Whiting

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0 of 1 people found the following review helpful. Five StarsBy 3winstfVery good9 of 14 people found the following review helpful. A Flawed Work: A Perfect example of the difficulty of writing historyBy SemmelweisIn 1960, 7 years after the armistice that ended the shooting conflict, Alan Whiting wrote a detailed analysis of China's entry into the

Korean War. Based on US documents, and primarily Chinese news accounts, he concluded that US actions provoked China to worry about its security and China was only protecting its interests. But recent works, based on Chinese sources, such as "Mao's Military Romanticism: China and the Korean War", 1950-1953 (Modern War Studies) by Shu Guang Zhang and "China's Road to the Korean War: by Chen Jian, offer a totally different perspective. They both conclude that Mao wanted war with the US. Mao desired to continue the revolution, to consolidate his control over China and his belief that China deserved to be a major world power. He fervently believed that overwhelming numbers will beat a technologically superior but politically "weak" power. Whiting concluded correctly based on the research information available in 1960. Unfortunately, the information was incomplete and his conclusion was dangerously flawed. In the 1970's this text was the foundation of most history courses. It supported a general anti-US trend in academics. His conclusions are still quoted in the popular press. One advantage of living long enough is sometimes, the truth comes out. Often too late, but still interesting.

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