

## FIFTY YEARS AGO IN WORLD WAR II July-August 1945

By the midsummer of 1945, U.S. and Allied forces in Europe were transitioning to the challenging tasks of occupation duty as they sought to restore order out of chaos. Representatives of the United States, Great Britain, and Russia met in Potsdam, near Berlin, to discuss the military and political issues tied to the cessation of hostilities in Europe. Meanwhile, the full military might of the Allies could now be turned upon Japan; bombing of the home islands intensified as the destruction of the remnants of the Imperial air force allowed U.S. bombers to roam virtually at will. The U.S. Third Fleet destroyed remaining Japanese naval and air forces around the Philippine Islands in early July, and then began staging strikes against Japan itself.

These and other highlights of World War II are excerpted from Bud Hanning's excellent chronology, *A Portrait of the Stars and Stripes, Volume II*, still available for only \$50.00 from Seniram Publishing, Inc., P.O. Box 432, Glenside, PA 19038.

- 5 July General Douglas MacArthur proclaims the liberation of the Philippine Islands.
- 12 July The U.S. 6th and 32d Infantry Divisions join the 24th Infantry Division to eliminate remaining Japanese pockets of resistance on Luzon.
- 16 July The atomic bomb is successfully detonated at Los Alamos, New Mexico. The Joints Chiefs of Staff decide that its use against Japan will prevent enormous casualties and bring the war to an early end.
- 26 July The cruiser U.S.S. Indianapolis delivers an atomic bomb to Tinian Island, in the Marianas, base of a special B-29 bomber unit.
- 6 August The Enola Gay, accompanied by two observer aircraft, drops the bomb on Hiroshima at 0815 hours, from an altitude of more than 31,000 feet.
- 8 August The Soviet Union declares war on Japan.
- 9 August A second atomic bomb is dropped, on Nagasaki, Japan, while carrier aircraft pound airfields and shipping in northern Honshu and Hokkaido. On the same day, Soviet troops storm into Manchuria.
- 14 August President Truman announces that a cease-fire is in effect and that the war with Japan is over.
- 30 August The 11th Airborne Division lands at Atsugi Airfield to formally begin the occupation of Japan, while an amphibious force—composed of the 4th Marines, 6th Marine Division, American and British sailors, and Royal Marine Commandos—lands at Yokosuka Naval Base.

