

THE POSTWAR PERIOD: FIFTY YEARS AGO

November-December 1945

The end of World War II saw an almost immediate resurgence of tension, as Communist forces in China and Korea sought to assert dominance over their respective countries. Backed by arms both provided by the Allies and captured from defeated Japanese units, Chinese Communists forced confrontations with U.S. and Nationalist Chinese units, while Korean Communists protested the division of the peninsula. The closing weeks of 1945 reflected the irony of the death of General George S. Patton, who had survived the risks of combat only to die of injuries sustained in an automobile accident.

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

- 14-15 November** *Chinese communist troops clash with U.S. Marines assigned to guard a train carrying the 1st Marine Division commander, Major General DeWitt Peck. The confrontation occurs near Kuyeh.*
- 18 November** *General A. V. Arnold, Military Governor of the United States in Korea, announces the creation of a personnel review board for Korea. The seven-member board will investigate the loyalty of Korean office holders and job holders within the military government.*
- 28 November** *President Harry Truman accepts the resignation of General Patrick J. Hurley as ambassador to China and appoints General George C. Marshall, retiring Army Chief of Staff, as his special envoy to mediate the developing crisis between the Chinese Nationalists and the Communists.*
- 30 November** *Chinese Communists capture Nationalist Chinese officers in a raid behind Chinese national lines.*
- 5 December** *Congressional hearings begin, looking into General Hurley's accusations that U.S. diplomats are sabotaging U.S. policy regarding China, whose government the U.S. supports at this time.*
- 9 December** *General George S. Patton, Jr., is seriously injured when his sedan collides with an Army 2½-ton truck near Mannheim, Germany.*
- 21 December** *General Patton dies in his sleep and is buried on 24 December in Hamm, one of the largest American cemeteries in Europe, a few miles from Luxembourg.*
- 23 December** *General George C. Marshall begins peace negotiations in Chungking, China, between the Nationalist and the Communist Chinese.*
- 23 December** *The Big Three Accord—the United States, Great Britain, Russia—divides Korea between U.S. and Russian forces in a five-year trusteeship. A truce between Communist and Nationalist Chinese forces takes effect and lasts one day.*
- 29 December** *Lieutenant General Albert C. Wedemeyer, commander of U.S. Forces in China, says that American forces in China need to be increased by 4,000 to help Chinese Nationalists move into Manchuria.*
- 31 December** *The Koreans denounce the "trusteeship" between U.S. and Russian forces.*