Injuring thousands of civilians, the news was doubly shocking. From all indications, Nazi Germany was at a point of near collapse. Allied armies were sweeping across Germany and would soon be at the gates of Berlin itself. If the European War wasn’t over it was clearly on the brink of its last gasp, or so everyone believed. As for the U-Boats that had once brazenly marauded in sight of American coastal beaches, they had made few recent attacks. Bolstering this premise were consistent waterfront rumors that the Navy was about to discontinue much of its coastal anti-submarine patrol effort.

It was these attitudes and others like them that Ingram was determined to scotch. The Atlantic War was not over, he insisted, and Americans were becoming far too complacent for their own good. Germany was down, but not out, Ingram warned. Hitler still had plenty of tricks up his sleeve, like the jet-powered fighters that were beginning to exact a high toll from Allied bomber formations. Terror weapons were Hitler’s last hope of allowing Germany to be able to negotiate some semblance of acceptable peace terms other than the unconditional surrender demanded by the “Big Three” Allied leaders. As Hitler’s rocket bombs struck fear into the heart of every Londoner because of their random killing, so, too, would they fall on New York City.

The specter of submarine-launched missiles with one-ton explosive warheads falling into the heart of Manhattan was almost impossible to believe.

New Yorkers had lived with the tragic effects of the Atlantic War since well before Pearl Harbor. The sight of grotesquely damaged, fire blackened warships was nothing new at East Coast shipyards. The Brooklyn Navy Yard had seen it all and few were the American beaches upon which the body of an Allied seamen had not washed ashore. But the neon lights were still glowing bright on New York’s Great White Way and no citizen of the “Big Apple” had experienced the devilish whine of a rocket bomb screeching out of the sky into an office building, theater, church, home, hospital, or...