

# DESTROY NEW YORK!

EARLY IN 1945, A HIGH-RANKING NAVY ADMIRAL SCARED THE WITS OUT OF EIGHT MILLION NEW YORKERS WHEN HE PREDICTED NAZI U-BOATS CARRYING ROBOT BOMB "WONDER WEAPONS" WERE HEADING TO ATTACK AMERICA'S LARGEST CITY. THE ANNOUNCEMENT WOULD SET OFF A SUBMARINE HUNT THAT WOULD BE THE DRAMATIC CLIMAX TO THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC

BY OWEN GAULT



"We are to carry out operations to search, discover, attack, and destroy enemy seaborne platforms for launching robot bombs"

VICE ADMIRAL HERBERT F. LEARY  
COMMANDER, EASTERN SEA FRONTIER

Had the announcement that German rocket bombs were about to fall on the City of New York come from anyone other than Adm. Jonas H. Ingram, the statement might have been totally disregarded as an absurd impossibility. Vice Admiral Ingram was a highly-acclaimed naval authority; a man with an unblemished career that had helped to shape the Navy's awesome anti-submarine operations into a cohesive force that had all but rid the Atlantic of Hitler's U-boat menace. What's more, as CINCLANT Ingram was Commander-in-Chief of the Atlantic Fleet, a most exalted position in the wartime naval hierarchy. When Ingram spoke everyone listened, including the press.

The bone-chilling news that swept the headlines of every major metropolitan newspaper was Ingram's Washington press conference of 8 January 1945. In a voice somber with ominous portent, Ingram boldly stated that he had good reason to believe Nazi Germany would soon attempt to launch rocket bombs from U-boats against American cities on the Eastern seaboard; namely, New York and its surrounding industrial centers. The source of his information was secret reports gleaned from captured spies and reliable espionage agencies, primarily ONI and the OSS, forerunner of today's CIA.

With every American all too well aware of the V-1 and V-2 rockets or "buzz bombs" that daily rained down on London and Antwerp killing or 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

Mad for retaliation against America's massive bombing attacks on Germany, Hitler viewed New York City as a prime target. The German dictator knew he could not mount a sustained attack but he realized that if one of his "wonder weapons" could somehow strike the city, then it would be a major blow that would cause panic among the civilian population. Besides the city itself, there was the Brooklyn Navy Yard with 70,000 workers, wooden minesweepers being built on City Island, PT Boats from Bayonne, and Staten Island's destroyer production so the area was a legitimate war target.

Unlike Hitler's famous photo against the Eiffel Tower in a surrendered France, there was no chance he would ever be able to have his portrait taken against the New York City skyline.

