

Dastardly Plot

written by Gary Kuhn | November 21, 2019



Airplanes have been used during formal peacetime in terrorist attacks. Even if the scale was small, some dramatic incident had the potential to be the catalyst for a revolutionary movement. Various aircraft at Miami are alleged to have been involved in plots, usually not carried out. The presidential palace at Port-au-Prince, Haiti was targeted by a North American B-25 “Mitchell” and also by a Lockheed Constellation acting as a bomber! Less known is a scheme revealed in the book *“Breve Resumo de Aerovias Brasil e outras Historias”* authored by Carlos Affonso Migliora (Rio de Janeiro, 1996.)

A pilot for Aerovias Brasil, an airline which in the 1940s made stops at the Dominican Republic on flights to Miami, married the daughter of dictator Rafael Trujillo’s chief of police. Years later, in 1959, an intense rivalry had developed between the Dominican leader and Rómulo Betancourt, the newly-elected democratic President of Venezuela. Money from Ciudad Trujillo supported a conspiracy designed to trigger a coup in Caracas.



North American B-25J, FAB-70, of the Brazilian Air Force. (Photo credit: Action Editora Collection.)

Six North American B-25 bombers, newly acquired by the Brazilian government, were to “disappear” from Belem in Northern Brazil, and flown to a secret airstrip being built in the extreme Northwest of the country (near Pico da Neblina, nearly 10,000 ft. elevation), directly South of Venezuela. There the B-25s would be painted in the colors of the *Fuerza Aérea Venezolana*. The supposed defecting rebel aircraft were to fly North to bomb the Aeronautical School in Caracas! The hope was to trigger a retaking of power by the recently displaced Venezuelan Armed Forces. There would not be enough fuel in the heavily-loaded bombers to return South, nor North to the Dominican Republic. In fact, their desperate plan hoped them to reach the island of Trinidad. Shades of Jimmy Doolittle!

The Brazilian pilots, supported by Dominican funds, held many planning meetings. The scheme was only abandoned when its leader became involved with an attractive Brazilian stewardess. His wife returned to her father in Ciudad Trujillo, the money stopped coming, and the amorous instigator had to avoid hitmen sent his way. If only all terrorist schemes likewise failed!