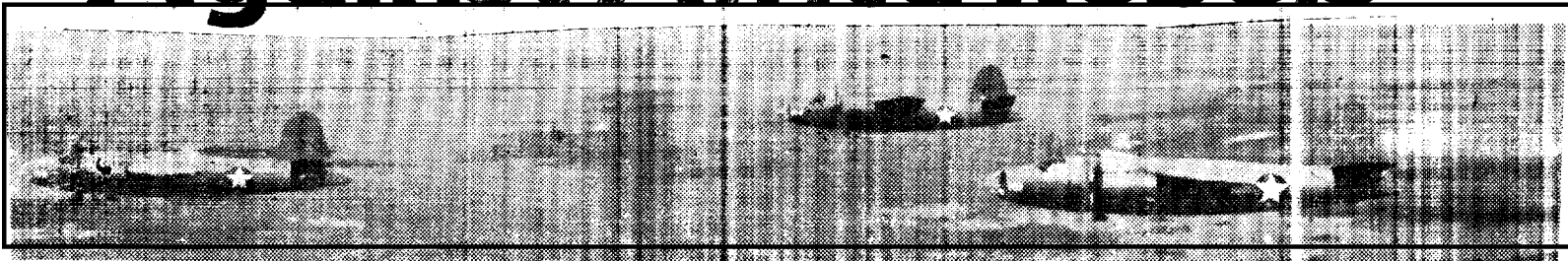


Files Show CIA Helped Portugal Get B-26's Against Africa Rebels

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B-26: U.S. Air Force bombers

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BUFFALO, N. Y. — Complicity of the highest U.S. government agencies in the secret sale of seven B-26 bombers to Portugal was officially admitted here last week in Federal Court. The admission was made at the trial of John R. Hawke, a British pilot now

living in Florida and Count Henri Marie Francois de Marin de Montmarin, a French airplane broker, charged with violation of the Munitions Control Act, which forbids export of military planes to a foreign country without a State Department license.

Edwin Marger, Hawke's attorney, has contended throughout the trial that the sale and flight of the bombers was a secret operation of the Central Intelligence Agency.

On a motion made by Marger, Lawrence R. Houston, general counsel of the CIA, opened the CIA's files for the court's inspection. These documents showed that the CIA was involved in the conspiracy to sell the bombers to Portugal and that the sale was known beforehand to the U.S. Defense Department, the Navy, the Air Force, the Army, the Joint Chiefs of Staff and 10 other federal agencies.

The planes were reportedly to have been used by Portugal to crush uprisings in her colonial territories of Angola and Mozambique.

Houston's statement was made following the testimony of Martin Caiden, aviation writer and former consultant to several Federal agencies, who charged that the CIA had been directly involved in the sale.

This was a direct contradiction of the Government's previous contention that the transaction was a private and illegal one.

Despite the fact that sales of military material are in violation of the Federal Munitions Control Act, Caiden said, he had been assured in conversations with Gregory H. Board, owner of a plane-leasing service and the man responsible for carrying out the transaction, that the flights of the planes to Portugal had been worked out in cooperation with the CIA. The defense has claimed that the flights to Portugal were not secret, and that flight plans and customs clearances had been obtained for all seven of the bombers.

Caiden also testified that he had discussed CIA participation in the project with several intelligence officers of the U.S. Air Force. He quoted one officer, Col. Charles Callahan of Patrick Air Force Base in Florida, as saying that "another government agency is involved in the case."

Following the arrest of Hawke and de Marin, Caiden stated, he was told by another Air Force colonel to "lay off the case" and to "stop putting on pressure."

"You just don't fly military aircraft out of the U.S. without some form of cooperation," Caiden

He charged that at one time Hawke, trying to land one of the bombers in Washington, had flown directly over the White House. Though this is strictly forbidden, he went on, "no violation was ever filed against him." He said that he found this "incredible . . . based on my experience as a pilot."

One of the documents, dated May 25, 1965, indicated that the CIA had been aware of the pending flights four days before the first B-26 took off for Portugal. It contained data, apparently gathered in Lisbon, that the Portuguese Government had purchased "about 20 B-26 aircraft from a private firm . . . which are flown from a base in Texas to Canada where they are modified for extra fuel tanks to fly the Atlantic via an unknown refueling base."

(Previous testimony has established that Hawke flew the first bomber from Tucson to Rochester on May 29, and from there flew on to Portugal.)

Under further questioning Houston admitted that the information contained in the document had been sent to the various government agencies mentioned above.

Late last week, in response to renewed charges by a Hungarian delegate to the UN,

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U.S. denied that it had violated a previously signed pledge not to sell military supplies to Portugal.

Last December the charge had first been made by Zoltan Szilagi of the Hungarian delegation, that the U.S. was violating its own laws as well as treaties of the UN by permitted shipment of the seven B-26 bombers to Portugal.

Szilagi quoted at that time a statement made the previous month by the U.S. delegate which asserted that in regard to "... the question of the supply of arms to Portugal, the United States has, for some time, ... felt that arms supplied to Portugal for use in its overseas territories might well contribute to increased friction, tension and danger. With these considerations in mind, the U.S. has, for a number of years, forbidden the provision of arms or military equipment from public or private sources . . .

"... The U.S. has also prohibited direct export of arms and military equipment to the Portuguese territories."

Szilagi continued; "I will confine myself . . . to drawing the attention of this Committee to the information supplied by a conservative British paper, the Daily Sketch. Mr. John Hawke, former officer of the Royal Air Force, confessed that, commissioned by a competent U.S. authority, he smuggled lately seven B-26 bombers to a military airfield near Lisbon.

"I am sure that the distinguished representative of the U.S. can supply our Committee with all the further details concerning this matter. Let me ask whether such activities do or do not fall under the category of 'direct export' referred to in the above-quoted speech of the U.S. representative."