



## Nationalist Heroines

*Olga Jimenez De Wagenheim*

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## **Nationalist Heroines** Olga Jimenez De Wagenheim

"A group of Nationalists led by Pedro Albizu Campos made it clear that they would free Puerto Rico from colonial rule. A confrontation between the Nationalists and the colonial police in October 1935 left four Nationalists dead. Albizu Campos and seven of his aides were convicted on seditious charges and sent to a federal prison in Atlanta, Georgia. His followers attempted to hold a demonstration in Ponce, Albizu Campos' hometown, and were gunned down by the police: nineteen were killed and more than one hundred and fifty were wounded. Eight Nationalists then attempted to kill Governor, Blanton Winship. Back in Puerto Rico in 1947, Albizu Campos began to plan for a revolution, which he launched on October 30, 1950. A commando unit of five attacked the Governor's residence while others assaulted police stations in half a dozen cities and towns throughout the island. One woman (Doris Torresola) was shot while protecting her leader. The same day Blanca Canales was one of three to lead the revolt in Jayuya. Two days later, two Nationalists, residents of New York, attempted to kill, President Truman at Blair House, his temporary residence. Massive arrests followed and forty-one women were detained on suspicion they had conspired with the rebels. Two of the fifteen women indicted were sentenced to life in prison. Then, on March 1, 1954, another woman (Dolores Lebraon) led three male companions in the attack of the U.S. House of Representatives where five congressmen were shot for keeping Puerto Rico in bondage. Historians have largely overlooked the roles of these Nationalist women. Now the book, *Nationalist Heroines: Puerto Rican Women History Forgot, 1930s-1950s* seeks to rescue the stories of the women who gave up their freedom in search of freeing their homeland"--Provided by publisher.

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