

LIBYA-BRAZIL ARBP 20(5)**Arms Planes Returned** 15/6/83

The impasse which held four Libyan aircraft grounded in Brazil for more than a month after it was discovered they were carrying arms for Nicaragua and not medical supplies as stated, has been resolved. Brazil has finally agreed that the arms can return to Libya in the aircraft which brought them.

This has hitherto been strongly opposed by the Air Force, which has very close links with the United States. But the view of the Foreign Ministry, equally concerned with the maintenance of links with the Third World, has finally prevailed.

There has been great concern in Brazil

that the incident might endanger Brazilian arms sales to Libya, the main customer for armoured cars, bombs and rockets.

With an order for 100 trainer aircraft worth £100m now at risk Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, the Libyan leader, has blown hot and cold on the issue, initially saying he had not known about the arms, but later accusing Brazil of being subservient to the United States.

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West Germans Released

Eight West Germans, who have been in prison in Libya since April, have been released and returned on May 15th to Frankfurt Airport. Meanwhile, two Libyans who went on trial in Germany on charges of torturing fellow-Libyans in the Libyan People's Bureau last November have been expelled in what appears to be a concession to Libyan demands for a swap.

The eight Germans, who were detained on unspecified charges of spying, said on

arrival that they had been well treated, and appeared to be in good health. Herr Jurgen Mollemann, State Secretary in the Foreign Ministry, flew to Libya last month to discuss their case with Major Jalloud, the Libyan deputy leader.

The exchange has caused considerable concern in Germany in case it sets an unhealthy precedent and exposes West Germany to blackmail by any country whose citizens are arrested in Germany.

The two accused Libyans, Dr. Mustapha Zaidi and Mr. Abdulla Yamia, had already appeared in court and heard charges that they had threatened dissident Libyans with forcible return to Libya.

Last weekend Bonn also expelled a Libyan who was serving a sentence of life imprisonment for the murder of a former Libyan diplomat. He was sent back to Tripoli and exchanged for four Germans who had already spent many years in prison in Libya on various convictions.

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