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AIRCRAFT INTELLIGENCE

LOADING METHODS for two purposes are shown. The twin-boom machine is the latest Fairchild
XC-120 and has been dubbed Sky Trailer because the cargo compartment can be fitted with
wheels and—minus its nose and tail—can be used like its highway counterpart. Seen jacked up
at Edwards Air Force Base to receive a Bell X-1 supersonic research aircraft in its bomb bay is
a Boeing B-SO. In early tests B-29s were used for air-launching the X-1, but the B-50, with its turbo-supercharged Wasp Major engines, permits a higher release-altitude.

Great Britain

Slingsby Grasshopper. The name Grass-
hopper has been conferred by the Air
Council on the Slingsby primary sailplane
as used by the Royal Air Force.

de Havilland Export Fighters. The first de Havilland Venom N.F.2 night fighter of a substantial order from Sweden is now on test. It will shortly be followed by the first of a batch of Vampire 52s destined for Finland and bearing swastika markings. From Venezuela it is learned that a Vampire Trainer has now been assembled there. This machine is non-standard in having refrigeration equipment.

Auster Cirrus Autocar. Four of the latest spraying versions have been bought by the Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations; they will be oper-ated in Kenya by the Desert Locust Con-trol. The order follows a series of highly successful tests in which spray-equipped Aiglets were used to attack locust swarms; an Autocrat was also employed to spot the swarms and report them to the spraying aircraft. Ground parties reported that the proportion of locusts killed per swarm was usually as high as 99 per cent. Powered by Cirrus Major III engines of 155 h.p. the Autocars are single seaters, space normally

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taken by the other three seats being occupied by a 70-gallon insecticide tank.

U.S.A.

Boeing KB-47. Projected under this desig-nation is a tanker version of the Boeing B-47B six-jet bomber. Conversion kits, one for the Boeing flying-boom technique, the

other for the probe-and-drogue method, will permit quick transformation from bomber to tanker.

Cessna L-19 (turbine-powered). Illustrated in Flight of November 21st, the Cessna XL-19B liaison aircraft, powered with a Boeing 502-8 turboprop, has now com-pleted about 20 hours' flying. Following the present trials a Turbomeca Artouste, a reduction gear for which is being made by the Continental engine company, will be installed in an L-19C.

Bell XHSL-I. Specifically designed for anti-submarine operations, this twin-rotor helicopter is due to fly early in the New Year. The engine is a Pratt and Whitney R-2800 and the aircraft will carry not only search radar but special anti-submarine weapons. The blades of the rotors will fold for shipboard stowage. This is particularly important because the XHSL-i is designed to operate from cruisers and other medium-sized vessels, as well as from small aircraft carriers. A commercial development, capable of carrying about 20 passengers and of cruising at 120 m.p.h., is envisaged.

Lockheed Super Constellation. Commer-cial orders for this "stretched" version now total 96, of which 24 are in service. The makers report that production is assured well into 1954. The airlines concerned are K.L.M., Air France, Eastern Air Lines, Air India, T.C.A., Qantas, Braathens S.A.F.E., Aeronias Nacionales de Colom-bia, Iberia, Pakistan International and Lineas Aeropostal Venezolana. As reported on page 15 of this issue, K.L.M. will be the first company to operate the compound-engined version; four of K.L.M.'s order for 13 Super Constellations will be fitted out as 94-seaters for emigrant traffic.

France

S.N.C.A.S.E. Sea Venom. The first de Havilland Sea Venom built for the French Navy by the Societe Nationale de Con-structions Aeronautiques du Sud-Est made its first flight at Marignane some weeks ago and is now being evaluated by L'Aero-Navale. The French Navy roundels, which are similar to those of L'Armee de l'Air but have a superimposed anchor, are painted on the sides of the nacelle forward of the cockpit.

Nord 3501. This type number has been assigned to a turboprop development of the Nord 2501 military transport, designed along Fairchild Packet lines. The main power units will be two Bristol Proteus 705s, and two Turbomeca turbojets will be installed as auxiliaries.