

# French Buy 600 Planes, Deny Getting U. S. Secrets

Only Saw Craft  
Available for Paris,  
Embassy Says;  
Deplores 'Mystery'

The French air mission has purchased "a minimum" of 600 new-type war planes from four American manufacturers, a French embassy spokesman said last night, emphatically denying that any United States military secrets had been revealed.

Col. Rene P. G. Weiser, air attache at the embassy, said contracts have been signed for bombers, pursuit ships and training planes, and that each agreement contains options under which the French air ministry may enlarge the orders. Asked if any military secrets were revealed to the air mission, Col. Weiser declared:

"Absolutely not. Everywhere we went we were very carefully guided away from shops where new work was under way. We saw only what we were sold."

## Why Get a Jazz Band

The French official revealed that the mission, the activities of which have been the subject of a Senate investigation, sailed for home last night. Declaring he would like to dispel the so-called "mystery" which has been thrown around the group, the air attache said it had carried on its work in the same manner as any other buyer with millions to spend.

Later another embassy source indicated that the orders include 100 Douglas and 115 Glenn Martin bombers, 200 North American planes, which it is understood will carry bombs, and 200 Curtiss Hawks, of which 100 were ordered last June.

The Douglas bombers, he added, are similar to the plane which crashed in California some weeks ago with a member of the French mission aboard and revealed the presence of the mission to the public, but will contain some modifications.

The mission, said Col. Weiser, "has merely been discreet. When you are entering into an important contract, do you provide yourself with a jazz band to attract attention? The mission, like any other purchaser, had to be protected against those who wanted to sell what we did not want."

## Apprehensions "Unfounded"

Col. Weiser declared all of the apprehensions of secret dealings and understandings between the American and French governments were unfounded.

"Having had no information of the existence of the mission, public opinion in this country was wrongly alarmed when suddenly it heard of it officially," he declared. "They imagined the worst—secret dealings and arrangements. All of this is wholly unfounded and untrue. The situation is as follows:

"France wished to buy good aeronautical material. Having already had experience with some Curtiss planes which she bought early in 1938, she immediately thought of the United States. The American Government, wishing to improve and develop its aviation industry, and finding that it would not impede production for its own requirements and would not compromise its military secrets, gave permission to France to inspect certain planes which met their requirements.

"Under those conditions, the French mission has completed its work and leaves New York for home on the S. S. Roosevelt tonight."

## Whereabouts Detailed

Col. Weiser said the mission really was composed of two parts, the officials who negotiated the contracts and the technical experts who came later and will remain until the planes are ready for delivery. The first group, he said, was composed of Messrs. Monet, R. Hoppenot and Mazer, Col. Jacquin and

Capt. Paul Chemidlin. Mazer, he stated, went back to Paris two weeks ago, while the others, except Capt. Chemidlin, are on the high seas. The latter, he explained, is still in the hospital in Los Angeles recovering from injuries suffered in the California crash.

The second group is now in Washington, Col. Weiser revealed. It consists of engineers from the French air ministry, who will remain to supervise the installation of instruments and equipment and study methods of equipping the planes with French-made armament. He stressed that the planes will have French bombs and guns.

"I wish you would say," he continued, "that the French mission was very much impressed with the high rate of production of American plane factories."

## Glenn Martin Explains

Baltimore, Feb. 14 (AP).—Glenn L. Martin, while declining comment on reports the French government had ordered \$20,000,000 worth of war-planes from him, said today his plant was being expanded.

"We are employing more men and we are creating more parking space for automobiles and making some other improvements," he said.

*M. Mallet-*

*This which*

*give this*

*apparently American*

*figures of the*

*aircraft bought*

*by the French*

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*20 in total up.*

*No. 258, Mar. 3 ref.  
on disp. No. 23, Jan 3  
Feb. ref.*

*Yes. 15.2. Mar 3  
H.A. or W.M. 15/2*

*27/2*

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