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1935

ETHIOPIA

The principal story today is a real live, red hot mystery. The big question is: "Who bought that Ethiopian oil?" Half the world seems to be engaged today, busily denying it. Francis M. Rickett, the man who got the concession from Haile Selassie, says he's working with one hundred per cent American money. But everybody in the oil business in America steadfastly denies having anything to do with it. Indeed, all those questioned have repudiated with considerable indignation the suggestion that they would even contemplate anything so embarrassing to the government of their own country.

~~It wasn't only in~~

It wasn't only in Uncle Sam's ~~country~~ <sup>domain</sup> that denials were in order. John Bull just as eagerly and hastily disclaimed having anything to do with it. Indeed, His Majesty's Government has started a vigorous investigation into this Fifty million dollar deal at Addis Ababa. Downing Street professes to be just as embarrassed and surprised as anybody else. But <sup>in</sup> Italy the accusation is being freely made that this English disclaim <sup>or</sup> is not strictly on the up and up. <sup>It</sup> But the suggestion current in Rome is that Francis M.

47

Rickett actually is a British agent. The idea is that the oil transaction is an attempt to bluff Mussolini out of his Ethiopian plans, a veiled threat that in a war of conquest he would have to reckon with not only John Bull but Uncle Sam.

However, ~~Down~~ Downing Street is showing every reasonable symptom of sincerity in the matter. The British Government announces that no British subject will be permitted to negotiate such a transaction. To make it still more emphatic, the British authorities declare: "Any British subject who engages in commercial ventures in Ethiopia at this time will do so without the sanction or protection of His Majesty's Government." They can hardly put it stronger than that.

The one man who is enjoying the situation is His Imperial Majesty, the King of Kings. Perceiving that this deal has put everybody in an awkward spot, he is using it for all it's worth. The deal stands, he says, and it's nobody's business but his own. It is a contract that concerns Ethiopia, it is strictly a domestic, Ethiopian matter, <sup>says he,</sup> and he cordially invites the other Powers to keep out and not to meddle. That's his reply to the formal protests

78

from not only the British but also the French and Italian diplomats.

Haile Selassie also continues to maintain that the buyer of that concession is the Standard Oil Company. ~~It is hardly necessary~~ <sup>still</sup> ~~to add that~~ the Standard Oil Company not only denies the accusation but protests vigorously.

The individual who has caused all this rumpus has hitherto been a man of mystery. He is described as the Basil Zaharoff of petroleum. Until the other day, he was unheard of so far as the general public was concerned. But diligent inquiry has turned up the fact that he is known in the oil industry. Few people in this country have met him, but they say he is one of the greatest oil promoters in the world today.

Personally, Frances M. Rickett is a heavy-set, jovial, smiling Englishman, about forty years old. ~~He is~~ <sup>is</sup> good-natured, smart, and shrewd. He is married, has three children, and lives in a luxurious apartment in the Chelsea section of London. ~~He is~~ But his family ~~do~~ <sup>do</sup> son't see much of him because he is always on the hop. That is literally true, because he travels everywhere by plane. He flies to Egypt, to Ethiopia, to Arabia, and other parts of the world

79

where John Bull owns territory <sup>as has interests.</sup> His journeys are always conducted in a mysterious fashion. All this lends considerable color to the statement that Rickett actually is an important agent in the British Secret Service, and not an oil promoter or a private individual at all.

He is a fellow of inexhaustible energy. A good part of his time ~~is~~ is occupied in negotiating with the government and business interests of other nations. And people who have seen him in action say that his tact and diplomacy are <sup>equalled only by his</sup> ~~equal to anybody's~~ tenacity. He never quits until he gets what he wants.

Oil men in this country profess to know extremely little about the mysterious Rickett. Nevertheless, he has been in the United States frequently. But he has come in and out so inconspicuously that no ship news reporter remembers ever having interviewed him. He is exceedingly cagey about his oil interests. Even his wife declares she knows hardly anything about his business. All these things help to build up the rumor that he is a British secret agent.

50  
You may recall that some months ago I told you about the thousand mile pipe line that was ~~being~~ <sup>and put in operation</sup> built in the oil country of

Iraq. Well, it turns out now that Rickett was the man who negotiated that deal. That pipe line is the longest in the world. It brings oil all the way across the North Arabian Desert from Mesopotamia to Palestine, where it is loaded into British, American and French tankers. The line cost Fifty million dollars, but it is only now that we've learned who put the deal over. Mr. Man Rickett kept in the background and his name never appeared in any of the stories at the time.

One circumstance which discredits the idea that he is a secret agent is that he is ~~xx~~ exceedingly wealthy. Secret agents as a rule are not well paid. Rickett has a magnificent country estate in Berkshire. He is also Master of Fox Hounds of the famous Craven Hunt. You can't be M.F.H. in England without having plenty of guineas and Pounds Sterling.

Incidentally, a member of the English peerage, Lord Kysland, was convicted and sentenced to prison recently for fenagling the finances of the Royal Mail and White Star Steamship Companies. And, it was Rickett who bought Lord Kysland's castle

in Pembrokeshire when His Lordship went to the jug - or to Quad, as they call it in England.

Well, this Master of Fox Hounds just now seems to be out-foxing the statesmen of Europe. And, the truth of the whole situation seems to be more elusive than any fox.

And yet one London newspaper declines to take this affair seriously. The "Financial News", which is comparable to our own "Wall Street Journal", says the deal between Rickett and the Emperor of Ethiopia is not particularly significant. Good news copy, says the "Financial News", but it doesn't amount to much in a business way. But that view doesn't seem to be shared by any members of His Majesty's government.

ADD ETHIOPIA

2  
1

Meanwhile a cable from London <sup>gives the dramatic, perplexing word</sup> ~~indicates~~ that hostilities have begun, sooner than anybody expected. Rumor <sup>has it by way of</sup> ~~comes from~~ London that the Duce's men have already started their invasion of Ethiopia. According to that, a thousand Italian troops, reinforced by fifteen hundred native auxiliaries, crossed the frontier, driving the Ethiopians before them. The London story had it that Haile Selassie's subjects were fleeing from all villages in the line of march.

However, the rumor was promptly denied in Rome. No hostile movements have begun yet, says the Italian war office. And there's another fishy item in the story. It reports the invasion as taking place, not on the Italian border, but at a place on the border of French Somaliland. So <sup>maybe</sup> ~~evidently~~ the yarn was just made out of whole cloth.

ICKES

The dreadful accident that killed Mrs. Harold Ickes claimed another victim today. Frank Allen of Gallup, the taxi driver who <sup>was</sup> at the wheel when the car crashed, died in <sup>the</sup> hospital this morning. He never regained consciousness for a single instant since the smash. That made it difficult for the authorities to construct an explanation of the accident. The chauffeur obviously was the only one who knew exactly what happened. Those who recovered hadn't the faintest idea what had happened until they came to, lying in a ditch in the over turned car.

53  
This tragedy in the family of the Secretary of the Interior has cast a cloud of gloom over the official world in Washington.

Mr. Ickes himself is in Chicago preparing for his wife's funeral. It was there that he learned of the death of Allen. Mrs. Ickes was quoted as having said that Allen was the best automobile driver in the world. All of which helps to make the affair a mystery as well as a shock.



LONG

The results of Huey Long's filibuster are showing up sooner than expected. So say the critics of the King-Fish. Families on the relief rolls in New York City will be the first to suffer from his tactics in talking the Deficiency Appropriation Bill to death. It was thought at first that his filibuster would mainly affect the beneficiaries of President Roosevelt's Social Security measure. And in their case it would mean only a four months delay. But the consequences are immediate.

Mr. Hodson, Public Welfare Commissioner of New York, made an announcement today. He says that all people who have been receiving relief checks of thirty-five dollars a month will have to take a cut. The checks will be reduced by two dollars. This becomes necessary because funds are running low. The relief authorities needed the money that would have been made available by the Appropriation bill that the Kingfish killed. So Mr. Hodson is obliged to decrease the allowances of some twenty-four thousand aged people in New York City.

There have been rumors that ~~Mr. Long~~<sup>Huey</sup> had damaged his political future by his actions on the last day of Congress. However, it may be observed that residents of New York City don't vote in Louisiana.

L.T. SUNOCO. MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 1935.

~~GOOD EVENING EVERYBODY:~~

~~An ominous~~ warning was issued today by William Green, President of the American Federation of Labor. He was making his annual Labor Day speech at Canton, Ohio. On this occasion, the big chief of organized labor in America evidently was in gloomy temper. He ~~says~~ sees no hope for the future unless the hours of the working man are reduced. In other words, the only solution of the problems facing us today are to spread the work systematically. Says Mr. Green: "The army of unemployed we have with us today will be with us forever unless we shorten the working day." A thirty-hour week and a higher minimum wage. That's the platform of the American Federation of Labor. If it's not adopted by the country at large, the relief rolls will just go on and on to the end of time, *says the head of the A. F. of L.* Mr. Green ~~evidently~~ <sup>says</sup> has his entire Federation behind him in this attitude. "Labor makes its choice", he declared. "It wants to see men and women at work, not standing around idle as wards of the government."

He drew a <sup>solemn</sup> gloomy picture of what has happened since the Supreme Court killed the Blue Eagle. "Since the N.R.A. was declared unconstitutional," <sup>says he,</sup> "employers have cut the pay of more than five million workers, reduced their wages and increased their working hours." He claims that code standards have broken down all over the country. The provisions of the N.R.A. are now being ignored in more than twenty thousand concerns, manufacturing, wholesale and retail.

Mr. Green's sentiments were echoed by Frank Morrison, Secretary of the A. F. of L. He also pleaded for a thirty-hour week, six hours a day for five days. For this, he said, workers should be paid enough to keep a family in reasonable comfort. Incidentally, the Labor chiefs indicated that Mr. Roosevelt will be able to count upon the support of the Federation next year. Secretary Morrison in particular spoke warm words of praise for the Administration. He said ~~the~~ both Senator Guffey's Coal Bill and Senator Wagner's measure regulating labor disputes, have won the gratitude of the union.

56  
Just a general exposition of the labor philosophy of shorter hours.

But if you're a logician try to figure this out: suppose you cut hours down to very little. What then?

## RACE

And Labor Day was featured by labor troubles:- Textile riot in South Carolina -- walk out of cotton pickers in the South West -- strike of New York shipping clerks.  
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A big sporting event came off today, the International Life Boat Race in New York Harbor. It was instituted eight years ago. Though it has always been rowed in American waters, American competitors haven't had much luck until this year. Last year it was won by the Italian line. A crew from the Conte de Savoia came in first. And today a crew from the Rex put up a hard fight. But this proved to be America's year in the International Life Boat Race. American crews came in not only first, but also grabbed second and third place. The winners were a team from the good ship TEAGLE of the Standard Shipping Company. They came in thirty boat lengths ahead of their nearest rivals. The boat that came in second was from the United States liner WASHINGTON. And a crew from the United Fruit Liner CURRIGULA took third.

By the way, the Thompson Trophy Race<sup>was</sup> just completed less than ten minutes ago at Cleveland Air Races and was won by Harold Newman. He completed the 150 mile course in 40 minutes, 52 and 38/100 seconds - an average speed of 220.194 miles per hour.

Roscoe Turner, who was nearly nine miles ahead of the nearest competitor was forced down during the ninth lap of this ten lap race by motor trouble and landed safely. There were no casualties in the race.

Steve Whitman took second honors.

CAMPBELL

A party of motorists in Utah found themselves in a jam today. Their car had run off the highway and was stuck in the mud, mired so deep that they couldn't move it. It looked as though it was stuck beyond all hope of salvation. They were none too ~~kw~~ well equipped with funds, and it would have taken them pretty nearly a day to walk to the nearest garage.

8

While they were bemoaning their ill luck another car appeared around the bend in the road. The driver, a tall fellow with an English accent, stopped and asked if he could be of help. The stranded unfortunates replied, "You can't do anything. It will take a derrick to get this bus back on the road."

To which the stranger replied, "Let's see about that; I've had considerable experience with this kind of work." The stranded people were still skeptical, but the stranger climbed out, took off his coat, and in a short time had that mired car back on the highway.

8 1/2

Douglas Williams of the London Daily Telegraph tells me that those people don't yet know that the man who pulled them out of the mud was Sir Malcolm Campbell, on his way to make his first

speed test with his Bluebird on the flats near Bonneville,

Utah. And the later news is that he made his first run on the salt --- the dried up bed of a Utah lake of salt. Just a preliminary try-out. But his dash of pepper on that salt - in round figures was 240 miles an hour. --- a long way from the 300 marks that he'll shoot at when he makes the final dash:

And now for my final dash,  
and s-l-u-t-m.

9

9 1/2