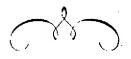
# THE FRIENDS OF ETHIOPIA IN AMERICA



# LETTERS FROM

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1890 SEVENTH AVENUE, NEW YORK
Phone UNiversity 4-2297

William J. Gordon Chairman

Wellis }

Lorena V. Spicer

Dr. Willis N. Huggins Secretary-Treasurer 1935

# GEORGE SCHUYLER RALLIES THE FRIENDS OF ETHIOPIA

(From Pittsburgh Courier, Saturday, November 23, 1935)

It would be a major catastrophe for the darker peoples of the world if Ethiopia should be defeated and subjugated by the Italians. This is the opinion of every intelligent colored person in the world today, and for once the view of the majority is correct.

There is not a red-blooded Negro, Mongolian or Malay in the world who does not want to see Ethiopia emerge from this present crisis with glory and victory and with sovereignty unimpaired. There is not a Negro with other than ice water trickling through his arteries who is not anxious to do something to help Ethiopia in her hour of extremity; who is not burning to strike through her a blow at white imperialism and aggression.

The question is: "How?" Ethiopia does not need men. She has plenty. Recruits from abroad would be so many more mouths to feed and hands in which to place non-existent rifles. The money spent going to Ethiopia would purchase much munitions of war and Red Cross supplies. What Ethiopia needs is money. She has man power, grit, determination and intelligence.

My friend, Dr. Willis N. Huggins, has organized the Friends of Ethiopia in America which is located at 1890 Seventh Avenue, New York City, New York. It is affiliated with the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History, the Ethiopian Research Council of Washington, D. C., the American Pro-Falasha Committee of New York City, the Universal Ethiopian Students' Association of New York City, the International African Friends of Ethiopia of London, England, La Revue de Monde Noir of Paris, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom of Geneva, Switzerland, and Les Jeannes Ethiopiennes of Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and other groups.

Dr. Huggins is a cultured, accomplished, brilliant and honest Negro who for very long has seen clearly the fundamental issues at the bottom of world white imperialism from the viewpoint of the Negro.

The Friends of Ethiopia in America of which Dr. Huggins is Secretary-Treasurer wants every Negro community in the United States to organize a local unit of the organization and pledge itself to send as large a monthly contribution as possible to the national office for hospitalization, schools and child welfare in Ethiopia. "An accounting of this money," he writes, "will be made to our local branches both by our national office and the office of the American Aid to Ethiopia of 2 West 46th Street, New York City, with whom we are affiliated."

Dr. W. Martin, Ethiopian Minister to the Court of St. James, London, England, has written to the Friends of Ethiopia, saying, "Dr. Huggins has my full approval to proceed in the organization of such activities in connection with committees which may be arranged." He has also written in this connection: "While we do not necessarily seek sporadic collections indiscriminately made, yet we do most ardently desire a public loan which should be arranged by responsible business men and managed through a reputable banking house. We welcome medical supplies, nurses, doctors, veterinarians, industrial and technical men to come to us."

I have not yet met any Negro who did not want to do something to help Ethiopia. In the most remote parts of rural Mississippi I have found the colored people intensely interested in the present struggle and burning to do their little bit to aid the largest remaining independent colored nation in the world. Here is their opportunity.

A branch of the Friends of Ethiopia in America can be formed tomorrow in every Negro community in this country from Gulfport, Miss. to Duluth, Minn. and from Portland, Me. to Portland, Ore. In the most lynch-ridden county in Georgia or Texas there will be no objection on the part of white folks to the organization of such a unit. Indeed, from what I have seen and heard in the Tar-and-Feather Belt, the white folks are 100 per cent in favor of Ethiopia and would join such an organization themselves, provided they could have the first three rows of seats set aside for them at public meetings. It is one of the anomolies of Dixie that some of the most persistent lynchers are yelling for Haile Selassie.

So there is no excuse this time that any Negro community can offer for not having a branch of the Friends of Ethiopia.

If there is any sincerity in the American blackamoor's avowed urge to aid Ethiopia, we should have in short order so many branches of the F. of E. and so much money rolling into its offices at 1890 Seventh Avenue, New York City, that Dr. Huggins will have to send out a hurry call for more clerks, bookkeepers and accountants to handle the flow of coin, money orders and checks.

There is not a church, school, club or association in Aframerica that cannot collect at least five dollars for this worthy cause, no matter where said group may be located. Thousands of dollars are being given to dance hall owners every night to the end that Senegambian couples may cavort across the maple clutched in rhythmic embrace. Ten times more is spent in the worship of Venus and Bacchus.

It would be a magnificent spectacle if all over the United States colored people would swell the ranks of this organization promptly and start a stream of currency toward New York. It would not only increase our self-esteem and pleasantly surprise the Ethiopians, but it would tremendously enhance our prestige in the eyes of the white world which usually expects us only to clown, and is seldom disappointed.

While we hesitate to do this and pinch pennies and nickels that we will spend for frivolities and trivialities, men, women and children in far-off Ethiopia are being smashed to death by airplane bombs, riddled by machine gun bullets, suffocated by poisonous gasses. While we wonder whether we should try to do something to help, the claws of the Italian war machine penetrate deeper into the last of free Africa. While we quibble about sending a few cents abroad, Ethiopian wounded pile up in makeshift hospitals where there are inadequate or no medical supplies and an insignificant number of haggard and overworked doctors and nurses stand helpless and handicapped before the swelling mass of wrecked and maimed humanity. We have an opportunity to give quick and effective aid. What are we going to do about it?

Memorandum presented by the International Council of Friends of Ethiopia to the Council of the League of Nations, Geneva, Switzerland.

Transmitted August 15th, 1935, to the Honorable Joseph C. Avenol, Secretary to the League of Nations, by Dr. Willis N. Huggins, Executive Secretary of the Council of Friends of Ethiopia.

Africans and persons of African descent throughout the world, have always looked with pride at the Empire of Ethiopia, which alone of all the ancient empires of black men in Africa, still maintains its independence.

The nefatious will of Italy to conquer Ethiopia is expressed at present, by the concentration of men and munitions on the Ethiopian frontiers. This is viewed with righteous indignation by the blacks in the western world who are bound by racial kinship to the ancient and illustrious Ethiopian people.

The planned destruction of Ethiopia, if actually executed, will not only be an indefensible catastrophe for all black men, but such a heinous crime will:

- (1) put the peace of the world in peril,
- (2) provide stronger arguments for the spread of subversive political theories,
- (3) increase the hollow mockery of the professions of Christianity thus bringing more and deeper disgrace to Christian principles,
- (4) increase the guilt of modern Christian nations who, yesterday raped Africa and carried away millions of her children to be enslaved in the Americas.

Today these same Christian nations actually aid or tacitly stand by, while plans are made to slaughter the people in the most ancient Christian land in the world.

The idea that the League of Nations would tolerate a war, so fraught with peril, so pregnant with dire consequences for the world and one, so utterly based upon such evident pretexts, is altogether repellent to the common judgment of mankind.

Ethiopia is a member of the League of Nations. Article X of the Covenant guarantees the territorial integrity and political independence of its members. Her membership was sponsored by France and welcomed by Italy both of whom considered Ethiopia's membership a credit to the League.

Great Britain, France and Italy have agreed (a) in the Tri-Partite Treaty of 1906 to co-operate in maintaining the political and territorial status-quo in Ethiopia and (b) in the Treaty of 1930 to assist the Emperor of Ethiopia to obtain arms and munitions necessary for the defense of his territory from external aggression.

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eaty of 1906 Ethiopia and 1s and muniThe Italian and British governments have unequivocally recognized the exclusive rights of Ethiopia to grant or refuse any request in connection with economic questions which either of these governments may make—the Italian Government in its note to His Highness Tafari Makonnen of June 9th, 1926 and the British Government in its letter of August 3rd, 1926, to the Secretary General of the League of Nations.

The International Council of Friends of Ethiopia ardently hopes that the League of Nations will;—

- (1) take measures to restrain Italy from this gross infringement of international law and agreements often ratified;
- (2) assure the Emperor and the people of Ethiopia that it whole-heartedly supports them in their efforts to preserve and maintain their rights;
- (3) protest to the Italian government against its immoral and unwarranted attitude toward Ethiopia;
- (4) send a neutral commission to Ethiopia to observe and report before September 4th on boundary disputes;
- (5) conform to its Covenant as stated in Articles X and XVI respecting territorial integrity, national independence and the sanctions for the violation of these Articles.

This memorandum faithfully translates the sentiments of millions of blacks in the Americas who plead that Ethiopia be safeguarded as a question of sacred honor and of human duty. They are convinced that the peace machinery of the world will do all in its power to give to the Italo-Ethiopian Dispute a solution in peace and mutual honor.

You will find in this Memorandum, honorable Members of the Council, the expression of our high consideration.

For the International Council of Friends of Ethiopia

(Signed) WILLIS N. HUGGINS, Executive Secretary.

The above plea was published in its entirety in "Le Journal des Nations" in Geneva, August 16th, 1935.

While in Switzerland Dr. Huggins made a special trip to Villeneuve on the upper end of Lake Geneva where he spent a half day with the renowned Romain Rolland. M. Rolland was sought because his great personal influence might be used to help sway Premier Litvinoff, as president of the Council, to come to the aid of Ethiopia.

Other black men whose voices were raised on behalf of Ethiopia in the ominous days of mid-August, were Hon. Gratien Candace, Member of the French Chamber of Deputies from Guaduloupe, Hon. Galandoe Diouf, Member of the French Chamber of Deputies from Senegal, General deNemours, Haitian Delegate to the League of Nations and Hon. Constantin Mayard, Haitian Minister to France.

Before leaving Europe Dr. Huggins sent a telegram of thanks to President Eamon de Valera, of the Irish Free State, thanking him for his expressed intention to use his influence for Ethiopia.

# ORIGIN OF THE FRIENDS OF ETHIOPIA IN AMERICA

(In 1919)

In August 1919 an Ethiopian Delegation of three Imperial Dignitaries came to the United States on a business and diplomatic mission. They were, Dedjazmatch Nadou, Kantiba Gabrou, governor of Gondar and Belanghetta Herouy, then Mayor of Addis Ababa and now Minister of Foreign Affairs at Addis Ababa. While in New York they received, in the old Waldorf-Astoria Hotel, the following committee of Harlem citizens: Rev. W. P. Hayes, then pastor of Mt. Olivet Baptist Church; Rev. W. W. Brown (now deceased) then pastor of the Metropolitan Baptist Church; Elder J. E. Humphrey, of the Seventh Day Adventists Church; Mr. Chas. T. Magill, publicist; Mr. J. A. Davis, realtor and Dr. Willis N. Huggins, historian.

From the Waldorf the Delegation went to the Metropolitan Baptist Church, 128th Street and Seventh Avenue where Rev. W. W. Brown welcomed them, not only in the name of Harlem but in the name of black folk throughout America. Mayor Herouy responded to the welcome address through Mr. Topokyan, an attache of the Persian Legation in New York.

At the end of the service the audience was assembled in front of the church where a picture was made with the Ethiopian Delegation in the centre. This was done, not merely in the course of ordinary courtesy but especially to show good-will and racial recognition for the blacks in America. To Dr. Huggins the Delegation gave the following message:

"On the part of the Ethiopian Empire we desire to express the satisfaction we have felt on hearing of the wonderful progress the Africans have made in this country. It gives us great confidence in the government of the United States to know that through the independence given you by America you have increased in numbers and developed in education and prosperity. We want you to remember us after we have returned to our native country. In order to help you to do this we suggest that you turn to your bible and in our memory read to yourself from time to time "the First Chapter of the First Epistle of St. John.

"This is the first thing read by our children after they have learned the alphabet and is called the Alphabet of the Apostles. Please also tell this to such of your friends whom we did not have the opportunity to meet and kindly convey to them our farewell."

(This statement was published in the weekly press at that time.)

#### 1927

In 1927 Dr. Azaz Wahrnek Martin, now Ethiopian Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to the Court of St. James, London, England, came to America on a special mission in connection with diplomatic relations between Ethiopia and the United States and also the matter of getting American aid in the development of the Lake Tsana water project.

While in New York, a committee headed by Hon. Arthur Schomburg, noted bibliophile and now Curator of the African History Section of the 135th Street Library, called on him invited Americ and settlers. S striven to keep

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noted bibliotreet Library, called on him in the Astor Hotel, 45th Street and Broadway. Dr. Martin, at that time, invited American blacks to come to Ethiopia as mechanics, professional men, farmers and settlers. Since that time Hon. Arthur Schomburg, by lecture and by writings, has striven to keep up a lively interest in Ethiopia.

#### In 1933

In the above year Prince Desta Demtou, the loyal son-in-law of His Majesty. Emperor Haile Selassie came to these shores accompanied by Ato Manamano, Ethiopian Consul to Jerusalem. Their special mission was to pay official visit to the United States Government in return for the visit of Hon, H. Murray Jacoby who was America's official representative at the coronation of the Emperor in 1930. Incidentally they pushed forward the work of the missions of 1919 and 1927.

While in New York a committee headed by Dr. Willis N. Huggins and Capt. Arthur P. Hayes called on Prince Demtou and Ato Manamano in their suite in the Hotel St. Moritz, 50 Central Park South. During a two hour interview the Prince inquired of every phase of the life of black folk in the United States. To such inquiries Dr. Huggins made brief but inclusive reply. He also asked that the statement given Dr. Huggins by the 1919 Mission be re-published as his sentiment. At the end of the interview Prince Demtou (who is now leading his armies against Italy in Ogaden), placed a golden ring on Dr. Huggins' finger which is the Ethiopian mystic circle of friendship and bade him to keep interest in Ethiopia alive in the hearts of the American blacks. The Prince also discussed at length the question of Dr. Huggins coming to Ethiopia to aid in a new program of school building and educational administration.

Dr. Malaku Bayen, a native Ethiopian, then (1933) a medical student at Howard University and now at the front in Ethiopia with a medical corps, was present, as interpreter, throughout the interview. When the Prince sailed on the Ile de France, he gave a final greeting to a group from the Universal Ethiopian Students Association which had come with a huge Ethiopian flag and a bon voyage basket of flowers.

#### In 1935

Toward the end of July 1935 it seemed that war between Ethiopia and Italy could be averted. In order that the blacks in America could claim a "mite" in such a desired situation, Dr. Huggins sailed for Europe in order to get in touch with the Ethiopian Ministers in London and Paris and also to contact native Africans and West Indians in European capitols who could aid in enlisting liberal Europeans in the cause of Ethiopia. He was presented to Dr. Martin. Ethiopian Minister to Great Britain, by Mrs. Amy Ashwood Garvey who represented "The International African Friends of Ethiopia," in England. Assisting Mrs. Garvey in making connections in London was Mr. Lapido Solanke head of The West African Students Union, in London.

With these contacts made Dr. Huggins proceeded to Paris where he was received by Hon. Tecla Hawariate, then Ethiopian Minister to France but now at home leading his armies against the Fascist invaders.

After conferences with Minister Hawariate, Dr. Huggins proceeded to Geneva where he was being awaited by The Women's International League for Peace and Free-

#### THE FRIENDS OF ETHIOPIA IN AMERICA

Out of the foregoing activities stretching over a period of nearly twenty, years. The Friends of Ethiopia in America has grown. The germ of the organization has been kept alive through classes in the study of African civilizations that have been conducted in the 135th Street Y.M.C.A. by Dr. Huggins since 1932. Temporary organization for war and peace work in Ethiopia was effected September 6th at a mass meeting in Rockland Palace, New York. Permanent organization was effected in the 135th Street Y.M.C.A. on October 6th, 1935. Headquarters are maintained at 1890 Seventh Avenue, New York.

As a result of Dr. Huggins contacts with Minister Martin in London and Minister Hawariate in Paris he brought back with him the following messages:

MESSAGE FROM DR. MARTIN

Ethiopian Minister to Great Britain

IMPERIAL ETHIOPIAN LEGATION

LONDON

August 7th, 1935

To the Friends of Ethiopia in the United States of America Greetings:---

I have this day received Dr. Willis N. Huggins in official interview and listened carefully to his statement of aims and plans initiated in America for the benefit of Ethiopia.

While we do not necessarily seek sporadic collections indiscriminately made, yet we do most ardently desire a public loan which should be arranged by responsible business men and managed through a reputable banking house.

We welcome medical supplies, nutses, doctors, veterinarians, industrial and technical men to come to us. However we desire that those who will come will also become a part of us in building the Ethiopia of the future. It is also desirable that an independent Red Cross of colored people act with other groups for us.

Dr. Huggins has my full approval to proceed in the organization of such activities in connection with committees which may be arranged,

Your efforts will be recognized officially from our London office.

Yours for Service,

(Signed) W. MARTIN,
Ethiopian Minister to The Court of St. James
London, England.

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#### MESSAGE OF Dr. TECLE HAWARIATE

Ethiopian Minister to France and Delegate to the League of Nations, Geneva (Interview)

To the Friends of Ethiopia in the United States of America: Greetings:

Dr. Willis N. Huggins was officially received by me today with letters of introduction from my distinguished colleague and fellow countryman, Dr. Martin, Ethiopian Minister to Great Britain.

I have carefully read Minister Martin's instructions to Dr. Huggins and heartily concur in them. I would add however that the black race in America forms a salient angle of Ethiopia which cannot be ignored in its relation to the one independent, indigenous black government remaining in the world.

Speaking, unofficially, I can say that His Majesty, Emperor Haile Selassie, regards himself as the Guardian of the interests of black men everywhere and the symbol of their hopes throughout Africa, which interests and hopes would be dashed to pieces if Ethiopia is vanquished in this struggle.

Coming out of this struggle victorious and sovereign, as with the help of God we will, Ethiopia will be stronger than ever. It will afford a profitable field for investments and commercial enterprise. A part of the surplus capital in America could then be safely put into Ethiopian gold bonds and would bring a sure return, higher, perhaps, than elsewhere.

As soon as conditions permit, representatives from Ethiopia will come to place these matters before the great American public. Meanwhile, through the best way possible, help Ethiopia in this hour.

(Signed) TECLE-HAWARIATE,

Ethiopian Minister to France and

Delegate to the League of Nations, Geneva.

Note: - Ex-Minister Hawariate is now at the front with his troops. Hon. Wolde Mariam is now Ethiopian Minister to France.

#### A LETTER OF APPRECIATION

## HIS MAJESTY, HAILLE SELASSIE

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#### Dr. WILLIS N. HUGGINS

for his efforts in Europe and his activities in America on behalf of Ethiopia.

#### IMPERIAL PALACE

Addis-Ababa, le 24 Septembre 1935

M. Ie Dr. W. N. Huggins, 1890 Seventh Avenue, New York. Monsieur,

Nous avons l'honneur de vous informer que votre lettre du 16 Aout 1935, addressé à Sa Majesté l'Empereur Notre Auguste Souverain, est parvenue a Sa Majesté.

Sa Majesté a étè tres touché de votre activite au nom du Conseil International des Amis de l'Ethiope, en notre faveur, et de la sympathie et des bons voeux que vous lui exprimez.

Sur l'ordre de Sa Majesté nous avons l'honneur de vous en remercier.

Veuillez, agreer Monsieur, l'expression de notre consideration.

Signed: (for the Emperor)

#### TRANSLATION

Dear sir:

We have the honor to inform you that your letter of August 16th, 1935, addressed to His Majesty, the Emperor, Our August Sovereign has come to His Majesty.

His Majesty has been very much touched by your activity in the name of The International Council of Friends of Ethiopia, in our favor and of the sympathy and the good wishes that you have expressed for Him.

Upon the order of His Majesty we have the honor to thank you for them.

We beg you to accept, Sir, the expression of our consideration.

# WHAT HAS THE ORGANIZATION ACCOMPLISHED?

I. It has aided in quickening the bond of friendship between black men in Ethiopia and black folk in the Americas through Dr. Huggins itinerary in Europe.

It is hoped that connections made with M. Galandou Diouf, French Deputy from Senegal, M. Gratien Candace, French Deputy from Guaduloupe, General deNemours, Haitian Delegate to the League of Nations, M. Constantin Mayard, Haitian Minister to France, Dr. Sajous of Paris, the remnants of the organization of Paul Panda of Brussels, and the work of the International African Friends of Ethiopia in London, will result later in a call for a world conference of representatives of the non-white peoples.

II. From October 6th to November 30th, 1935, it has set up local organizations in 106 cities throughout the United States, who will shortly become monthly contributors to the cause of Ethiopia, especially for her peace time program of Education.

III. It has co-operated with every organization in the East and especially in the New York Metropolitan District that has done any work at all for Ethiopia. Many of these groups have sent money or medical supplies either to Dr. Martin or direct to Addis Ababa.

IV. It is affiliated with The American Aid to Ethiopia, an Inter-Racial Society, 2 West 46th Street, New York. It contributed \$100.00 toward the purchase

of a hospital truck which that organization has shipped to Ethiopia.

V. It is informing black Americans through the press and from the platform that they, especially, have a human duty and a racial obligation to rally to Ethiopia in her present hour of distress. A distress brought upon her by an unprovoked war, one of the causes of which is the fact that the Incomparable Menelik and the Astute, Dignified, Haile Selassie, refused to cringe and bow before the will of "Fascist pseudo Romans."

VI. Dr. Huggins has defended Ethiopia in many large cities, notably New York, Philadelphia, Boston, Springfield and Worcester, Massachusetts, Providence,

Rhode Island, Washington, D. C., Pittsburgh, Detroit and Chicago.

VII. The organization has co-operated with the Provisional Committee for the Defense of Ethiopia in consolidating many of the independent groups in the New York Metropolitan District in order to prevent duplicated and misdirected efforts. The time now is to go before the country with one big racial or one big inter-racial organization so that the greatest good can be done in the shortest

Finally, to those who are interested in Ethiopia and are unwilling to co-operate with any group then they can still help by sending an International Money Order or Registered letter direct to:

> DR. AZAZ WAHRNEK MARTIN Ethiopian Minister to Great Britain 13 Elm Park Gardens, S.W. 10 London, England or simply to

THE IMPERIAL ETHIOPIAN LEGATION London, England

### A CALL TO THE AID OF ETHIOPIA

If the independence of Ethiopia is destroyed, then the status of black folk will be lowered. This letter calls upon you to do two major things:

First: To do your whole job fighting for civic and economic rights in America under the leadership of our national and local organizations, civic, political and religious. It may be necessary to go all the way around by Ethiopia in order to intensify the spirit through which the above things can be done.

Second: To do your whole job on the international scene by helping to hold up the hands of President Stenio Vincent of Haiti, President Barclay and Minister Walton in Liberia and His Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie, his cabinet in Ethiopia, and Dr. Martin, Ethiopia's minister to Great Britain. It is directly in the interest of Ethiopia that this appeal comes to you as follows:

First: Organize a group in your city as a local auxiliary to "The Friends of Ethiopia in America."

Second: Pledge them to send to our national office, as large a monthly contribution as possible.

Third: This money will be used both for hospitalization and in the immediate program for schools and child welfare.

An accounting of this money will be made to our local branches both by our national office and the office of the American Aid to Ethiopia of 2 West 46th Street, New York City with whom we are affiliated.

The barest minimum of the money received by us from our local branches will be used for stamps, printing, advertising, office furnishings and office help. We plan that extra donations and volunteer help will largely cover such items. This appeal to you is all the more urgent, because Minister Martin in London and Minister Hawariate in Paris have explicitly asked our office to organize the colored people in America, so that they may render effective non-military aid to Ethiopia, not only in the present crisis, but for the Ethiopia of the future.

The enclosed letter from Dr. Martin explains itself. The enclosure from the Emperor shows his approval, not only of our plea at Geneva for Ethiopia, but of the activities of our office in her general welfare.

We will appreciate your reply in the enclosed self-addressed envelope.

Yours truly,

WILLIS N. HUGGINS

Local Organizations have been set up in 19 States