

Who owns the Eiffel Tower?

The Eiffel Tower is one of the most famous buildings in the world. It was built for the World's Fair in 1889. It became very popular and so the French decided not to demolish it when the World's Fair was over. Later it was used as a radio tower. But in 1925 the tower was in a bad condition, and there were articles about the problem in the newspapers.



A man called Victor Lustig read one of those articles and he had an idea. He „borrowed“ some notepaper from the French Ministry of Posts. He wrote to five French businessmen. His letter invited them to a secret meeting at a hotel in Paris.

When the businessmen arrived, a friend of Lustig took them to a private room. He said he was Mr Lustig's secretary. The five men sat at a long table and waited for Mr Lustig.

Then Lustig came into the room and said, „I have some important and very secret news. The Eiffel Tower is in a dangerous condition. Unfortunately, we must demolish it. I'm sure you understand why you are here - there are 70,000 tons of metal in the Eiffel Tower.“



The five men listened to Lustig. Then they went away. After a week they each offered a different amount of money for the 70,000 tons of metal.

The „lucky“ businessman was André Poisson. Lustig took his money and told Poisson that he was now the owner of the Eiffel tower.

Lustig and his „secretary“ left the country immediately. But Poisson was so ashamed that he did not go to the police.

World's Fair.
Weltausstellung
borrow: leihen
invite: einladen
appear: erscheinen
condition: Zustand
each: jede(r)
amount: Betrag
owner. Besitzer
immediately: sofort

When Lustig learned that this André Poisson hadn't told anyone, he returned to Paris. And believe it or not, he could sell the Eiffel Tower a second time. What a salesman!

The same meaning:
He is the owner of the blue car.
He owns the blue car.
The blue car belongs to him.
The blue car is his.

Translate:

Sie lud uns zu einem Treffen ein.

Das blaue Auto gehörte uns.

Sein Sekretär schrieb dem französischen Geschäftsmann.

Wir warteten auf die Polizei.

Ich nahm mein Geld und verließ das Hotel.

Der Mann hörte den Frauen zu.

Sie sagte, sie sei eine Sekretärin.

Wir gingen nicht zur Polizei.

Wir verließen das Land nicht.