

Head of Projects For Fellow Negroes Freed by Nixon

W. Post

1-6-70

By Stuart H. Loory

Los Angeles Times

LOS ANGELES, Jan. 5—

President Nixon freed a black capitalism leader serving time for income tax evasion today in a clear gesture of conciliation towards the nation's Negro minority

The President commuted the sentence of Dr. Thomas W. Matthew, 45, a New York neurosurgeon and president of the National Economic Growth and Reconstruction Organization (NEGRO) who was serving a six-month sentence at the Danbury (Conn.), Federal correction institution where he has been jailed since Nov. 10.

Matthew pleaded guilty to refusing to pay taxes in 1963. At that time he said he was refusing to pay taxes so he could devote all his resources to helping black people start new businesses.

Matthew has promised to make restitution to the government on taxes he owes for 1961, 1962 and 1963. Over those three years, he earned \$106,000, according to the Internal Revenue Service.

The black leader is known among civil rights circles as "a loner and a conservative" who agrees with few others.

White House Press Secretary Ronald L. Ziegler, announcing the clemency, told newsmen.

"The President, in granting the commutation, feels that the interests of the country and particularly the communities in which NEGRO is active would be better served by Dr. Matthew's release and his return to the vital work in which he is involved and in which NEGRO is involved. It is felt that Dr. Matthew's continued absence from his leadership role would threaten the existence of many of the activities of NEGRO."

Matthew's situation came to the President's attention through a variety of channels during the past 10 days, it was learned. The administration, which has not been able

to establish rapport with black groups, has been under heavy fire for what black leaders see as a repressive campaign against the Black Panther party

Against this background, officials spotted newspaper advertisements calling attention to Matthew's incarceration. At the same time, his attorneys approached several administration officials to ask for presidential clemency.

U.S. Chief Of Prisons Will Retire

United Press International

Myrl E. Alexander, a harsh critic of the federal penal system, will retire Jan. 31 as director of the Federal Bureau of Prisons, it was announced yesterday

Attorney General John N. Mitchell announced his acceptance of Alexander's retirement "with great reluctance and only after he agreed to continue helping us as a consultant."

Alexander, 60, a native of Dayton, Ohio, will become a professor of correctional administration at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale.

His career in prison work began when he took a job as a case worker in 1931 at the Atlanta Federal Penitentiary

He was named prisons director by Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy in 1964 after serving as assistant director for 14 years under five attorney's general.

The Justice Department said no decision had been made about naming a new head of the bureau, which supervises 20,500 prisoners and employs about 5,500 persons at 35 institutions.

Alexander believed the entire system of criminal justice was inadequate and felt that it failed as a means of changing criminal behavior. He advocated a system that would reform the offender rather than merely punish offense

Nixon Commutes Sentence of NEGRO Leader

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By ROBERT B. SEMPLE Jr
Special to The New York Times

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SAN CLEMENTE, Calif., Jan. 5—In his first act of executive clemency, President Nixon commuted the six-month prison sentence of Dr. Thomas W. Matthew, a Negro neurosurgeon who heads the National Economic Growth and Reconstruction Organization in New York City.

The organization, known as Negro, tries to provide black entrepreneurs with technical assistance and other forms of encouragement to help them establish businesses.

Dr. Matthew's efforts in the Negro slums supplied early inspiration for Mr. Nixon's campaign pledge to promote "black capitalism" to draw Negroes into the mainstream of the American economy. Dr. Matthew's organization runs a business in the Watts area of Los Angeles and various projects in New York, including a hospital and a drug rehabilitation center.

Dr. Matthew, 45 years old, was convicted last Oct. 20 for failure to pay income taxes for 1968. He explained at the time that he had not paid the taxes because he wished to devote all of his personal resources to the self-help program.

Dr. Matthew, Imprisoned for Tax Evasion, Held Vital to Self-Help Group

He told the court, however, that he was prepared to pay the penalty for breaking the law and on Nov. 10 he began serving his sentence in the Federal Correctional Institution in Danbury, Conn.

Ronald L. Ziegler, the Presidential press secretary, who announced Mr. Nixon's action at a briefing here this morning, said that Dr. Matthew was currently filing taxes and had made arrangements for "complete restitution of unpaid back taxes."

May Stay Away Longer

He noted further that the President, in granting commutation, "feels it is in the interest of the country and particularly in the communities in which NEGRO is active" that Dr. Matthew be released to continue his work.

"It was felt," Mr. Ziegler went on, "that Dr. Matthew's continued absence from a leadership role would threaten the activities of NEGRO."

Mr. Nixon has sought to carry out his campaign pledge

to promote Negro self-help measures by establishing an office of minority business enterprise in the Commerce Department. But the effort has been damaged by internal wrangling in the department, the resignations of key personnel, and—some have charged—insufficient financing. The President's special consultant on civil rights, Leonard Garment, has since been assigned to give the effort new life.

Mr. Nixon, meanwhile, remained in Palm Springs, Calif., at the residence of Walter H. Annenberg, United States Ambassador to Great Britain. He was expected to return to his seaside estate here tomorrow.

Mr. Ziegler said the President played a round of golf and had begun serious work on his State of the Union message, scheduled for delivery Jan. 22.

He was accompanied by a daughter, Tricia, his wife, Pat, his close friend, Charles G. (Bebe) Rebozo, a Florida banker and real estate man, and two aides, Dwight Chapin and H. R. Haldeman.

The press secretary indicated that the President, who had been expected to return to the Capitol on Thursday, might stay over another day or so to celebrate his birthday. He will be 57 on Friday.

NEW YORK TIMES Editorial
January 12, 1970

Clemency for Dr. Matthew

President Nixon showed the quality of mercy by freeing Dr. Thomas W. Matthew after he had served two months of a six-month jail sentence for failing to file income-tax returns. This well-known neurosurgeon, a Negro, had run afoul of the law because he insisted on using his personal funds to advance the work of the black self-help organization (NEGRO) which he heads, instead of paying Federal taxes. Punishment for violating the tax laws was entirely in order, no matter how noble his intentions; but now, after making restitution, it will be possible for him to resume his work of providing training, jobs and bus services in several communities. President Nixon's first act of executive clemency was well chosen.

STAR

Feb. 19, 1970

PRESERVATION COPY

Pardon for Dr. Matthew

SIR: Those of us who have long supported the efforts of Dr. Thomas W. Matthew, head of NEGRO (National Economic Growth and Reconstruction Organization, Inc.) to bring economic and social self-sufficiency and independence to the Negro in America through his black capitalism programs, were deeply gratified by the action of the President of the United States in exercising his first pardon in behalf of this great Negro leader.

I am sure that the President recognized that the decision of Dr. Matthew to use his personal funds, including his tax obligations, to help improve the plight of the Negro at the bottom of the economic ladder was an action taken with full intention of paying the price for his decision even if it meant going to jail, which it did. This was an heroic act, but equally noble was the act of the President in pardoning Dr. Matthew so that he could return to his selfless work in behalf of citizens who need training, rehabilitation and self-respect and not the slavery of permanent welfare.

George P. Morse.

Joseph O. Dean, M.D.

Robert Kressley.

Sr. Mary Kenney, R.J.M.

Newsday

Harry F. Guggenheim, President and Editor in Chief
Bill Moyers, Publisher
Nick Thimmesch, Washington Columnist

Dear Marty,

I thought you might be interested in
seeing this column.

Best,

Nick T.

550 Stewart Avenue, Garden City, Long Island, New York, 11530

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NICK THIMMESCH Eye on the Presidency

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CLEMENCY FOR A BLACK MAN

FOR RELEASE SATURDAY/SUNDAY
JANUARY 10/11

BY NICK THIMMESCH

(C) 1970, Newsday, Inc.

Washington--President Nixon's first major act of executive clemency turns out to be for a remarkable black man, Dr. Thomas W. Matthew, whose hatred for the welfare system got him into a federal pen.

There are some 500 pleas a year for presidential pardon or commutation. Dr. Matthew's case is special, particularly so because he had H. E. W. Secretary Robert Finch, several key White House staffers, and the President's own personal views on Negro uplift going for him.

Dr. Matthew, 45, the nation's first black neurosurgeon, gave up most of his \$100,000 annual practice several years ago to energetically carry out his Negro "self-help" philosophy.

When he learned that blacks, living in the Watts section of Los Angeles, couldn't get to work because of poor bus service, he started his own bus company to meet the problem. He founded the National Economic Growth and Reconstruction Organization (NEGRO), financed it through sale of "Economic Liberty Bonds," and started a half-dozen enterprises, including a hospital and a Harlem-based drug detoxification center.

His guiding philosophy is that while civil rights campaigns were once necessary, the overwhelming need of the Negro is economic liberation. "The civil rights leader, the white sociologist and the liberal economist," he said, "mean us well but fate plays a cruel joke on us all," and thus he condemned the 1968 Poor People's March. He also warned: "Our grandparents had a guaranteed annual income. They called it slavery."

Back in the early sixties, Dr. Matthew got so sore at what he considered the liberal mania for civil rights and federal anti-poverty, that he refused to pay his income taxes. He protested that the money would be squandered by the government in useless programs and that it would be better used in "black capitalism."

(MORE)

This act of civil disobedience resulted in a conviction, last October, and a one year sentence (six months suspended) which Dr. Matthew willingly accepted as a penalty of his protest.

His jailing in Danbury, Conn., worried several administration officials. When Finch was California's lieutenant governor, he helped Dr. Matthew get a franchise for the Watts bus line. In early 1968, when Nixon was running for President, campaign aides Leonard Garment and Martin Anderson cultivated Dr. Matthew because they wanted to sell Nixon on "black capitalism."

That relationship resulted in a meeting between Nixon, vice presidential candidate Spiro Agnew and Dr. Matthew and other "black capitalists" at Mission Bay, Calif., immediately after the G. O. P. convention. Dr. Matthew was forcefully presenting arguments when Nixon and Agnew got up to leave. "We have more to say," declared Dr. Matthew, and Nixon and Agnew sat down to listen for another 45 minutes. Nixon was very impressed and warmly thanked Dr. Matthew.

White House aide Garment knew that several NEGRO projects were in a jam because Dr. Matthew was in jail. Investors, who intended to buy the drug addiction center property for NEGRO, balked, and the landlord's eviction threat angered some of the resident addicts to the point they were ready to fight the cops. So Garment recommended that Dr. Matthew get top help from the New York City Lawyer's Civil Rights Committee. Atty. Robert P. Patterson, Jr., son of the former Secretary of War, was retained, and got affidavits of support Dec. 12, from Finch, Queens, N. Y. District Attorney Thomas Mackell and Dr. Efrem Ramirez, former narcotics expert for New York City. Patterson argued there was great public need for Dr. Matthew to be released.

But U. S. District Judge John Bartels castigated Patterson for the pressure, and put off the petition motion until Feb. 7, 1970. When Finch learned this, he put in a personal call to President Nixon to recommend presidential action.

White House aides Anderson and Pat Buchanan, both known as conservatives, wrote memos of support, and Presidential Assistant John Ehrlichman handled liaison with the Justice Department. Finch and Garment kept watch over the effort. Because of a rule requiring a five-year wait for pardon for those convicted of tax violations, it was recommended that the President instead commute Dr. Matthew's sentence, which he did Jan. 5th.

Upon release, Dr. Matthew, one of nine children born in the basement of a Harlem slum and who still lives in a \$128 a month Harlem apartment, phoned Finch to thank him. All souls involved are eminently pleased. The President commuted the sentence of another federal prisoner who was terminally ill last summer, but Dr. Matthew's case is considered the first major action of this kind. Dr. Matthew has arranged to pay back taxes, and now plans to campaign for establishment of "rehabilitation centers" on Alcatraz Island (for Indians and Mexican-Americans) and on Ellis Island (for blacks and Puerto Ricans).

(MORE)

SECOND ADD THIMMESCH

FOR RELEASE SATURDAY/SUNDAY
JANUARY 10/11

Dr. Matthew has black capitalists and Black Panthers alike on his payroll, and somehow this strikes the togetherness and self-uplift urges of some of the President's most influential advisors. This has been a fascinating episode.

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Omaha
World

Black Capitalism

5/5/68
The above phrase is being used by Richard Nixon, a man whose political strength has never been great among Negroes, but whose ideas about white investment and assistance in Negro-operated enterprises are attracting considerable attention.

Austin Scott of the Associated Press reports that "a small but apparently growing faction of Negroes who oppose the idea of 'handouts' from whites" is backing black capitalism.

This group believes that the traditional approach of pressuring whites to break down legal segregation and racist attitudes has about run its course. They also believe that it is unrealistic to expect profit-minded business men to broaden welfare programs or to spend money to set up businesses in the slums.

* * *

Even if the slum business approach were economically feasible, it doesn't get to the problem of the psychological damage, which from slave days has left the Negro with little faith about competing in the white world.

This new Negro group believes that self-help programs based on the profit motive can generate both pride and a better standard of living for black people. And its members believe that they can get conservative help for such undertakings.

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The work of a New York neurosurgeon, Dr. Thomas Matthew, is frequently cited as an example of what can be done. Dr. Matthew has founded a number of small "self-help" businesses in New York and Watts. They now employ nine hundred persons. The operation is financed by bonds bearing 6.5 per cent interest.

So far, 400 thousand dollars worth of bonds have been sold. They have financed a hospital, bakery, clothing factory, chemical factory, bus line and construction company. All are very small. All are designed to employ Negroes who were formerly on welfare.

Critics charge, and Dr. Matthew does not deny, that the enterprises pay less than the going wage. He admits that he cuts other corners, too.

But he points out that the wage rates are higher than welfare, that the employees acquire skills they can use on higher-paying jobs elsewhere and can thus compete in the white man's world. He argues that by giving whites a profitable investment, and borrowing their money with no strings attached, blacks create a kind of self-respect that Government-guaranteed annual income cannot provide. Crime and welfare costs are diminished, says he, and all of society benefits.

Dr. Matthew opposes the guaranteed annual income plan and he opposes a poor people's march on Washington. If the 500 thousand dollars estimated to be spent on the march were invested in his group, he says it would supply 20 thousand permanent jobs for hard-core unemployed. The guaranteed income, says he, would make blacks more than ever dependent on whites. And he adds:

"Our grandparents had a guaranteed annual income. They called it slavery."

* * *

Not only Richard Nixon but representatives of Senator Robert Kennedy have shown interest in the Matthew approach.

Dr. Matthew's National Economic Growth and Reconstruction Organization, or NEGRO, is one of dozens of public and private efforts to solve the twin problems of building pride and creating economic opportunity. An important fact about it is that its advocates look to private enterprise to help solve a great social and economic problem.

That is a direction in which a great many eyes are turned these days, as the shortcomings of public welfare programs become more and more apparent.

N.E.G.R.O. Charts New Path to Freedom

BY PETER BAILEY

NEW thinking is shattering old concepts about the best ways to assure the survival of Black people in America. The old tactics of the civil rights movement stressed non-violent protest and legal action. Now many programs promote black self-help as a surer road to freedom.

Thus groups emphasizing this approach are springing up in communities across the country. Probably the best organized of such groups is the New York-based National Economic Growth and Reconstruction Organization NEGRO which is headed by Dr. Thomas W. Matthew, a neurosurgeon. "The Negro people are looking for and are receptive to a self-help program," Dr. Matthew says, "because it offers them a lasting solution."

Because the centuries of oppression have so gravely scarred the will for self-reliance a very significant victory is needed on behalf of the concept of Negro self-help. Now in its seventh year, NEGRO operated for several years as the Interfaith Health Association, a group founded by prominent businessmen, clergymen and physicians, including the late P. M. Savory, co-owner of the Harlem newspaper *The Amsterdam News*; clergyman Gardner C. Taylor and sociologist Kenneth Clark. It was chartered in 1964 as a non-profit corporation with the aim of "developing of the self-help concept among the Negro people." NEGRO now employs more than 600 people, has an annual payroll of over \$1 million, and has more than \$3 million in assets, spokesmen say.

It owns and operates the following:

- The Interfaith Hospital in Queens, New York. Acquired in 1963, it is a public service-type general hospital with 140 beds; there is room for expansion to 210 beds. The largest single business owned by Negroes in New York state, the hospital has been the experimental base for NEGRO's self-help program.



Dr. Thomas W. Matthew (left) who gave up lucrative neurosurgeon's practice to head National Economic Growth and Reconstruction Organization (NEGRO), a vast complex of black-controlled, self-help industries addresses his patients at Interfaith Hospital in Queens, N. Y. Hospital is key component in organization's industrial ventures which include chemical firm, textile industry and apartment buildings. Below, he looks on while children and parents board one of 65 NEGRO-owned buses for a trip to Interfaith where preschoolers get free medical examinations.



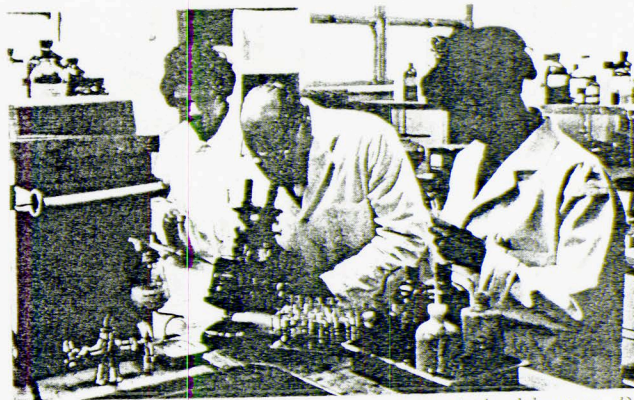
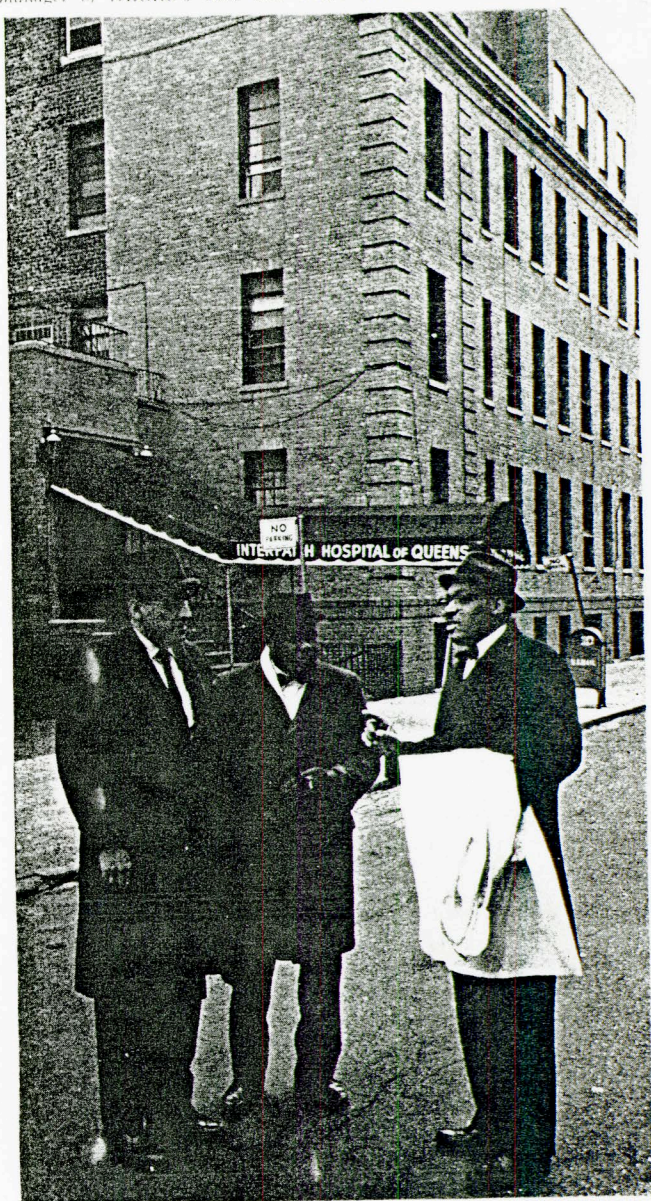
PRESERVATION COPY

Spunky physician launches vast self-help program in New York

Reprinted from April, 1968 EBONY

Reproduced at Richard Nixon Presidential Library

Street corner condabls below are frequent in Dr Matthew's busy schedule. Here he chats with his aides, Jules W. (l.) and Atty. Firmin Joseph, manager of NEGRO's Blue and White Bus Line.



Examining specimens at Interfaith laboratory, Dr. Matthew is assisted by lab technicians Karen Montgomery (l.) and Cynthia Holder. Lab visits are daily routine for doctor who maintains medical expertise.

N.E.G.R.O.

- The Domco Chemical Co. in Jamaica, Long Island. Among the \$700,000 in government and private contracts the company has is one for production of a disinfectant used in Vietnam for washing U. S. Army mess gear, fresh fruits and vegetables.
- The Domco Textile Co., also in Jamaica, which makes most of the uniforms worn by NEGRO employees, and which has a \$100,000 contract with singer Miriam Makeba for production of dresses for her Caribbean boutiques. A lingerie shop turns out stylish products, labeled "Free Fashions," which are sold in such New York department stores as Abraham & Straus, Alexander's and Mays.
- A paint manufacturing plant which makes all paint used in buildings and the hospital that NEGRO owns.
- Two 100-family apartment buildings in the Bronx, New York. Rehabilitation of the buildings was by NEGRO's Spartacus Construction Co.
- A clothing manufacturing plant in Pittsburgh.
- Two bus lines with 35 vehicles in Los Angeles' Watts section. Another bus line, Blue and White Bus Co., with 30 vehicles, is operated in Harlem and Jamaica, Long Island.

Always on the lookout for other acquisitions, NEGRO has adopted a guideline that a project must be not only economically sound but must fulfill a public need.

NEGRO's activities are financed by the sale of Economic Liberty Bonds offered in denominations ranging from 25¢ to \$10,000. The bonds, which are sold on streets, by mail and through payroll deductions, mature in 10 years and pay "holiday interest" of 6½ percent annually between Thanksgiving and Christmas and Hanukkah celebrations. They are insured by NEGRO's \$3 million in assets. The first bond program in 1965 raised \$400,000, of which all but \$5,000 has been re-paid. A \$2 million bond program begun last June has already raised more than \$450,000.

Dr. Matthew explaining the decision to use the bond system says: "It's a system that makes it absolutely impossible for any outside force to gain control of our policies. For once our bonds are bought, we can do what we want with the money as long as we keep up with our commitments. Outside forces can affect us only by buying or not buying the bonds."

Dr. Matthew, a much-honored neurosurgeon who gave up a \$100,000-a-year practice to run NEGRO, says the organization has two major purposes—"the building of a people and the completing of the emancipation from slavery." He explains: "The primary function of NEGRO is to be a developing agency. It develops industry as well as social programs, particularly wherever there are groups of Negro people. We build ourselves not by attracting another Black man because he hates an enemy but we attract him by being relevant to him and his survival. Operating a program which admits its "big brother" nature, the doctor believes that Black people must break up the "dependency complex" with which their experiences in this country have burdened



With his wife, Carol (seated r.), head of Interfaith's Department of Social Services, and her staff, Dr. Matthew discusses social problems facing patients.

N.E.G.R.O.

them. The building of this complex in the doctor's opinion, was the result of a deliberate policy based on American economic need for a large reservoir of cheap labor. Though now the need is not so great the dependency complex is still maintained by the country's welfare system—all of which leads the Black man "with little if any belief in his own capabilities. Dr. Matthew believes that this complex must be destroyed before Black people can be truly free.

So wary is the doctor about NEGRO acceptance of "handouts and paternalistic charity" as he refers to most of the existing programs aimed at the Black community, that when asked if the organization would accept a million dollar grant from the Ford Foundation, he replies, "We would not accept such a grant. We would not accept it because even the offering of such a grant would mean that they are not listening to or understanding the needs of the Negro people. Rather than offering a million dollar grant they could buy a million dollars worth of our bonds.

Behind NEGRO's philosophy is a commitment to those Black people who have been completely left out of the affluent society. Says Dr. Matthew, "We are concerned with building the economic strength of our people. Our programs are geared toward improving the standard of living of the masses of Black people, not just the 'talented tenth. All of our thrust is in that direction, so you will find that we are not as smooth as we would be if we took only the highly skilled. Dr. Matthew feels that Black people must build up financial resources which belong to them as a whole and not to any specific person or group of persons. NEGRO, he says, has discussed the possibility of setting up "a National Negro Fund, which will be the treasury of The Negro nation—our Fort Knox. With these funds we will be able to help the people who have hang-ups—people who need work, yet who won't be hired by this society's regular sources of employment. We recognize the importance of the dignity of working for a living.

For Dr. Matthew the success of NEGRO represents another in a list of solid achievements which have marked his growth as a student, a neurosurgeon and a Black leader. He was born 43

years ago in New York City where his father was a janitor in an all-white apartment building. One of nine children, all of whom are now professionals, he says, "When I was growing up, I wanted to be one of three things: a lawyer, a science teacher or a clergyman. I ended up combining them all.

From the Bronx High School of Science through specialty training in neurology and neurosurgery at the Harvard Medical Center Thomas W. Matthew received dozens of academic honors. He was the first Black graduate of both the Bronx High School of Science and Manhattan College. At Meharry Medical College he was on the Dean's List each year as an honor student. He was the first Black man to be trained as a neurosurgeon in the U.S. and the first Black man to serve as director of service at a major hospital outside the Harlem community. He has been an instructor at the Albert Einstein Medical College and clinical instructor at Harvard and Boston University medical schools. He has been a staff neurosurgeon at several top hospitals, and is currently a consultant neurosurgeon at four New York City hospitals and for the New York State Boxing Commission.

Always actively involved in the human rights struggle Dr. Matthew was president of the Bronx Youth Division of the NAACP when he was a teen-ager. Today he refuses to join the American Medical Assn. because there is segregation in some AMA local chapters.

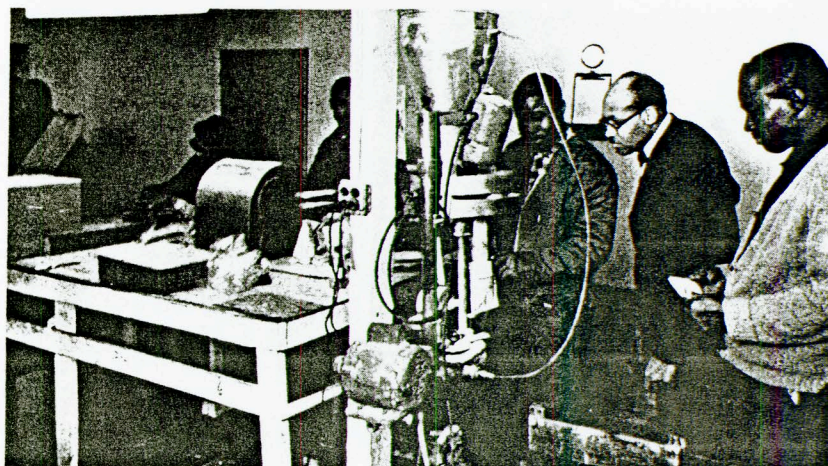
Completely dedicated to the self-help approach, the mild-looking physician can be a formidable foe when confronted by what he feels is an unreasonable attack. On one occasion Flushing Savings and Loan Assn. found that out when they tried to take possession of the Interfaith Hospital for non-payment of rent. Overnight Dr. Matthew became a "nitty gritty" combatant, directing his aides and nurses to barricade the hospital and block the entrance for city marshals. He told his staff "If you see marshals or policemen coming, don't let them in—call me." During the stalemate Dr. Matthew and his opponents negotiated a compromise. Only then, after a settlement, was the barricade (a chicken wire fence reinforced by white baby cribs) removed. At other times, city building inspectors have been refused entry into NEGRO buildings while rehabilitation was in progress. "We

At a long day's end, Dr. Matthew parts company with Red, an ex-officio "administrative assistant" in the doctor's projects. A "man of the street" King is extremely devoted to Dr. Matthew.





Extending warm handshake to man in need of medical care, Dr. Matthew offers services of Interfaith Hospital which admits patients regardless of their ability to pay. Below he watches progress of workmen remodeling Fox Street Apartments, a NEGRO enterprise urging men to meet completion of their deadline.



Peering over the shoulder of an employee (left) at NEGRO's Domco Chemical Co., Dr. Matthew checks production of chemical disinfectant company manufactures for the federal government under a \$500,000 contract. Talking to toddlers (above, left) at Fox Street Apts., Matthew gets a "report" on how their mother, Mrs. Marie Richardson, is coming along with a job of laying floor tiles. Flats, whose rents range from \$65 to \$120 a month, are designed for fatherless families. At the organization's lingerie factory (above), Matthew chats with a worker and Manager Bernard Feinman. Shop has staff of eight.

N.E.G.R.O.

will let them in when we are finished," said Dr. Matthew.

At the moment, Dr. Matthew is embroiled in a struggle with New York City about enfranchisement of N.E.G.R.O.'s buses. Because of an injunction, the buses are not able to run on a regular schedule; instead they make gypsy-like trips through Harlem and Queens, picking up passengers where they find them and taking them where they want to go. "We are fighting the injunction," says Dr. Matthew, "but if things haven't been settled by the time the weather gets warm, we are going to run our buses in Harlem and Jamaica on regular schedules and dare the city to stop us."

Dr. Matthew has strong beliefs on many things affecting the future of Black people in America, especially civil rights. "The civil rights movement will eventually fail," he predicts. "It has to fail because it only asks for equal opportunity. But if the Black man has only 'equal opportunity' he won't be able to compete with non-Negroes for they will have the advantage of the support of their group. It will be the individual Negro against another group. Until the Negro has a strong group as a backup, his equal opportunity is meaningless, and 'equal opportunity' is the most that 'civil rights' can bring to the Black man. Our people's need transcends civil rights. If forced to make a choice I'd give up civil rights for economic freedom."

On Black Americans: "I believe that we are a distinct people—distinct from Africans, distinct from other Americans, distinct from any other people on earth. I have always accepted the fact that we are a nation within a nation—a people with similarities based on our experiences in this country which bind us together, these similarities being both cultural and biological."

On Black Power: "White America can save Black Power and it is in white America's interest to do so. The Black Power worthy of saving is the only power N.E.G.R.O. seeks—the power of self-help. The alternative to white America joining N.E.G.R.O. in its struggle to bring the Negro people into the mainstream of American life is the Black Power of defeat. Those whose cries and even whose names frighten white America are shouting Black Power because it is the only power left to them."

On Laws and Lawlessness: "There are two kinds of laws in a society: laws of necessity which bind man to man and without which society would fall into chaos, and laws of convenience which are laws that serve special interest groups because they have, in one form or another, enough power to bring those laws into existence. These laws are not vital to society's survival and society would not collapse without them. When the interests of my group demands that I break the majority group's laws of convenience, then I become the lawless. Laws of convenience are inherently discriminatory against the interests of Black people. When I break them I must be prepared to pay the penalty, though at times whether or not you pay the penalty depends upon your strength."

On Riots: "Riots are epidemics of erupting boils. Medically, pain and fever trigger natural responses, and under proper professional care, additional drugs and treatment defeat disease. It is only when pain and fever are masked by the palliative of aspirin that boils erupt on the human body. Similarly, the palliatives of civil rights bills, token integration, and an ineffective war on poverty have brought to the surface of American life the erupting boils we call riots. Riots are not caused by viciousness; they are triggered by viciousness. I can't see our people completely giving up the concept of riots. Riots can be an important strategy for our people."

On Negro Leaders: "Our leaders have tried too long to make the Negro look more principled than any other group. We have no obligation to do this. It is a kind of back-handed racism for my Black leader to assume that we are going to be any more principled than any other people. We are the only group being called upon to fulfill the Christian-Judaism Ethic in pure, absolute form. Our leaders must also learn not to talk out of emotion, but out of sheer cold, factual, rational calculation."

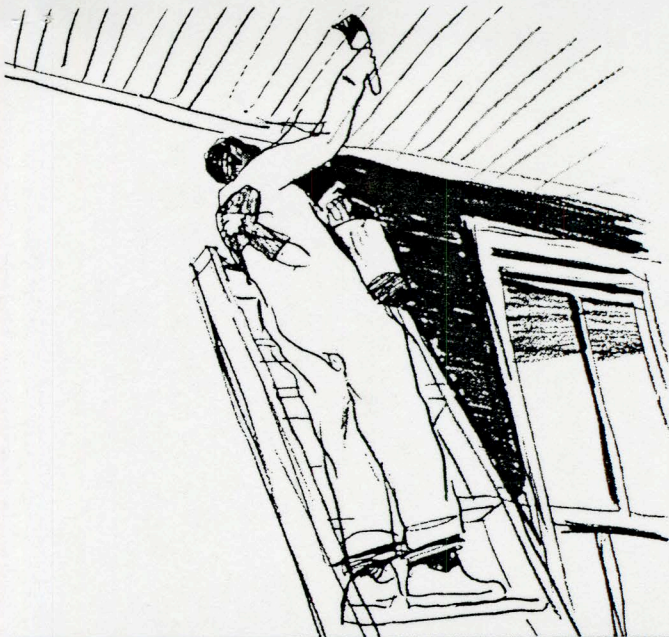
On Malcolm X: "I knew Malcolm very well and often discussed things with him. Malcolm's great fault was that he never had a program. But I do feel he was the foremost spokesman our people have had to state the indictment of the oppression which we have experienced."

On Stokely Carmichael and Rap Brown: "Stokely and Rap are symbols of the racial problems in this country. They are spurs in the saddle. They are serving the important role of being catalysts. If the time comes when we no longer need this spur, the Negro people will put them down."

On the Guaranteed Income: "Negroes have known about guaranteed annual income since we first came to this country. Our grandparents had a guaranteed annual income; they called it slavery. The civil rights leader, the white sociologist, the liberal economist all mean us well, but fate plays a cruel joke on us all. The guaranteed annual income they seek for us would doom us, as it has the American Indian who stayed on the reservation to an ever lower level of existence. The cruelty lies in the fact that this 'hope' they offer is but an empty dream. The Congress is not going to pass a guaranteed annual income and every informed observer and politician knows it."

N.E.G.R.O.'s West Coast operation is inspected by Gordon C. Lynch shown (right) in garage with bus line mechanics who service organization's 35 vehicles. Lynch is N.E.G.R.O.'s national field director. Below: passengers board N.E.G.R.O. bus in South Los Angeles. Company charges maximum fare of 15 cents, offers full transfer privileges.





TO SAVE A SLUM

With outside financing and a big boost from Bobby, a project grows in Brooklyn

One sunny morning last week nine young Negroes in blue denims began primping and refurbishing a single dilapidated house on a single block in Brooklyn's sprawling Bedford-Stuyvesant section, one of the nation's most crime-ridden black slums. There was something at once stirring and depressing in the sight—as if this meager handful of unskilled laborers aimed to rebuild, stone by stone, 640 square blocks riddled with poverty and decay.

But in fact, they were the visible beginning of the Bedford-Stuyvesant Restoration Corp., the modest aegis for what is designed to be the most sweeping and comprehensive rehabilitation effort ever brought to bear on a single American community. With no less a guiding star than Sen. Robert F. Kennedy, the Bedford-Stuyvesant scheme epitomizes one basic approach to slum reclamation: the concentration of powerful external forces, both public and private, on the task of turning a living wasteland into a booming commercial-residential complex. If the project fulfills its vaulting ambitions, within a few years Bedford-Stuyvesant will have been virtually reinvented. Most of its deteriorated three- and four-story row housing will have been renovated. It will have two "super-blocks" linked to central green belts, two rehabilitation centers for skill training, a \$4 million athletic and cultural center, a huge office-and-shopping center with perhaps a Macy's among the major stores. There will be some 25 new businesses and plants, franchises for national chains like Woolworth's, a network of health centers, a local TV station, a four-year work-study college. And flowing from it all, jobs, money and expanded horizons for the ghetto-locked inhabitants.

A year ago Senator Kennedy (with a big assist from Mayor John Lindsay) helped organize the all-Negro Restoration Corp. to establish priorities and implement the programs. Simultaneously, he set up a parallel advisory board, the Bedford-Stuyvesant D&S (for development and services) Corp., made up of top New York business executives and financiers, and put them to work to determine once and for all if an alliance of massive white power—in the form of Federal money, local-government cooperation and private enterprise—and black will power could hammer out a solution to the intractable problems of one Brooklyn ghetto.

The restoration program is indeed a breath-taking concept, thundering with high hopes—which makes some of Bedford-

Stuyvesant's street-wise citizens view it with understandable skepticism. "Another damn agency," sneered a bearded young CORE member standing on Fulton Street, the section's seedy main stem. "They come. They open offices. They go. I don't have no job and I ain't gonna get one. Nothin' changes."

Kennedy concedes that there is a huge barrier of doubt and apathy to break down: "Every politician has gone in there during elections and made promises. You must always come to that edge with them—the promises haven't been kept."

For decades Bedford-Stuyvesant was a comfortable enclave of middle-class Brooklyn society. There are still spacious, tree-lined streets, rows of stolid brownstones and little of the blatant tawdriness of the uptown Harlem slum. But during World War II the area began a precipitous downhill slide. Today some 400,000 people—around 90 per cent Negroes and Puerto Ricans—are packed into its 3½ square miles. Bedford-Stuyvesant suffers the city's highest infant-mortality rate, highest rate of overcrowding, and almost the highest rate of crime and decrepit housing. Inevitably it has been a seedbed of summer rioting.

Yet when Kennedy first systematically explored the section after the summer disturbances of 1966, he found some promising features to serve as a foundation for building: the stability afforded by a 15 per cent level of private home ownership, and a stubborn core of neighborhood pride. After he launched the Restoration Corp. Kennedy employed his considerable persuasive powers to line up high-powered talent for the companion D&S Corp., men like international banker Andre Meyer, IBM chief Thomas Watson Jr., former Treasury Secretary Douglas Dillon, J.H. Whitney & Co.'s managing partner Benno Schmidt. With them came Republicans Jacob Javits and John Lindsay, the services of architect I.M. Pei, a \$750,000 Ford Foundation grant, a pledge of \$1 million from the Astor Foundation and \$7 million from the Department of Labor to start things rolling.

***'We are understating our goals . . .
It's going to be a helluva long pull'***

Nearly every Restoration Corp. project in the ghetto is designed to include a job-training component. Every store, service and plant it helps establish is to be owned, managed or staffed as much as possible by local citizens. And the planners have scrupulously tried to restrain those prematurely aroused expectations that have proved nearly fatal to the larger war on poverty. Kennedy staffer Tom Johnston explains: "Our feeling is that it would be much better to understate our goals and our hopes. It's going to be a helluva long pull."

Despite such precautions, there are already rumblings of resentment over what looks to some Negroes like one more grandiose handout by the white man. The two corporate bodies were quickly dubbed "White Board" and "Black Board." A factional fight forced reconstitution of the Black Board to broaden its community base earlier this year, and there are still rankling discontents over the shake-up.

The program—still in its infancy—has wisely been walking softly and carrying large uncertainties. So far there is little visible but the first fruits of phase one—the housing-renovation project. And Kennedy has found there may be limits even to his endearing young charms. One company president, Kennedy reports, put it this way: "Senator, the afternoon I walk into my board of directors and tell them Bobby Kennedy was here today and thinks we should put a plant in Bedford-Stuyvesant is the afternoon they'll have me committed."

Kennedy has no ready answer to such boardroom recalcitrance, except to push ahead wherever possible.

And hope remains high, despite the certain knowledge that tangible progress may be ten years off. "I view it as a testing ground for the proposition that a mixture of the private sector, government and the community can work," says one Black Board member. To that, Robert Kennedy's foremost political rival in New York adds his own amen. Says John Lindsay: "I think this is going to work."

DO IT YOURSELF

For some Negroes, progress is a bootstrap effort—not the long wait for white help

In the welter of embittered attitudes and ideologies swirling through the black communities, at least one notion strikes a powerful chord of concurrence: above all, Negroes want control of their own destinies. And that quest has led to a welter of self-help slum enterprises—all of them in marked contrast to the Bedford-Stuyvesant concept of concentrated external assistance. For these are economic ventures run by, and for Negroes themselves.

One such flourishing undertaking that leaves no doubt about its identity is NEGRO, an acronym for National Economic Growth and Reconstruction Organization. Headed by Dr. Thomas W. Matthew, a tall, 43-year-old neurosurgeon, NEGRO is currently renovating two six-story apartment houses in the Bronx. As ghetto families begin moving into the buildings' vacant rooms, NEGRO will supply a stream of services: a nursery, family-care programs, vocational guidance, an employment office, a medical clinic.

Begun three years ago in Queens with \$2,000 in capital, NEGRO now claims a \$1 million payroll and \$3 million in assets. It already has a string of subsidiaries that include a small Queens hospital, a chemical corporation, a clothing factory and a construction company (which supplies manpower for the apartment-house renovation), all owned and operated by Negroes. This is Matthew's answer to high-powered "hand-out" programs, among which he includes the New Deal, the present war on poverty and even the Bedford-Stuyvesant master plan. All such external schemes invariably fail to reach the hard-core Negro poor, he says.

His own program, Matthew admits, is a "big brother" scheme. "We take care of people. Nobody gets fired. We'll hire two men to do one man's job and we'll hire anybody. A secretary may have to look up every single word and be able to turn in only one piece of dictation a day, but we'll hire her. In time, she'll learn." Rather than have Negroes go on depending on white largess, Matthew encourages them to rely on Black Brother until they can make it on their own: "The point is, we treat each individual as a patient with problems that are fundamentally medical. If you approach this in pure economic terms, you don't solve it. That's why the anti-poverty program is a failure."

The president of NEGRO argues that massive inputs of money and technical assistance are nearly irrelevant in a culture of poverty where even the most basic skills are lacking, and where what is needed first of all is the dignity of working for a living. At NEGRO's chemical subsidiary for example, four young Negroes stand around a table laboriously filling sacks with an evil-smelling disinfectant compound for the Army. "I have a folder right here describing a wonderful machine," says the fast-talking Matthew with a grin. "One man can punch a button and fill three times as many bags as we turn out. A beautiful machine but it's not for us."

One of NEGRO's triumphs this past summer was the establishment of a gypsy bus line in the poorly serviced South Jamaica ghetto in Queens. It now has acquired buses and recently sent eighteen of them on a cross-country trek to Watts. "People are calling us now from all over the country," Matthew says, "either wanting us to come there or wanting our help in setting up self-help operations of their own."

But self-help success can breed new problems—as the experience of the Rev. Leon Sullivan in Philadelphia recently demonstrated. The 6-foot 5-inch Negro launched a job-training operation three years ago and now has models of his Opportunities Industrialization Center functioning in more than 40 cities. Last June his OIC's came to the attention of the White House and a special commendation from the President only further enraged ghetto Negroes who objected



to Sullivan's stress on "attitude training." To militants, "attitude training" sounded too much like tidying up the black man's image to make him less offensive to whites.

"This walk right, talk right, smile right, smell right program [is] crap," snaps Philadelphia's Alvin Echols, executive director of the North City Congress. "Why can't a dirty black man walk in for a job like a dirty white man and have the same chance?"

'Self-help groups could do so much more if America put money at our disposal'

The Negro backlash leaves Sullivan undaunted. He claims he has placed 3,000 trainees in jobs in Philadelphia alone. And though some Negroes accuse him of "creaming it" with inflated success statistics, at the moment he is pushing for a fund of \$100 million "to activate centers in 60 cities which could produce 50,000 more newly trained people in a year."

Though the OIC's are advertised as open to all comers, so far few whites have enrolled. And indeed, Negro moderates fear that the emphasis on enterprises owned, operated and staffed by blacks will tend in the long run to isolate the ghettos even further from the white community. But in a curious way, self-help enthusiasts seem to be cultivating a nineteenth-century rugged-individualist mentality that is helping establish links to the white business community. As a rule among Negro self-helpers, anything that smacks of government intervention and white liberalism is suspect; private enterprise is the only partner or benefactor to be trusted.

Thus, Detroit's Negro-run Career Development Center turned down an offer of \$2 million in poverty funds two years ago, but it has been cheerfully accepting contributions of money, equipment or instructors from Ford, the Burroughs Corp., and the hotel and restaurant industries to set up a job-training center in the Detroit ghetto.

Yet most Negro poverty workers acknowledge they can't make it alone. Dr. Cleo Blackburn, executive director of Flanner House, a highly successful self-help home-building project for Negroes in Indianapolis, recently asked the Senate Banking Committee for a national program to help put up 80,000 such houses. And in the nearly forgotten poverty belts of the South, Negroes are using Federal grants to set up self-help producing and marketing cooperatives like the prospering Southwest Alabama Farmers Cooperative Association.

"We cannot be wholly a bootstrap operation," says James Farmer, chairman of the National Advisory Board of CORE. Even NEGRO's Matthew acknowledges: "We could do so much more with America putting money at our disposal." And the whole truth seems to be that there is room enough—and poverty enough—for the efforts of a Thomas Matthew, a Robert Kennedy and even a Federal war on poverty.

NYT
3/18/68



The New York Times (by Neal Boenzi)

WOULD RESTORE VACANT BUILDINGS: Harlem residents led by Dr. Thomas Matthew, with lantern, enter back yard at 342 St. Nicholas Avenue. Men occupied three buildings and a store, promising to rehabilitate them.

Surgeon Moves Into 3 Buildings In Harlem to Rehabilitate Them

By WILLIAM K. STEVENS

Dr. Thomas Matthew, a Harlem leader, and a platoon of 50 fatigue-clad helpers yesterday broke open the doors of three vacant, dilapidated apartment buildings and a vacant store in Central Harlem, set up camp inside and said they would stay to rehabilitate the premises.

The three apartment buildings are owned by the city, which took them when the former owners—including an official in the city's Department of Relocation—defaulted on taxes.

Dr. Matthew based the action on what he called the right of "citizens' condemnation," which he likened in principle to the citizens' arrest. The Negro neurosurgeon is president of a slum area self-help group called the National Economic Growth and Reconstruction Organization.

"This is not a demonstration," he said. "This is action. There have been too many surveys, too many demonstrations. We'll clean this up at no expense to the city. All we ask is that they stay out of our way."

Agreed to Sell Recently

Three of the buildings, at 342, 344 and 346 St. Nicholas Avenue have been partly owned by David Schamis, a senior real estate manager in the city's Department of Relocation.

Dr. Matthew said NEGRO had been trying to buy the buildings to convert them into a halfway house for drug addicts, but that Mr. Schamis would not sell.

Mr. Schamis said through a spokesman yesterday that he had agreed to sell the properties two weeks ago.

The city actually owns the properties, having taken them over for nonpayment of taxes, according to Marvin Bogner, director of public relations in part.

the Department of Real Estate.

Mr. Bogner said Mr. Schamis, who with others holds a defaulted mortgage on the properties, put up a \$300 deposit last June and petitioned to regain them. The deadline for payment of back taxes "has been postponed two or three times," Mr. Bogner said.

Mr. Bogner said that if Dr. Matthew's group had occupied the buildings, "they're doing so illegally."

Dr. Matthew asserted the occupation took place because the buildings were open in the back, harbored drug addicts and were a danger to children; and because "it is wrong to have empty buildings standing unused."

Some From Hospitals

Shortly before noon, the green-clad Negroes, many of them recovered or recovering drug addicts from their organization's Interfaith Hospital in Queens, advanced with a pair of longhandled shears on the door of 346 St. Nicholas Ave. They cut through a padlocked chain with the shears, then quickly breached the doors at 344 and 342. Police stood by and watched them enter, as did a small crowd.

Later, the group went to Eighth Avenue and 119th Street, where similar action was taken against the former Wong and Wong grocery store, located on the ground floor of one of five other apartment buildings to be occupied by the group.

Some of the apartments at Eighth Avenue and 119th Street were vacant and standing open. Dr. Matthew said the owner, George Jaffee of Brooklyn, had agreed not to interfere with the occupation after a telephone conversation in which Capt. Robert Cotter of the Sixth Police Division took part.

White America— *Stop Punishing Yourself!*

Dr. Thomas W. Matthew, father of Negro self help and first black neurosurgeon, has been sentenced in Federal Court to serve six months in prison for the misdemeanor of refusal to file income tax returns. The president and creator of NEGRO* (national economic growth and reconstruction organization) has in the past openly stated his refusal, as a protest, to file and to pay income taxes in the pages of this newspaper, on radio and television and in public forums across the nation. As he so freely stated he used his personal earnings and taxes withheld to fund the self-help efforts he deemed essential to the salvation of his people and the America in which they live. This admittedly extra-legal step was taken not only to provide the needed resources for NEGRO self help but to protest the use of federal tax revenue to finance poverty programs designed to perpetuate his fellow black citizens in a state of welfare dependency.

Unwilling to accept charity from either government or philanthropic foundations, Dr. Matthew gave up most of his lucrative (\$100,000 per year) neurosurgical practice to concentrate on his twin goals of psychological and economic independence for the Negro in America. As a primary means of accenting this independence NEGRO has received its capital funding through the sale of NEGRO BONDS to both black and white. The success of NEGRO in achieving these goals in its pilot projects has enabled him this year to file and pay his taxes. Dr. Matthew has refused to contest the government action against him and is ready and willing to accept the punishment meted out to him.

We, as white Americans dedicated to the concept of law and order with justice, accept and agree with Dr. Matthew's statement to the court that he who breaks the law, no matter how noble the cause, should be willing to accept the penalty. We do believe, however, that the interests of all Americans, black and white, would be better served by the suspension or even postponement of Dr. Matthew's sentence enabling him to continue his task.

In the period since the failure to file for which Dr. Matthew has been sentenced his NEGRO industries have paid in salaries over \$11-million to persons who were on welfare. This black neurosurgeon who sees the work of NEGRO, the nation's largest black self-help program, as an extension of his medical practice, has brought to the ghettos of America the hope that dignity and pride are possible and that through diligence, unity and hard work black Americans can join the main stream of American economic life.

The shock of recognition of what centuries of slavery, segregation and discrimination have done to our fellow Americans of darker skin has brought about in white America a self-indulgent wave of guilt and self-recrimi-

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The shock of recognition of what centuries of slavery, segregation and discrimination have done to our fellow Americans of darker skin has brought about in white America a self-indulgent wave of guilt and self-recrimination. We punish ourselves with words which serve only as a substitute for the action which can resolve the problem all Americans now share.

White America must stop punishing itself and start solving our problem. We believe the first step in that solution is for white America to support NEGRO's philosophy of self-help as the means of ending black welfare dependency. We urge all Americans to join us in our declaration that the national interest demands that Dr. Matthew be allowed to continue his work for an America in which all people are equal in responsibility as well as opportunity. To remove his leadership will seriously jeopardize America's last great hope for peaceful and meaningful integration, the union of the haves with the have-nots through growth not force, in self-interest and not by coercion. The genius of the American experience is its concern with the individual. We are concerned with the fate of America which may well rest on the freedom of one of its most remarkable individuals, Dr. Thomas W. Matthew.

Write or wire the President, your Senators and Congressmen today.

CITIZENS FOR DR. MATTHEW

Co-Chairmen: John Chamberlain
Jeffrey St. John
George P. Morse

Suite 16D, 890 West End Avenue, New York, N.Y.

Suite 1052, National Press Bldg., Washington, D.C.

**NEGRO (National Economic Growth and Reconstruction Organization) is the nation's first and largest black self-help program. NEGRO industries across the country include a voluntary (non-profit) general hospital, chemical plants, lingerie and textile factories, construction firms, housing, drug addiction facilities, and the bus system of Watts. NEGRO manufacturing plants are currently under contract to private industry and the Federal Government.*

FROM: Tom Ryan
Countee Cullen Associates
A Division of NEGRO
48 West 55th Street
581-8680

MEMO TO THE PRESS

The attached material is a set of resolutions and supporting material to be presented by Dr. Thomas W. Matthew at a meeting at Carnegie International Center, 345 East 46th Street at 10:00 a.m. Monday, April 22, 1968. Dr. Matthew was invited to attend this meeting by telegram and staff telephone calls from Rev. Ralph Abernathy, President, Southern Christian Leadership Conference and Dr. Frank Reissman, Director, New Careers Development Center of New York University.

The resolutions proposed by Dr. Matthew are expressions of his concern that the assassination of Dr. King will open the Negro people once again to "rape", the raising of false hopes, and their use as "cannon fodder" in a fight for legislation already proved helpful to many white Americans (New Deal Legislation) but inherently detrimental to black Americans.

If the Poor People's March on Washington is not cancelled, Dr. Matthew will campaign across the country against black participation. He is already scheduled to speak at a New York City Human Rights Commission Luncheon on Friday, April 26, a U. S. Junior Chamber of Commerce Luncheon in Washington on Saturday, April 27 and a day long special conference sponsored by the Chamber of Commerce of the United States in Detroit on May

RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED TO AD HOC COMMITTEE

Carnegie International Center

345 East 46th Street

10:00 a.m. Monday, April 22, 1968

by

Thomas W. Matthew, M.D.,

President of NEGRO

1. We call upon black America to declare a moratorium on all demonstrations, including the Poor People's March on Washington. This cessation of demands for charity on God given rights, not subject to negotiation, should in no way be considered a renunciation of the right and obligation of the Negro people to defend themselves from any attempt by anyone to interfere with Negro self-help. Black America should turn its energy to the rebuilding of the ghettos.

2. We recognize that black poverty and white poverty are different. The fundamental problem facing the Negro is his identity. No program which fails to deal with Negro identity as its primary goal can resolve the problem of black poverty.

3. Recognizing the opportunities so tragically presented to black America, as a result of the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King, and recognizing that the national interest in the plight of the urban poor is a result of the anguished and violent expression of the Negro's needs; we resolve to undertake no movement which takes away emphasis on the black man's quest for first class citizenship.

4. In light of the foregoing facts, we resolve that this meeting confine itself to the discussion of programs related directly to the needs of black America. The noble coalition of white and black Americans which founded the NAACP and the Urban League offer testimony as to the wisdom and efficacy of meeting the needs of black America and thereby aiding all America. For example, anti-discrimination legislation and practices have opened opportunities to all minorities, including the elderly and women. Indeed the life and martyrdom of Dr. King is the perfect example of how dedication to the cause of justice for Negroes can uplift the moral and spiritual tone of a nation and the world. It is only through the resolution of the problems of the black man that white America can ever be truly free.

5. Recognizing that the elimination of black poverty would in fact virtually eliminate white poverty, we rejoice that our efforts can resolve the problems of white Americans now unemployed. We distinguish between welfare, the care and sustenance of those unable to care for themselves which is the hallmark of a civilized society, and the plight of those physically able to support themselves but prevented from so doing by social, or educational economic pathology. Inequities in/ or inadequacies of the current welfare system are serious problems deserving the attention of technicians and legislative bodies, but not the primary attention of this meeting which dedicates itself to the equalization of opportunity for all Americans through the emancipation of black America.

6. Recognizing that America has an unfinished agenda, that

AMPLIFYING NOTES ON RESOLUTIONS

1. Moratorium on Demonstrations

Demonstrations have played a significant role in the history of the black man in America. But, demonstrations have never met the basic need of the Negro in America, economic independence.

At this point, to engage in the Poor People's March on Washington to pressure Congress into enacting legislation not just useless but detrimental to the interests of the masses of black Americans, would be a tragic misdirection of energy.

To demonstrate or negotiate for God given and constitutionally guaranteed rights is to surrender before the fight. No reasonable or fair American respects or expects Negroes to honor or observe local regulations or practices contrary to the national policy of equality. Black America should not petition for equal rights. Black America should exercise equal rights.

We should never demonstrate for vague generalities, but only to correct abuses which prevent Negroes from achieving specific goals. To demonstrate for "jobs" may be satisfying to the soul, but demonstrating to eliminate practices which prevent us from creating our own jobs has a specific goal and benefit to our people.

It is time that victories be tangible. It is time that goals be realizable. It is time that our promises to the people be believable. The energy black Americans spend in rebuilding the ghetto must be equaled by the cooperation of white America. If white America fails to cooperate, but thwarts Negro self-help, the answer should not be demonstrations or riots, but direct action to achieve our goals by whatever means necessary.

Amplifying Notes on Resolutions

2. Black Poverty Unlike White Poverty

Black poverty is essentially different from white poverty. Not only is this true because of the attitude of the major community but because of the Negro's own attitude toward himself. Negro identity is the essential first step in any program to end black poverty.

For two hundred years the black man in America was systematically taught not to trust his fellow slaves and therefore not to trust himself. It is only in recent years that the masses of black Americans have looked at themselves with pride. In an America not the melting pot of legend but the uneasy coalition of ethnic groups of historical fact, the Negro must follow the example of those who came to America many generations later.

Black America must create the social institutions which create identity, pride, and resources to compete in America. It is only when their collective muscle commands respect that real integration and equal opportunity for the individual can take place. Black poor and white poor may share common symptoms of poverty, but the Negro needs more than a shot of vitamins or money to escape the ravages of a disease generations in the making.

Amplifying Notes on Resolutions

3. Black Man's Needs First

The tragic murder of Dr. Martin Luther King has been a painful and costly reminder to all America that there is unfinished business. The riots which have plagued our cities have alerted the nation to the fact that with all that has passed the masses of Negroes are still deprived. Civil rights laws and the war on poverty, while expressions of justice and humane concern, have benefited but a few while the vast majority of black Americans fall even further behind their fellow citizens.

The interest and concern currently being expressed across this country must be used to confront once and for all the harsh reality of life in the ghetto. No matter how well meaning the proponents, how humanitarian the goals, and how glittering the promises, black America should not be led into the trenches to be "cannon fodder" in the fight for legislation which benefits others but dooms it to permanent dependency. History has shown repeatedly that when broad human interests become the concern of the army, the victory belongs to the spoilers and the Negro is left behind.

Black America already asks who got the billions in anti-poverty funds. It would be a final travesty if Black America must ask about Martin Luther King, for whom did he die?

Amplifying Notes on Resolutions

4. NAACP and Urban League Set Precedent

As paradoxical as it may seem, America's attempt to resolve the socioeconomic problems of the Negro established many new rights and opportunities for non-Negroes. Most such gains were accomplished by the joint efforts of many coalitions of black and white Americans, the first of which was the NAACP, founded in 1910...followed in 1911 by the National Urban League. What both of these organizations had in common was a resolve to help the black American enjoy the full rights and opportunities of a first class citizen.

While many other integrated groups helped, none contributed so greatly and consistently during the first part of the twentieth century to improve the conditions of the Negro people. Along with the efforts of the more recently founded organizations such as CORE, SNCC and SCLC of the late Rev. Martin Luther King, they developed new social attitudes in this country. The American legend of equal opportunity has become more a reality for all citizens. In a wide variety of areas, including the armed forces, education, employment, housing and voting, arbitrary discrimination has been eliminated.

The rights of women and the elderly in employment have been expanded. More Spanish speaking and other foreign lingualed citizens are now able to vote. In states where housing laws prohibit racial discrimination, more Jews, Italians and other ethnic groups have been able to enjoy a wider choice of places to live. The business field, including the banking industry has been opened to more ethnic groups.

These gains were won as a result of joint efforts of black and white people to eliminate injustice where it has been most blatant and pervasive, toward the Negro American.

Amplifying Notes on Resolutions

5. Black Success Eliminates White Poverty

The resolutions that this meeting concentrate on the problem of black poverty are not meant to indicate that all Americans should not be concerned about the plight of our white poor. The resolutions make clear the difference between black and white poverty and do cite the immediate historical occurrences which prompted the sponsors to call us together.

In addition to the direct efforts made by others to deal with white poverty, the thrust of this united effort to eliminate black poverty would have as an effect the elimination of much white unemployment. The consumer potential of 24 million Negroes, entering the mainstream of American economic life, will create jobs for black and white alike.

The concentration of effort in the rebuilding of the ghettos, creating the opportunity for the participation and training of the unskilled Negro must bring about changes which will benefit others now excluded.

We must not confuse the problems of those a humanitarian society chooses to care for, the aged, the young, and the infirm with the problems of those prevented from functioning as productive citizens by social, cultural, educational, or economic pathology. Changes in welfare laws, however euphemistically named, will not create productive members of society.

Amplifying Notes on Resolutions

6. Unfinished Agenda Precludes Guaranteed Income

The vast majority of Americans agree that this nation has an unfinished agenda. We can even agree on many parts of that agenda. We all seek the economic opportunity for all Americans to become consumers, the rebuilding of our ghettos, the creation of educational and medical facilities, and the modernization of plants and the expansion of industries.

Each item on America's unfinished agenda creates jobs, the vast majority of which are not technical. It is our obligation to so meet these needs that their implementation provides the opportunities black Americans have always lacked. No man should be idle while plaster falls, roofs leak, or walls peel paint.

The artificial barriers which exclude black participation in construction must fall. Bureaucratic regulations designed to meet the needs of an affluent society cannot be allowed to prevent Negroes from helping themselves. If the grandfathers of the white Americans in this room could climb to the fifth floor of an old law tenement, then the children of the black Americans in this room can do likewise, even if government programs insist that an elevator be installed and make rehabilitation so costly that no Negro can afford to pay his own rent.

We seek reform not revolution. Black America is not yet ready to give up on the American system and accept a permanent dole. We refuse to concede that if white America's children can make it, black America's children cannot.

Partial Text of Opening Statement by Dr. Thomas W. Matthew
in Debate on a Guaranteed Annual Income
8:00 p.m. February 16, 1967 at
Overseas Press Club

We are here tonight not to debate a new subject but to debate an old subject. Negroes have known about guaranteed annual income since we first came to this country. Our grandparents had a guaranteed annual income. They called it slavery.

The New Deal introduced a new form of welfare called home relief. Home relief was created as a method of meeting a crisis for all the people. A massive depression made necessary a temporary guarantee of minimum income for all Americans. I am grateful because I grew up on home relief. There is no way of knowing what would have happened to me and my brother and sisters if it were not for the assistance we received.

All of us need help at some time and some of us through no fault of our own because of ill health or because we are too young or too old, will always need such help. Home relief or welfare is the way in which a civilized people take care of their own.

But home relief or welfare is not a permanent answer to the problems of the able bodied. And let there be no mistake, welfare by any other name is still welfare. There is nothing new in the attempt to disguise it by calling it guaranteed income. If one reads the Congressional debates of the thirties, the phrase appears and re-appears.

I do not doubt the sincerity of many who propose it now but I ask them to recognize that dignity cannot be granted by changing words. Dignity can only be earned.

The proposal we discuss tonight is different from the proposal of the thirties. One was a temporary measure to help all people. The other is designed as permanent means of dealing with the Negro people. Unable to find any other way to deal with the restless stirrings among the Negro masses, the social theoreticians have conceived a grand plan creating Negro "welfare reservations" from which we are never to roam.

Certainly no Negro can fail to acknowledge his debt to those who have fought the brave fight for civil rights in the North as well as the South. We must, however, ask these brave men, "Where do you lead us now?" We must pass judgment on the future they promise to us.

No matter how glorious his past, a Negro who leads his people down the path of permanent dependency is but a Judas goat. His people are to be sheared of self respect, their share of the American economy. We are to be fit only for the lines; the young for battle lines; the old for bread lines.

Where has their fight for emancipation gone? The representative of Core would lead us in another protest march. We are to demand action, pressure the President, coerce the Congress, and

what for? A return to slavery by handcuff and slavery by handout.

Our ancestors were betrayed into slavery by black tribal chiefs. It is because of their spiritual and intellectual bankruptcy that our so-called civil rights leaders are so ready to repeat history. They have no faith in America and they have no faith in their own people.

Whom do they follow? What is their program? A few short months ago they joined in attacking a white sociologist who wrote a report about the deterioration of the Negro family. Today, Daniel Moynihan is their prophet. They talk of economic independence for the Negro but beg for economic slavery. They are confused because they have never understood reality, they have never understood why they were allowed to win the victories they sought.

The Negro has always had his friends. The concerned have always existed in the white community but who are they? The concerned have been the abolitionists, the social workers, the missionaries; all men of concern but with no capacity to make dynamic decisions.

There has never been a genuine movement of the major community in the area of racial or social concern except at those moments in history when economic necessity so dictated.

The Negro was emancipated because slavery was no longer a useful economic tool. The reconstruction was halted and the Negro placed in economic serfdom because America needed and was willing

to maintain, in welfare status, a reservoir of cheap labor. The forward steps taken in the last decade have been permitted because automation has eliminated the need for cheap unskilled labor and because society is no longer willing to pay the every increasing cost of the black ghetto.

The tragedy of the confusion of our civil rights leadership is that it cannot see that at long last the needs of white America and Negro America are the same. The Negro people must serve notice that the debate about our future must be taken out of the parlors of the concerned but powerless, parlors in which Negroes have always been welcome but seldom really helped, and into the streets where our mother wit may be used to choose our future.

The civil rights leader, the white sociologist and the liberal economist all mean us well but fate plays a cruel joke on us all. The guaranteed annual income they seek for us would doom us, as it has the American Indian who stayed on the reservation, to an ever lower level of existence. The cruelty lies in the fact that this "hope" they offer is but an empty dream. The Congress is not going to pass a guaranteed annual income and every informed observer and politician knows it.

America is ready to help us help ourselves. We, as Negroes, must let America know we want the helping hand and not the hand-out. It is for this reason that I issue this challenge to all who speak as leaders of our people.

The choice the Negro people must make for themselves is between welfare and self-help. I will debate this choice in any hall, in any church, or on any street corner where our people gather. I will offer the N.E.G.R.O. (National Economic Growth and Reconstruction Organization) program of self-help as a promise of future partnership with all people in America. I challenge those who support home relief as the hope of our children to join in that debate.