

AIR MAIL

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MRS F. MATTHEWS

ATHLONE HOSPITAL

LOBATSI

BOTSWANA







IN MEMORIAM.  
Z.K. MATTHEWS.

A T R I B U T E B Y C.M.C. N D A M S E 19-5-68 A T U M T A T A.

The Chief Minister, Sir, and Members of the Cabinet and Friends, it is my privilege on behalf of your Government, Sir, the Almini, to pay heartfelt tribute to an esteemed, revered and cherished son of the Black Soil, to a dear friend ZACHARIA KEODIRELANG MATTHEWS Master of Arts, Bachelor of Laws, Doctor of Literature, Doctor of Philosophy, Sir, Doctor of Laws, HONORI CAUSA, a highly respected man generally a person always in a tower of strength of his friends as well as a Rock of Gibraltar to his colleagues.

I pay this tribute with the deepest humility, realizing fully my inadequacy to do so with my fallible reason and faltering tongue. No mortal, Sir, can deal effectively with Prof. Z.K. Matthews' amazing stature. A prophet in the same predicament declared aloud "CRY" the answer was "WHAT SHALL WE CRY".

"The cedar of Lebanon has fallen". His was a unique heritage, a heritage he dearly cherished, a heritage to which he added untold lustre. Zacharia Keodirelang was born of humble parentage in 1901 in Barkley West. He grew up in Kimberly. The cosmopolitan nature of Kimberly widened Matthews' horizons and made in him, during these impressionable years, a new and lasting perspective in human affairs and relations.

After his Primary schooling, he entered the "White Gates" of Lovedale. He then crossed the Tyumie River to step on the rock of the precincts of the then South African Native College Fort Hare. In record time he completed the requirements of the Matriculation Examinations.

In 1923, he earned so studiously the honour of being the first African graduate to qualify in the degree of Bachelor of Arts of the University of South Africa through the infant, and in many instances the rickety South African Native College Fort Hare. His insatiable desire to follow knowledge like a sinking star, led him to qualification in Diploma of Education. Thus as a result he joined the staff of Adams College and later became Principal. While Principal at Adams College, he burnt the midnight oil, scorned delight and lived laborious days in his quest to conquer academic heights in the legal profession.

While colleagues and former class-mates basked in the sunshine of glee and merrymaking, South Africa's "Wonder boy" satisfied the requirements for the L.L.B. degree of the University of South Africa. It was while he was at Adams College that he met John Albert Luthuli. Their link removed mountains till death did it part.

His scholarstic achievements and other incidental matters put him on the academic map. He was awarded a scholarship to enter Yale University - New Haven in the United States of America, where he obtained the degree of Master of Arts. On his return he stayed in London and entered the famous London School of Economics where he studied Social Anthropology and other Social Sciences at the feet of the celebrated, Bronishlaw Malinowski - the Immortal Intellectual Giant.



In 1936 he accepted the invitation to join the staff of Fort Hare where he established the Faculty of African studies. Dr. Kerr phones to say, "then he and Matthews gripped each other's hand warmly - he finds the grip even warmer after the news."

Where lies the greatness of the man, it is in Matthews the indefatigable. He was tireless as a student and as a scholar at the University of South Africa, Yale and London. He was tireless as a humanist in his deep and memorable association with J.H. Oldham the then Secretary of the International Council of Missions and with Dr. Loram.

These early associations were destined to beckon him in later years to join the World Council of Churches in Geneva with a particular task to help refugees, the dispossessed, the hungry and indigent in Africa. Thus Matthews has been making history at an age when most men are satisfied to relax and read history instead of making it. In the performance of that duty, he flew all over the world but always with his feet on the ground.

Greatness lies in the man as an **educationist**. The inordinate and often unbalanced steps from Stewart Hall to Henderson brought into the lecture-room brilliance unsurpassed to all comers that darkened the walls.

Dr. Kerr and Matthews served in the East Africa Higher Education Commission. This Commission's report laid the foundation of the University Colleges - Makerere, Royal College in Nairobi and one in Dar-es-salam.

His greatness lies in Matthews the scholar, and a man of widening horizon in a rapidly shrinking world. He rubbed shoulders with renowned scholars and intellectual giants in the London University Drawing Room. Jomo Kenyata, Kwame Nkrumah, George Murdock of Yale, Thurkoff of Harvard, Heskowitz of North Western University, Sol Saks of Chicago, Paul Leser of Hartford, O.F. Raum all supped with him. At no time did he ever come second best.

Africa generally, South Africa in particular, our young state Transkei with particular reference can never repay the debt she owes her illustrious son. Here was a man who combined intense activity with standards of quality and excellence, dedicated and devoted service with firm conviction and forthrightness of purpose, absolute integrity and honesty with common sense, greatness with humility. Indeed here was a man who dined, wine and supped with kings but never lost the common touch.

His gift as an educationist was climaxed as the Acting Principal of the University College of Fort Hare. To this he brought not only his legal training but also his understanding of human relations.

Greatness lies in Matthews the indomitable. No trial, no arrest, no detention, no humiliation, no prison could daunt the eternal spirit of the chainless mind whose liberty was brightest in dungeons made of man. His refrain was Arthur Clough's:-



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"Say not the struggle naught availleth,  
 The labour and the wounds are vain  
 The enemy faints not nor faileth  
 And as things have been  
 For Westward Look The Land is Bright, ... "

His greatness lies in Matthews the family man - the husband to a dear wife - Frede Nobusi, both whose hearts throbbed next to each other sharing the divine secrets of flesh and spirit - yea a father to five Trojans who are the proverbial "Chips of the old block."

His greatness lies in Matthews the indestructible. From all stings of misrepresentation, and political slander he emerged larger than life. A practical and astute politician he was.

His greatness lies in Matthews the Pilgrim. In him who would truly varlour see there is no discouragement. No hobgoblin no foul fiend in the image of man could daunt him. Matthews often paved the way for men of God to rise up and be done with lesser things. Often Matthews preferred penury to affluence. We often wondered for we could not fathom the Christian ethics of the man. Z.K. Matthews has carved until the end of time a place in the annals of our dear land.

His greatness lies in Matthews - the total man - the complete man. He was born Matthews. He died Matthews.

His last credo was to die in harness in Washington D.C. The President of the United States of America did not hesitate to charter the plane to bring back the remains of Z.K. Matthews per nubes to the silence of the veld from which he sprung.

Behold the Scene - the Stargazer laughing to scorn the natural barriers! What a glorious journey after the fruits of sweat and labour! Farewell Soldier, watchman of the night, scholar, music lover, gentleman and true son of the Soil whose motto is "where better wars are fought the Matthews will fight them on that side of eternity."

Goodbye relay race runner, this stick you carry from Jabavu you leave in the palm of our hand. We know only too well to drop it is to lose the mandate from Heaven.

We ununderstanding mortals cry "Matthews"! thou should be living at this hour -

The company of angels reply in chorus -

"He is with you now!"

Fare thee well! Sleep gently dear friend!

You have taught us how to live

You have taught us how to die!

IN TE, OPTIMUS OPTIMORUM, SERUISTI ARBORES, QUAE ALTERI SAECLIO PROSINT.

IN YOU, IS THE BEST OF THE BEST, YOU PLANTED THE TREES TO SERVE ANOTHER AGE.