

SONWABO EDDIE FUNDE



30 years in exile for the freedom of his nation

Commemorative edition of the Australian Memorial Service

“Eddie Funde was not just a tireless campaigner against apartheid and for the overthrow of an unjust government; he was a representative of people everywhere fighting for social justice, human rights and labour rights”.

Sharan Burrow
General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation

About this publication

This commemorative publication records the proceedings of the Australian Memorial Service organised by Union Aid Abroad APHEDA for Ambassador Sonwabo 'Eddie' Funde.

The Memorial Service was held on 19 June 2018 at the Sydney Trades Hall.

Eddie Funde was the first Chief Representative of the African National Congress to Australia and New Zealand and served between 1983 and 1991.

After the overthrow of apartheid Eddie held senior posts in the South African public sector, including Chair of the South African Broadcasting Commission.

In 2008 he was appointed South African Ambassador to Germany.

Eddie passed away on 22 May 2018. The ANC held a National Funeral in his honour.

Eddie is survived by his wife Nosizwe and sons Themba, Vuyo, Bongane and Andile.

This commemoration of Eddie Funde's life has been produced on the first anniversary of his passing with the support of Stephanie Coory, Wendy Farley of Anthouse Communications (www.anthouse.com.au), Pat Wagner, Malcolm Larsen, Mark Prasopa-Plaizier, Jill Biddington, Casey Thompson and friends of Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA.

You can honour Eddie Funde's life by supporting APHEDA's humanitarian work around the world. Go to www.apheda.org.au to find out how.

You can learn more about Eddie Funde's remarkable life in his newly published autobiography, *Man on a Mission*. Visit sifisopublishers.africa.

Daren McDonald

Sydney, June 2019

Foreword

Kate Lee, Executive Officer, Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA

From a small cold office in the Sydney Trades Hall Eddie Funde built a powerful anti apartheid movement that shaped the policies of the Australian government, won broad support from the Australian people for the cause of the African National Congress, and played a key role in the liberation of South Africa.

The ANC Mission in Australia was established at the very same time that Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA was founded, and was located just doors away. We were proud to stand shoulder-to-shoulder with Eddie and the ANC in fighting for a free, democratic and non-racial South Africa, and over the years collaborated in delivering numerous humanitarian aid programs for the people of South Africa.

Eddie Funde was a tenacious and tireless advocate for his people. On the first anniversary of his passing, Union Aid Abroad APHEDA is proud to honour his life with the publication of this Commemorative Edition of the tributes delivered in his memory at the Australian Memorial Service held in June 2018.



About the contributors

Anthony Albanese MP is the current Leader of the federal parliamentary Australian Labor Party and a former Deputy Prime Minister. He was a friend of Eddie Funde and was a strong supporter of the ANC Mission and its cause when Eddie was chief representative to Australia during the 1980s.

Sharan Burrow AC is General Secretary of the International Confederation of Trade Unions, based in Brussels. She is the former President of the Australian Council of Trade Unions and a lifelong advocate for social justice and workers' rights.

Kolin Thumbadoo is the former NSW President of the Australian Anti-Apartheid Movement. After coming to Australia as a South African exile he played a major pioneering role in helping to establish the ANC Mission in Australia.

Malcolm Larsen joined the anti-apartheid movement as a Young Labor activist. Malcolm was there at the beginning with Eddie in 1983 in helping to establish the ANC Mission. And he was there at the end; being the last Australian to spend time with Eddie in South Africa before his passing.

Jenny McAlister is a senator for New South Wales in the Australian parliament. She is the former National President of the Australian Labor Party and represented the ALP at the conference in South Africa to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the ANC.

Adam McCarthy is the Australian High Commissioner to South Africa and a friend of Eddie Funde. He is the former head of the International Legal Branch of the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade and has served overseas as Deputy High Commissioner in London, with earlier postings in Washington DC and Wellington.

Helen McCue AM was the co-founder of Union Aid Abroad – APHEDA, the international aid agency of the Australian Council of Trade Unions and was a key adviser and close comrade of Eddie Funde. She has been described by former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans as one of 'the living treasures of the Australian Labour Movement'.

Audrey McDonald OAM is the former National Secretary of the Union of Australian Women, the sister organisation of the ANC Women's League. The ANC Support Group was established in Australia on her initiative. She was a key adviser to Eddie Funde and was the guest of the ANC in Pretoria on the occasion of the inauguration of Nelson Mandela as President of South Africa.

Daren McDonald was a close friend and comrade of Eddie and the Funde family. He played a prominent role in facilitating numerous visits to Australia by ANC representatives before and after the ANC Mission was established in Sydney in 1983. Daren spoke at the National Funeral held for Eddie Funde in Johannesburg.

Tanya Plibesek MP is the shadow minister for Education and Training and is a former deputy leader of the federal parliamentary Australian Labor Party. She was an anti-apartheid campaigner and friend of Eddie Funde.

Her Excellency, **Ms Beryl Sisulu** assumed the post of High Commissioner for South Africa to Australia on 1 March 2017. Prior to accepting this post, she served as the South African Ambassador to Japan, Iceland and Norway.

Helen Ware has been an historian, a sociologist, a demographer, a human rights advocate, a femocrat, an aid bureaucrat, a High Commissioner to Zambia and Malawi, and Ambassador to Angola, and now is a Professor of Peace Studies.

Rev Greg Woolnough is a Minister of the Uniting Church of Australia and a keen advocate for social justice. The Uniting Church played a pivotal role in helping Eddie Funde and the ANC build broad community support in Australia for a free, democratic and non-racial South Africa.

About the memorial service

Professor Helen Ware, University of New England

A celebration of the life of Eddie Funde was held at Sydney Trades Hall on 19 June 2018. The venue was very appropriate because this was where Eddie established the African National Congress office after his arrival in 1983. The Commemoration opened with a stirring rendition of Nkosi Sikelel' Africa by the Sydney Trade Union Choir.

Daren McDonald, a close friend, was the MC and had attended the funeral in South Africa from which he had brought back striking excerpts expressing the whole Nation's loss. Helen McCue, co-founder of Union Aid Abroad APHEDA, and Audrey McDonald, former National Secretary, Union of Australia Women, delivered a joint Eulogy with personal anecdotes.

The deeply felt response came from Her Excellency Beryl Sisulu, the South African High Commissioner. Messages of Support came from Adam McCarthy, the current Australian High Commissioner in Pretoria, Anthony Albanese MP, Tanya Plibersek MP, and Senator Jenny McAlister.

In this setting, it was striking to remember what a vital role Eddie played in bringing the evils of Apartheid to the forefront of the consciousness of both Australian politicians and women and men in the street.

Common themes raised by several speakers were that whilst Eddie was personally humble he was very proud on behalf of the people of South Africa; that there was a period when in Australia Funde was a better known name than Mandela and certainly much better known than the official Ambassador of Apartheid South Africa, who later paid him the tribute of acknowledging that Eddie had far outshone him in every area of access to the media.

All agreed Eddie had immense courage from the time when he first joined the ANC, to the very end despite the accident which rendered him a paraplegic.

This was a rare occasion to celebrate the life of a major historical figure and for an older generation to relive past glories.



Eddie Funde addresses the Sydney May Day rally in the mid 80s with Stan Sharkey of the Building Workers Industrial Union.

Australian Memorial Service for Ambassador Sonwabo Eddie Funde

**Tuesday 19 June 2018
Sydney Trades Hall**

Acknowledgement of Country, Welcome & Opening Remarks

Daren McDonald (MC)

Showing of South African News Coverage of the National Funeral for Eddie Funde

Nkosi sikelel

Sydney Trade Union Choir

Joint Eulogy

Helen McCue, co-founder, Union Aid Abroad-APHEDA

Audrey McDonald, former National Secretary, Union of Australian Women

Tributes

Adam McCarthy, Australian High Commissioner to South Africa (Pretoria)

Hon Anthony Albanese MP

Kolin Thumbadoo, former NSW President, Australian Anti-Apartheid Movement

Hon Tanya Plibsek MP

Sharan Burrow, General Secretary, International Confederation of Trade Unions

Senator Jenny McAlister

Response

Beryl Sisulu, South African High Commissioner to Australia

Reflections

Rev Greg Woolnough, Uniting Church of Australia

Farewell Remarks

Malcom Larsen, anti-apartheid activist and friend

Opening Remarks

Daren McDonald, Program Director

Your Excellency, High Commissioner of South Africa,
Ms Beryl Sisulu;

Distinguished Guests, and I particularly acknowledge
Dr Helen Ware, former Australian High
Commissioner to Zambia;

Veterans of the Australian anti-apartheid movement;
Comrades and Friends,

Eddie Funde touched the lives of thousands of
Australians. We admired him, we loved him, and we
deeply share the grief of his family and people.

Thank you for joining us today to celebrate the life
of this courageous ambassador of his people.

Allow me to commence by acknowledging that we
meet on the traditional lands of the Gadigal people
of the Eora nation and pay my respects to their
elders past and present.

Comrade Eddie passed away on the 22 May 2018.

The South African Minister for International
Relations and Cooperation hosted a Memorial
Service in Pretoria on 28 May to honour Eddie's life.

The ANC declared 31 May 2018 a National Funeral
and in Johannesburg that day the ANC leadership,
friends and family paid tribute to Comrade Eddie's life.

For those able to stay, we will then share with you
the poignant moments of the South African services.
This part of our afternoon will run for about a
further 25 minutes and conclude just after 2pm.

It is highly significant that this Memorial be held in
this place. It was at this Sydney Trades Hall where
Eddie established the ANC Mission. And it was in
this auditorium, packed to the rafters, that President
Oliver Tambo addressed the trade union movement
to a rousing reception.

Comrades and Friends, The day Madiba stood with
Eddie atop the steps of the Sydney Opera House –

before a sea of ordinary Australians who had flocked
to the foreshore in a city abuzz with excitement that
Mandela was free and in Sydney – embodied the
enormity of the achievements in Australia by Eddie
(and the anti-apartheid coalition that he built).

To appreciate this, we must go back 35 years to
the day Eddie exited the arrivals lounge at Sydney
Airport for the very first time.

The 1967 Referendum – a landmark achievement
for Indigenous Australians – had been won a mere
16 years before.

Despite the proud history of Australian civil society
taking often inspiring actions against the apartheid
state (best illustrated by the boycotts imposed by
maritime unions on South African shipping and large
protests against Springbok tours), on arrival Eddie
found little resembling a nationally cohesive, broadly
based, and permanent anti-apartheid "movement."

The scourge of apartheid was not an international
issue that was consistently front of mind in Australia.

I think it's fair to say that even most progressives
were mainly focused on issues closer to home –
Vietnam, French nuclear testing in the Pacific, the
Indonesian invasion of East Timor, and the ever-
present threat of nuclear war.

Most ordinary Australians had never heard of
Nelson Mandela and the ANC; and many of those
who had considered them terrorists.

We know now that when the decision was taken by
Australian friends of the ANC in 1983 to support
the establishment of an ANC Mission here – a
decision taken in the George Hunt Room just yards
from where I stand – an agent of the Australian
Security Intelligence Organisation was taking notes.

To boot, the day Eddie arrived to establish the
Australasian Mission he knew no one, had no money,
no office, nowhere to live, no income to feed himself >

or run his Mission, and perhaps worst of all, no wife, as Nosizwe's arrival would have to await him raising enough funds to support his family.

Just imagine the challenge.

Fast forward a mere handful of years and:

- a broad and influential movement of unions, churches and other civil society institutions supporting the ANC had been built in Australia;
- Australians were undertaking all manner of solidarity actions;
- the Hawke Labor Government was in the vanguard of the Commonwealth in imposing financial sanctions, and was funding development assistance programs such as scholarships for ANC students;
- Apartheid had become the number one international issue in Australian civil society; and
- The ANC was widely accepted by Australians as the legitimate government in waiting.

A seismic shift towards the ANC had occurred in our country during those years, and Eddie Funde's finger prints were all over it.

Former Australian Foreign Minister Gareth Evans remembers that it was "Eddie, with his immense store of ability, dignity and personal charm" that did so much to successfully counter the propaganda attacks peddled by the regime's embassy in

Canberra, home grown racists, and those that were ignorant or ill-informed about the realities of apartheid.

Eddie's, and Nosizwe's, work in Australia did not just help change South Africa; it also changed Australia.

Let me read from a message from Sally McManus, Secretary of the Australian Council of Trade Unions:

"The Australian Trade Union Movement acknowledges the incredible role that Eddie Funde played in changing South Africa.

We also wish to recognise the part he played in improving Australian society. His belief in the Australian people to support liberty and equality in South Africa helped us reshape our national image and changed Australia's place in the world".

The story of the victory over apartheid is incomplete without the chapter telling of Eddie's years in Australia.

Today, we come together to remember and share these stories.

We begin our commemoration with a short piece of footage from the SABC about how Eddie was remembered at the National Funeral in Johannesburg.

While that is showing, could I ask the Sydney Trade Union Choir to come to the stage.

After the SABC footage is shown, I would ask that you all be upstanding for *Nkosi sikelel'*.



Eulogy

Helen McCue AM

Former Executive Officer, Union Aid Abroad APHEDA

Eddie Funde arrived in Australia on the eve of Christmas in December 1983 with no office, no money, no fund-raising structure and nowhere to live. By the time he left in 1992 he had survived an assassination attempt, was on a first-name basis with Australian government ministers and had created a network of anti-apartheid activists across the country.

Eddie was born in 1943 in Soweto, Johannesburg, where he later became a member of the African National Congress at age 20. He went into exile in Lusaka, Zambia in 1965 and later completed his electrical engineering Master's degree in 1975 in Leningrad. He worked for the ANC in Sweden and then in Dar-Es-Salaam, organising the ANC's scholarship programme for young South Africans and then moved to Zambia as the International Head of the ANC Youth Section. In 1983 he joined the diplomatic service of the ANC and was assigned as their representative for Australasia and the Pacific.

A few months after landing in Sydney Eddie, by then no longer 'homeless', was joined by his wife Nosizwe, who was able to find work with the Water Board of NSW as an engineer, a career for which she had trained in Bulgaria.

In time, with the support of the Building Workers Industrial Union and other unions, Eddie opened an office in the Trades Hall in Sydney from which he built an extraordinary grassroots movement across Australia and New Zealand of committed, energetic and effective anti-apartheid activists who worked tirelessly for the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) ANC program. His work as a political activist for democratic liberation motivated many Australians and his strategies of political community organization and mobilization were inspirational. His presence as an African activist also had a substantial impact on the Indigenous community.

I first met Eddie in the ageing creaky lifts of this beautiful old place in February 1984. The lifts were small and at that time we didn't have many Africans

in Australia so naturally I started up a conversation. We had established APHEDA, the overseas aid arm of the Australian Council of Trade Unions, in January of that same year and so both of us were new to the building and new to our respective positions. Our first formal meeting was soon after that and we discussed how APHEDA could provide support to the ANC refugees in the Front Line States and to the movement inside South Africa and how we could assist him in Australia.

Soon after Eddie's arrival the original ANC Support Committee was expanded to become the Australian ANC Support Committee based in Sydney. It was chaired by the late Cliff Dolan, then ACTU President, and myself as Secretary representing APHEDA. This committee was wide ranging in its scope with unions, faith communities, lawyers, health workers, youth and representatives from the overseas aid sector and women through Audrey McDonald the Union of Australian Women.

We all worked hard to raise awareness of the ANC's struggle against apartheid and to facilitate visits by ANC personnel to Australia from South Africa. The Committee also funded tours of South African trade union officials, lawyers, medical personnel, church ministers and facilitated meetings with key Australian politicians such as Bob Hawke and Gareth Evans.

The committee under Eddie's guidance also sponsored visits to Australia key ANC political figures including the ANC's Foreign Affairs Minister Johnny Makatini, President Oliver Tambo and Thabo Mbeki. APHEDA also sponsored ANC Treasurer General Thomas Nkobi and Executive member Steve Tshwete as well as many other sporting, legal and religious leaders. The Union of Australian women sponsored women's leader Gertrude Shope among other women as well.

While there was a lot of hard work, Eddie Funde also knew how to rally the people through cultural fundraising events such as the famed Amandla

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Cultural Ensemble's visit to Australia, a Freedom Festival, an African Film Festival as well as a successful rock concert and supported by the South African ANC Support Committee a very successful New Year's Eve Ball.

Eddie also worked very hard to gain development assistance for exiles in Southern Africa and inside South Africa. Aided by APHEDA and under Labor Foreign Minister Gareth Evans' stewardship, over 17 million dollars was made available, a sizable amount of which was administered by APHEDA for various skills training, HIV Aid education, and community level infrastructure development in South Africa. Many of those trained in Australia under this program later held senior positions in the new democratic South Africa.

With the breakdown of apartheid, Eddie relocated to Johannesburg in 1992 and was appointed initially as the Chair of the South African Broadcast Commission, later the Eddie was head of the South Africa Telecommunications Regulatory Authority.

He was appointed Ambassador to Germany in 2008 but a tragic accident there left him as a quadriplegic. His courage, humour and determination throughout his extensive rehabilitation resulted in a return to political and developmental work in South Africa.

In Australia he is remembered as a dynamic and effective lobbyist for the anti-apartheid cause and the ANC across all levels of government and he won the hearts of those he met with his charm and good humour.

Our thought are with Nosizwe and his children at this sad and sudden loss of a wonderful Ambassador for the ANC, and a brave, courageous and friend to us all.

Vale Eddie



Left to right: Australian Foreign Minister Senator Gareth Evans with Eddie Funde and Nelson Mandela at a dinner held in Mandela's honour when he visited Australia to thank the Australian people.

Eulogy

Audrey McDonald OAM

Former National Secretary, Union of Australian Women

Eddie Funde's arrival in Australia gave new impetus to the struggle against apartheid in Australia.

He built a broad and influential movement in support of the ANC amongst unions, the churches, parliamentarians, and many community organisations.

Mandela knew this – for he told Eddie when Eddie visited him just after his release: “The first thing I want to do is to come to Australia to thank them for all they have done for the struggle in South Africa and for the ANC”.

Eddie arrived in Sydney close to Christmas in 1983. The fledgling ANC Support Group – established 6 months earlier – jumped into action and a meeting was organised with Eddie at the offices of the Australian Peace Committee in Room 9. He told us what he needed – an office, accommodation, funding and to meet key people.

Next day I took him to introduce key union and church leaders and Members of Parliament to get assistance. This included Pat Clancy (BWIU), Reverend Bern Stevens (Uniting Church) and supportive NSW Labor parliamentarians Maurie Kean and Pat Rogan.

Eddie's warm personality and enthusiasm meant it wasn't long before he had a place to live, an office and many supporters anxious to help. His communication style and ability drew people into active support for the ANC in their struggle. A number of support structures were developed that Helen has referred to.

When Nosizwe came soon after, even further opportunities arose from her participation and activities with supporters. Irene Gale of the Campaign Against Racial Discrimination remembers taking Nosizwe to an anti-apartheid demonstration in Adelaide not long after her arrival.

At the demonstration there was a long line of police officers. Nosizwe looked at them and with some dread and asked Irene why they were there.

Irene replied, “They are here to protect our right to protest!”

Nosizwe too played a critical role in Australia. She undertook visits to schools and contributed in so many ways to the success of the Mission.

Many of us recall stories about their presence here with love and appreciation.

The Reverend Dick Wootton from Melbourne, the Secretary of Social Justice for the Uniting Church of Australia, recalls that Eddie's mother told Eddie, “Before you come home I want the boys baptised in Australia.” And so this was done – Dick came up from Melbourne especially to baptise Themba and Vuyo.

Eddie and Nosizwe lived a life in exile for decades. Both of them slipped into exile to join the ANC and their mothers had no idea of what had happened to them for many years.

In Australia, Doreen Borrows from Wollongong became Eddie's “Australian mother.” The Funde's spent Christmases with Doreen. Doreen tells the story of a civic reception for Eddie to talk about the ANC's cause sponsored by the Lord Mayor of Wollongong. Doreen's bus was running late and Eddie told the Lord Mayor they couldn't yet start the civic reception because his “mother” hadn't arrived.

After the reception, the puzzled Lord Mayor approached Doreen and asked, “How is it exactly that you are Eddie's mother”?

For all of us it was a pleasure to have known and worked with Eddie; we loved, admired and were inspired by him.

When Eddie came to Australia as ANC Representative in 1983 he changed our lives – our movement was brought to a new level.

All who knew Eddie will be touched and saddened by his passing.

Video tribute

Adam McCarthy

Australian High Commissioner

It is both a great privilege and also a sad duty to say a few words on this solemn day about somebody who I was proud to have called a friend in Bra Eddie Funde.

Put simply, Eddie loved Australia, and Australia loved Eddie right back.

He changed the nature of the anti-apartheid movement in Australia.

I think up until Eddie's arrival, Australians had been generally opposed to Apartheid but didn't really think much about it and certainly weren't active.

Eddie mobilized and galvanized the anti-apartheid sentiment in Australia, into an active force and made us one of the leaders in the anti-apartheid movement globally.

It was an extraordinary act done with a minimum of resources but an awful lot of hard work and character.

I just want to relate two stories to tell you something about Eddie today.

Another person who I've been privileged to know reasonably well until his own death quite recently was Tom Wheeler, who was the Consul General for the apartheid regime in Sydney in the mid-1980s.

I bumped into Tom once and, kind of one professional diplomat to another, I stirred him a little bit and said, "Well, Tom I saw Eddie every single night on the TV or heard him on the radio in Australia, when I was a teenager first becoming interested in politics and getting active in the anti-apartheid movement". I continued, "Tom where were you? I never saw you? What were you doing all that time Tom? Were you just playing golf?" and Tom said "bloody PW Botha," – might have been a stronger word than bloody just quietly – "stubborn old bastard", he said, "he made it a rule basically that if there was a member of the ANC on any given panel or a media opportunity, then we were not to appear".

"So any time I got rung up by absolutely anyone I'd say sure, that sounds terrific, now if you don't mind me asking, is Mr Funde going to be appearing? And, of course, whatever the organization was, they'd say – yes, yes, yes we've asked Mr Funde and he will definitely be there. Now I had to say no to all of these invitations".

And Tom finished this story by saying; "And bloody Eddie, he was absolutely everywhere", which of course was true.

I recounted this story to Eddie, and as you all know, Eddie was both gracious and humble. He reflected on this said, "Ah it was a slightly easier job to be selling the ANC in Australia in the mid-80s than it was the National Party, poor old Tom." And of course, he was correct.

My other really fond memory, of many fond memories, of Eddie was the first time I met him when I had the honour of taking him around the original version of the Memories of the Struggle Exhibition, which I'm sure most of you today will be familiar with.

He was accompanied by his son Themba. As we looked around at photos of Eddie, photos of Eddie with Madiba in front of the Opera house or there's a wonderful photo of Eddie with Malcom Fraser and Bob Hawke, you could just see the wide-eyed look in Themba's face, oh my God, Dad did this? Dad did that? It was just extraordinary, the pride that came through and Themba was just amazing.

We were lucky over the last couple of years with Australia Day events and with the Memories of the Struggle exhibition to get Eddie over a lot and to make a real fuss over him. Eddie's love of Australia and of Australians just came through every single time.

Can I just tell Eddie, who was a really dear friend: Hamba Kahle Bra Eddie or, as we'd say in Australia, "See you later mate". You'll be missed.

Tribute

Kolin Thumbadoo

Former NSW President, Australian Anti-Apartheid Movement

It's fitting and it's just that the people who were here at the very inception of Eddie's entry to Australia are today commemorating the great revolutionary he was.

I won't repeat the wonderful accolades about Eddie we have already heard this afternoon – his charm, his wit and indeed his whimsical sense of tactics at times.

I remember a remark at the time of Eddie's arrival, who at the time we thought was just here on a short speaking tour – "Eddie, comrade that's a lot of luggage for a speaking tour".

What we didn't understand at the time was that the ANC had decided to establish a mission in Australia for the very first time. Prior to that the ANC was forbidden from doing so in Australia due to the old cold war antics of Australia and its allies.

However, in a very short space of time Eddie had established a beachhead of the ANC and he was spoken of in the halls of power by the decision makers in this country – friend and foe.

I want to share a story about Eddie and tactics. We were on the cusp of claiming the scalp of one Doug Sutherland, who was on the Sydney City Council. Sutherland had chosen to violate our call to boycott the 100th anniversary of the racist Johannesburg City Council and attended the ceremony. And upon his return we had organised a really hot welcome. It was all set – protesters courtesy of Malcom Larsen and Young Labor. Our objective was to claim Sutherland's scalp. and score a wonderful victory for the anti-apartheid movement.

But lo and behold – I got a whisper in my ear from Eddie "Can we extract a different but

bigger prize?" than Sutherland's scalp. You could see the disappointment in my eyes as that scalp was disappearing.

Eddie together with the late Brian McGahen, a Sydney City Councillor, went up to Mayor Bingham and demanded he award the Freedom of the City to Nelson Mandela. And that is how Madiba became one of the few individuals to ever to be awarded the Freedom of the City of Sydney.

Another great achievement that Eddie managed to pull off was to have an invitation extended to Oliver Tambo to visit Australia. That visit had a huge impact in Australia in winning people to the cause of the ANC.

In my opinion, if there was ever a natural successor to Oliver Tambo it would have been Comrade Funde because of his mannerisms, his discipline, his charm and his persuasiveness seemed to mirror that of Comrade Tambo.

There are lessons that Eddie left us and we must remember. While Eddie was a true son of Southern Africa, he was an internationalist. He never forgot those who had walked with us arm-in-arm in struggle.

It was Eddie Funde who initiated the establishment of the office of the SWAPO in Australia under the leadership of Hadino Hishonga.

Eddie's internationalism left me with an enduring commitment to the liberation of others.

None more so than the Palestinians, who Eddie walked hand-in-hand with and who had stood by us from the very inception of our struggle.

Video tribute

Hon Anthony Albanese MP

I am very sorry that parliamentary sittings mean that I can't be with you because I am sure that you are not just commemorating the life of Eddie Funde – you're celebrating it.

Because he indeed changed Australian politics for the better. By being here as the representative of the ANC educating all of us about apartheid, about struggle, in a way in which he was always humble, committed, compassionate, brave, articulate and strong.

I well remember Eddie coming to the 1985 annual Conference of Young Labor. That was controversial in itself because the ANC were regarded by some as a terrorist organisation rather than a national liberation movement.

Who could have foreseen that less than a decade later, due to the struggle of the people of South Africa, apartheid would be gone?

I will never forget watching Nelson Mandela walk from goal. I'll never forget the euphoria that was there all around the world when the democratic elections happened in South Africa in 1994.

In my office in Marrickville sits a copy of the first ballot paper for a non-racial and democratic election in South Africa. This is what people gave up their lives in struggle for; democracy and a society in which people were respected regardless of their race.

Eddie Funde was a courageous and inspirational leader. He touched all of our lives in such a personal way. He helped us to understand in just a small way what it could be like to engage from a position of being regarded as inferior, which is what apartheid was.

He always put forward his views in such a respectful way. And because of that he earned respect for the struggle.

Eddie Funde will be much missed. He was very much loved and I pay tribute to him today.

Tribute

Hon Tanya Plibersek MP

Eddie Funde led a life of service to others.

He was a relentless activist, a patient diplomat and, above all else, a thoroughly decent man.

In Australia we remember Eddie best for his many years of leadership in the struggle against apartheid.

As the ANC's Representative in the 1980s and 1990s Eddie built a great coalition of support including from unions, churches, indigenous groups and leading politicians.

He bravely fought off opponents and endured a terrifying attempt on his life – but his resolve never wavered.

I last saw Eddie in 2015 at his home in Johannesburg. He was humble about his lifetime of hard work, and the enormous role he played in helping to secure a free, democratic South Africa.

Eddie served his country with distinction. But Australia is a much better place because of Eddie's example too. We will never forget him.



Video tribute

Sharan Burrow AC

General Secretary, International Trade Union Confederation, Brussels

Eddie Funde was not just a tireless campaigner against apartheid and for the overthrow of an unjust government; he was a representative of people everywhere fighting for social justice, human rights and labour rights.

As the ANC representative in Australia Eddie Funde was an inspiration.

He campaigned for his people's freedom despite the risks. The assassination attempt on his life in Australia in 1989 saw his tireless advocacy just step up a notch.

The trade union movement was proud to stand alongside Eddie Funde.

We will remember you for your solidarity with workers and for your stand against human rights abuses in South Africa and around the world.

Vale Eddie Funde



Tribute

Senator Jenny McAlister

I had the good fortune to meet Eddie when as Labor's National President I represented our party at a conference in recognition of the 100th anniversary of the ANC.

Eddie was at that time very unwell, immobile and in hospital.

I was uncertain whether he'd appreciate a new face at a difficult time, but with characteristic grace he welcomed me warmly.

We talked at length about Australian politics, the state of the international labour movement, and his reflections on the political changes that had taken place in his lifetime in South Africa.

He recalled with great detail the events of the anti-apartheid movement in Australia, and he was keen to hear news about all the friends he'd worked with.

His persistent curiosity, intellect and ambition for politics in the face of significant personal adversity was both striking and moving, as was his personal warmth.

I offer my sincere condolences to his family and comrades.

Response

Her Excellency, Ms Beryl Sisulu, High Commissioner for South Africa

We are gathered here today to celebrate the life of the late Sonwabo Eddie Funde.

In celebrating his life we acknowledge the sadness those of you in the Australian anti-apartheid movement must feel in having to say goodbye to a wonderful friend, brother and comrade.

We cannot take away your grief but we can say that we share in it. Take time to remember the happiness you felt in Eddie's presence and cherish those moments.

Eddie was a great person, a gentle giant who added so much to every life he touched. One has so much to learn from him. People like Eddie make us think about what is important in life. How do you walk from that? What do you measure and how do you measure up?

We are told that the secret to giving is to serve as if no one is watching; to come and go without the need for anyone to know that you are there.

Eddie exemplified this and this leads me to a quote from unknown author titled, "The Measure of the Man".

Not how did he die but how did he live? Not what did he gain but what did he give? Not what was his station but had he a part? And how did play this god-given part? Not what was his strength nor what was his creed but had he befriended those really in need? Not what did the piece in the newspaper say but how many were sorry when he passed away?

These are the units to measure the worth of a man, as a man, regardless of his birth.

Eddie as you know, arrived in Australia in 1983. He was a trusted activist of enormous energy and vision and he had charm and good humour. These attributes stood him well in Australia.

He effectively lobbied for the anti-apartheid cause across all sectors of society, including government. With his charm and good humour he won the hearts of all those whom he met – trade unionists, politicians, representatives of faith communities among the many.

As a Chief Representative of the ANC Eddie carried out the mandate of the ANC to the letter. He worked well with the anti-apartheid movement in Australia which became instrumental in the fight against apartheid. He was an ambassador for the ANC par excellence.

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to those of you present in this room, those not here and to everybody else who assisted Eddie and contributed so much to strengthening the fight against the evil of apartheid.

For that we will be forever grateful. I thank you.

Abridged reflections

Rev Greg Woolnough, Uniting Church of Australia

I didn't know Eddie Funde personally so I consider it a great honour to bring this reflection on the perspective of his work with the Uniting Church of Australia.

Since being invited to speak here, I took the opportunity to talk with a number of people who did know Eddie and worked with him and it is clear that the life we celebrate is one of a most remarkable person.

As I was preparing this reflection it became clear that Eddie embodied a deep and genuine love of others in the priorities he set for his own life.

Eddie refused to tolerate systemic injustice.

He witnessed atrocities committed against his own people during the apartheid era, by fellow countrymen who were acting legally because the perpetrators of those crimes were empowered.

Eddie's intolerance of injustice became his *raison d'être* and we have heard how he invested himself into bringing about change.

Eddie was realistic in recognising that if he was to challenge the power in his society then he and his family would face danger. Eddie and his family were subjected to a gun fire attack in his own home because of the stance which he took.

He accepted that if he was going to bring about change there would be risks. Throughout history people who have spoken out against the empowered who are abusive will inevitably face personal judgement.

Eddie was a man of action; Eddie was strategic. He had the ability to engage with a wide variety of people to make things more just for others.

Eddie worked extensively with the Rev Dick Wootton, who was at the time the Secretary of Social Justice for the Uniting Church's National Assembly.

Rev Dick Wootton remembers Eddie as a person of great commitment and courage. A man who was comfortable working with people of faith, unionists, sympathetic politicians and whoever else was supporting deposing a repressive regime.

This reflects a deep humility that is able to set aside the ideological difference and work of the common good.

I don't know if Eddie articulated any particular faith tradition. I do know that he requested Rev Dick Wootton to baptise his children just before he and his wife returned to South Africa. So, he valued the traditions of the Christian faith.

But more important than declaring one's faith in words is the way one lives one's life. Eddie lived his life in a way that was consistent with the way of Jesus. A life lived selflessly, aiming to do the best that can be done to improve society for all. For such is the kingdom of god. And it comes with a great risk.

Any reformer will meet resistance. Eddie saw injustice and without fear he was intentional about seeing it corrected.

Eddie was courageously adaptable. We have heard about the tragic accident that befell him in 2010 and left him physically disabled. It is a sad irony that Eddie was left unscathed by a coward's bullet but a freak accident caused him so much damage.

It speaks of the courage of the man that he was able to stay positive, both giving and receiving love from his family and contributing to the life of his community following his accident.

Perhaps it is opportune to ask ourselves how our association with Eddie has changed us and what we have learned about ourselves. Perhaps we could ask what our principles are and how we established our priorities in life based on those principles.

In order to honour his memory, let us dare to look objectively at our world and ask ourselves – how just is our society? Should we conclude that there is much to be done, what can we do to bring about change and are we prepared to face the cost?

There can be no peace without justice. And Eddie is an example of a man who brought a little more peace into the world.

Farewell remarks

Malcolm Larsen, friend and anti-apartheid campaigner

I first met Eddie Funde in the early 1980s when I was a student and became involved in the anti-apartheid movement.

From a small cold office in the Sydney Trades Hall he built a powerful national movement that shaped the policies of our government and played a role in the liberation of South Africa.

For most of us, throughout a lifetime, we only come across a handful of people who are both inspiring political leaders and genuinely warm and empathetic friends.

People who influence us in such a way, they leave an indelible mark.

For me, and many others Eddie Funde was such a person. He was a political leader; educator; mentor; funny and optimistic; patient, thorough, and determined; proud yet humble; and charismatic.

But Eddie was not brief. For Eddie came from the Moscow school, and for those of us who remember, he rarely made brief remarks. He patiently taught us about the struggle for a non-racial South Africa. And in that a bit about ourselves.

Throughout the mid to late 1980s, public debate and even popular culture became focussed on the continuing incarceration of Nelson Mandela, as the symbol of apartheid tyranny. The Hawke Government took a very public international position against apartheid, and for human rights. For Australia it was a moment of international renown and national pride.

But it was never lost on Australians, whether they were anti-apartheid activists, or ordinary folk who came within earshot of a speech about apartheid or song about Nelson Mandela to compare the apartheid minority's treatment of black South Africans with the Australian majority's treatment of indigenous Australians.

In his office in Trades Hall there was a poster of the ANC Freedom Charter declaring that:

The people shall govern

All national groups shall have equal rights

The people shall share in the country's wealth

The land shall be shared among those who work it

All shall be equal before the law

All shall enjoy equal human rights

There shall be work and security

The doors of learning and culture shall be opened

There shall be houses, security and comfort

There shall be peace and friendship

One couldn't help but consider the Freedom Charter's application to Australia.

Eddie helped advance our understanding that racism is more than just a law that forbids one race from voting, or walking through the same doorway. Because even though he was here as a representative of a very South African political organisation, the ANC, campaigning against a very South African creature, apartheid – the campaign that he led and the way he led it was for a very human, universal freedom. That's why he was so effective.

I saw Eddie again at home with his family in Johannesburg in February this year, after a gap of 26 years. He was quadriplegic, wheelchair bound and able only to slightly move his right hand. He was dependent on assistance for many things including eating and drinking.

I was initially shocked at the profound nature of his disability. Once I got over my own ignorance, we got to talk, eat, drink, and reminisce about the old anti-apartheid movement and the new South Africa, and I realised it was the same old Eddie.

I reunited with his wife Nosizwe and met his grown up sons Themba and Vuyo, who I last saw in a pram.

Eddie remonstrated against aspects of the new South Africa and the new ANC. Against the corruption, greed and ill-discipline by some in the party. Against the violence that was endemic in some parts of the country. I saw him banter with the boys, reminding them "what we fought for, what Mal fought with us for".

He told me the story of his accident, and how at the depths of his despair, he decided he wasn't going to give up.

Eddie wasn't locked in some rose-coloured past. He always lived in the present and planned for the future. He told me about the work he was doing – mentoring young entrepreneurs in the communications sector and officials in government. Still in regular contact with his MK comrades, planning the next steps. And he never gave up.

Eddie Funde set himself big goals and achieved most of them.

My lasting memory of Eddie Funde is the smile on his face that night as we talked, about the work he did and was still doing. Working not just for his beloved country, but for all humanity.

Thank you Eddie, from all of us.



EDDIE FUNDE

Servant of his people
1943 – 2018

“When I visit other countries the first question people ask me is about Nelson Mandela. When you visit Australia the first question people ask you is about Eddie Funde.”

Kgalema Motlanthe
President of South Africa 2008–2009

“The Australian Trade Union Movement acknowledges the incredible role that Eddie Funde played in changing South Africa. We also recognise the part he played in improving Australian society. His belief in the Australian people to support liberty and equality in South Africa helped us reshape our national image and changed Australia’s place in the world”.

Sally McManus
Secretary, Australian Council of Trade Unions

“Eddie Funde changed Australian politics for the better...he educated us about apartheid, about struggle, in a way in which he was always humble, committed, compassionate, brave, articulate and strong.”

Anthony Albanese
Parliamentary Leader of the Australian Labor Party

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