

TRIBUTE MESSAGE TO COMRADE TREVOR BONHOMME, MP
delivered by eThekweni Municipality Mayor: Cllr Zandile
Gumede at Phoenix Area

Programme Director,
Provincial leadership,
Regional leadership,
Members of Parliament,
Councillors,
Alliance leaders,
Comrades and Friends,
Family and Friends of Comrade Bonhomme,
Fellow mourners,
I greet you all in the name of the African National Congress.

On behalf of the African National Congress and people of eThekweni, let me start by sending my words of sympathy to the family of a Member of Parliament that recently died in Cape Town during oversight. We send our heartfelt condolences to the family of Comrade Khoza. He died in the line of duty, serving his country and his people. May his family, his comrades find comfort that he died like a soldier with his boot on.

Programme Director,

I must say that we are sad when we lose people who are dedicated in serving the people of this country. As we bid farewell to comrade Trevor who was our stalwart - we must use this opportunity to learn from the life and legacy of comrade Trevor. We as present generation of leaders, who are deployed in government – we have a duty to study the lives of veterans such as Comrade Bonhomme.

Comrade Bonhomme's political journey began at age of 7 when he was thrown off a bus for asking why he could not sit on the "white" seats. His first protest as an adult was in 1973 when he protested against the American singer Eartha Kitt's visit to South Africa. In the late 1970s, he

and his brother, Virgile Bonhomme led a Natal-wide furniture workers strike against appalling low wages. The consequence of which led to him being blacklisted and unable to find employment opportunities in Durban.

Comrades and Friends,

Comrade Bonhomme was a true soldier for non-racialism, I am sure he will be worried about the situation in Elderado park schools. He will be worried about news of coloured community refusing to be led by a black African school principal. When we see these things cropping in our society, we must fight divisions amongst our people.

We must never entertain the silliness of MPs like Malema who make reckless statements about Durban Indians. Clearly, Malema is being used by the enemy to divide our people. A true leader like Bonhomme would have challenged Malema for making such statement.

As the ANC government we have doubled our efforts in dealing with imbalances and divisions created by the apartheid regime. When we participated in the Provincial Social Cohesion and Moral Regeneration Summit convened by the Premier Willies Mchunu it was about ensuring that we unite the people of this province and the city in particular behind a common goal of creating a prosperous South Africa.

As the ANC led municipality we are alive of the fact that the majority of our people do not have access to economic opportunities. It is for these reasons we are implementing the radical economic transformation programmes aimed at benefitting Africans in particular. We have called on the captains of industry to work with the municipality to transform the economy of this city such that we have equal access to economic opportunities.

Shouting from the roof-top with no concrete programmes is a display of political immaturity and a lack of understanding of what needs to be done to create a non-racial society

Programme Director,

The fall of this hero of our struggle - after a long illness marks an end of a life spent in pursuit of the goals of our struggle for freedom. Once freedom was achieved in 1994, comrade Bonhomme dedicate his life in ensuring that our country was one that was stable and secure. He spent his life servicing the community of Phoenix even though he was from Newlands.

This is what true servants do, unfortunately in our days you find MPs and Councillors running away from their constituency work. Some spend more time on Facebook and television while leaving the communities stranded. People need us in those offices we must not leave offices to administrators, Comrade Bonhomme spent his time not only in the office but was also with people on the ground.

In 1980 comrade Bonhomme helped to launch the Durban Housing Action Committee campaigning for tenants' rights across the racial divide. Thereafter, he went on to become a founding member of the United Committee for Concern and the United Democratic Front in Natal.

In 1989, days before he was to lead 10 000 protestors for a protest swim at a whites only beach in Durban, he was arrested and imprisoned. He spent two months in prison and was released under restriction. After the unbanning of the ANC in 1990, he formally joined the party and served eThekweni Municipality councillor.

He was first deployed to the National Assembly as a Member of Parliament in 2006. In 2013, his attendance in the National Assembly was at 94%. He was so discipline and was not part of those MPs who are always absent in Parliament but only attend factional gatherings. Some MPs spend hours at save South Africa events but they will never come to ANC programmes.

Our message to Members of Parliament is that when we mandated you to go to Parliament, we did it by show of hands in our ANC meetings.

We expect you to take mandate from ANC not your conscious. Don't vote to collapse your government. Go there and defeat that vote of no confident – whether it is secret or open ballot. Defeat this enemy sponsored motion.

Fellow mourners

WE are deeply saddened to lose a comrade of Cde Banhomme's calibre. MPs whom we trusted that they will never go to bed with the enemy just to fight internal battles. Comrade Trevor was a warrior for social justice and a humble people's servant. He remained loyal to the very end.
Hamba Kahle Qhawe!