



Max M. Kampelman Papers

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FINAL

REMARKS BY

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LUNCHEON IN HONOR OF MRS./DR. HELEN SUZMAN

HOSTED BY THE INSTITUTE FOR THE STUDY OF DIPLOMACY AND

THE AFRICAN STUDIES PROGRAM

OF THE SCHOOL OF FOREIGN SERVICE

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Washington, DC

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Georgetown University's Institute for the Study of Diplomacy and the African Studies Program are honored to have Mrs. Helen Suzman as their guest this afternoon. We look upon Mrs. Suzman as one of the most extraordinary women of our century -- one of the outstanding intellectual, moral and political leaders in the world. These are generous words but they reflect a genuine and realistic appraisal of Dr. Suzman's illustrious career.

It has been said that Helen Suzman was a conscience of her nation. It can also be said that her voice represented the conscience of the human race as she courageously and effectively challenged the monstrous policy of apartheid in her country. Her tools were simple but powerful. She used her service in the Parliament of South Africa from 1953 to 1989 to marshal her intelligence, wit, mastery of facts, and passionate commitment to justice to challenge a tribal pattern in her country which ran contrary to the dignity of the human being. It

was Solzhenitsyn who said: "The inability of most people to feel the pain of others as if it were their own is what makes evil possible."

The daughter of an immigrant family from Lithuania, she trained and began as a teacher and then concluded that in a democracy she could be most effective by entering the political arena. She ran for office and entered Parliament as a member of the Progressive Party. From 1961 to 1974 she was the only member of her party in the Parliament, standing virtually alone in her dedication to the principle of human dignity and equality of opportunity.

The message for her country was a simple one, "Released from the shackles of apartheid, South Africa will become the workshop of the African continent . . . able to enhance and enrich not only its own geographic region, but the world at large."

The recipient of more than twenty-two honorary degrees and many other awards of distinction, the world has already expressed its appreciation to Helen Suzman for her leadership and her commitment. Georgetown University is honored with her presence here today.