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For Immediate Release

**A Trailblazer, A Pioneer, and a Patriot - The United States Presidential Service Center Marks the Passing of Madeleine Albright**

Washington D.C ( April 27, 2022) "It took me quite a long time to develop a voice, and now that I have it, I am not going to be silent."

The words of Madeleine Albright, who was laid to rest today after passing away last month at the age of 84.

Albright was a true American success story. Born to a Jewish family in Prague, they were forced to flee Czechoslovakia when Madeleine was only two. The year was 1939 and Hitler had just taken control of her country.

In fact, it was that war and its impact on her family that shaped her life. She fled Nazism and later fled Communism. Albright had seen first-hand the problems that came with appeasing dictators. Her family was a clear example. Albright's family lost more than a dozen people in the war, including three of four grandparents. At least two perished in the Nazi Concentration Camp of Auschwitz.

"She always stood on the side of freedom," said Dr. Miguel Rodriguez, United States Presidential Service Center CO-CEO. "This is truly a sad day for our nation. In diplomacy, she led the way and showed us the way."

Albright became a US citizen in 1957 nearly a decade after her family applied for political asylum. She married in 1959 and built a long career as a successful professor at Georgetown. Her classes on government were required as she taught about the dangers of authoritarian states and their leaders.

Dr. Joynicole Martinez, who is CO-CEO of the United States Presidential Service Center remembered Albright, not just for her accomplishments but for how she inspired a new generation of leaders, including women.

"Because of her achievements, women sitting at the helm was no longer a rarity," said Dr. Martinez. "We owe her a debt of gratitude and she is deserving of the many tributes that honor her."

In December of 1996, then President Bill Clinton tapped Albright to be America's first female Secretary of State. In announcing his choice, Mister Clinton remarked "She has watched her world fall apart, and ever since, she has dedicated her life to spreading to the rest of the world the freedom and tolerance her family found here in America."

She worked tirelessly to balance the challenges of diplomacy and military might. In 1998, she helped to craft the Wye Accords that saw the Palestinians gain control of about 40% of the West Bank.

"She was respectful and curious, and this allowed her to work with all parties and identities of people," said Dr. Martinez.

A year later, Albright helped to persuade President Clinton to support efforts to overthrow Yugoslavian leader Slobodan Milosevic who had been accused of genocide and other war crimes. Milosevic was eventually deposed and stood trial at the Hague. During those proceedings, he was eventually found dead of a heart attack in his cell.

After she left public service, Albright continued to be a voice for the voiceless, working on a variety of projects and authoring several books. In 2012, President Barack Obama awarded her the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation's highest civilian honor.

"Once she had the voice, she used it and she used it to support the pillars of democracy," said Dr. Rodriguez.

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