

Sir De Villiers Graaff Papers (1913 - 1999)

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Abstract:

The Sir De Villiers Graaff Papers reflect the distinguished career of a South African politician who played an important part in the parliamentary, constitutional, economic, agricultural and military life of the country for many decades. Sir De Villiers Graaff was an MP of the former United Party from 1948 to 1977 and Leader of the Opposition for more than 21 years. The Papers comprise of correspondence, speeches, memoranda, pamphlets, press cuttings, photographs and publications. Subjects include the African National Congress, Broederbond, Black Sash, communism, crime, education, Bantustans, Poqu, Rhodesia, Ex-Services League, terrorism, War Veterans Torch Commando, South West Africa, Wallachs' Printing and Publishing Company among others. In addition the Graaff Papers include about 150 files on individuals. Sir De Villiers Graaff corresponded with many persons, locally and internationally. There is also correspondence between Sir De Villiers Graaff and Nelson Mandela, writing on behalf of the All-In African National Action Council, about Africa becoming a republic. The volume of correspondence addressed to Sir De Villiers Graaff, the many requests for assistance (for passports, pensions, jobs and money, among others) and the expectations of the general public of all races, however, is amazing. The compassion and kindness in Sir De Villiers Graaff's replies are exceptional and caring person. All the speeches, except those at school functions and at art exhibitions, are on the subject matter. Sir De Villiers Graaff used the information files for research purposes during his public career. The files are arranged in alphabetical and chronological order. The Sir De Villiers Graaff Papers are of great research value to students in many different fields of study. It is a privilege to preserve and make available to researchers the Graaff Papers. They provide insight into the political turbulence and trends in South Africa between 1948 and 1977, as seen through the eyes of the Leader of the Opposition Party.

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