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Donald P. Kommers, the Joseph and Elizabeth Robbie Chair in Government and International Studies and a concurrent professor emeritus of law, died Dec. 21 at his home in Holy Cross Village. Kommers served as director of the then-named Center for Civil Rights at Notre Dame Law School from 1976 to 1981. He was the second to hold the position, and is credited with helping Rev. Theodore M. Hesburgh expand the mission of the Center to embrace international human rights.

A member of the Notre Dame faculty since 1963, he was a renowned scholar of German and American constitutional law. He was the author of more than 100 major articles and books, including the widely acclaimed work "The Constitutional Jurisprudence of the Federal Republic of Germany," the third edition of which was published in 2012 by Duke University Press and recently reviewed with high praise in the *Frankfurter*

Allgemeine Zeitung.

Kommers also served as an advisor to President Jimmy Carter's Commission on the Holocaust. This experience, along with his international perspective, was reflected in the work of the Center. In his second year as director Kommers organized a major international conference at Notre Dame entitled "Human Rights and American Foreign Policy." The next year the Center undertook a study of American immigration and refugee policy against the backdrop of developing human rights law. The findings of this study, along with the Center's recommendations, were submitted to the Select Committee on Immigration and Refugee Policy in 1980.

While alongside this expanded, global, vision, the center continued to pursue the civil rights agenda upon which it had been founded, by the end of Kommers' term the Center had been renamed the Center for Civil and Human Rights. A generous gift by Rick and Molly Klau in 2018 created the Klau Center for Civil and Human Rights, now part of the [Keough School of Global Affairs](#).

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