

KOL MEVASSER

A Hero of the Holocaust

Reprinted from CNN

KJ Editors: We thank Michael Salem for bringing this article and this true hero to our attention

When Ho Feng Shan died at the age of 96, he took a secret to his grave. The only clue was a single sentence in his obituary in 1997. Throughout his long life, Ho never mentioned his heroic deeds during World War II, not to his wife, his children or friends.

During 1938 to 1940, Ho, the consul general of the then Nationalist Chinese government's consulate in Vienna, saved perhaps tens of thousands of Jews from the Holocaust with just a stroke of his pen. When Jews desperately sought visas to escape from Nazi-occupied Austria, he issued thousands — in defiance of his superior's orders.

The exact number of entry papers Ho issued -- and the number of lives saved -- may never be known, as too many have already been lost to time. Ho is often hailed as "the Chinese Schindler," in honor of the industrialist Oskar Schindler who saved 1,200 Jews by employing them in his factory located in Poland. "Nowadays most people believe that he saved more than 5,000 lives at the time," said Xu Xin, a professor and a leading expert on Jewish studies at Nanjing University. "More importantly, Ho was probably the first diplomat to really take action to save the Jews."

While other countries refused to issue visas in fear of aggravating the Nazi government, Ho threw his weight behind the Jews. And when the Nazis confiscated the premises that housed the embassy because it was owned by a Jew, Ho opened a new office with his own money to continue the rescue. "It

was totally in character," says Manli Ho, daughter of the late diplomat, who has been researching her father's story for some ten years. "That is the kind of person he was -- very principled, straightforward, and has integrity."

The visas Ho gave out were unique-- they were only for Shanghai, an open port city without any immigration controls and occupied by the Japanese army. As a result, anyone could enter without a visa.

So why did he issue visas to a place that doesn't require one in the first place? Here's where Ho's sophistication shines through. The holders of Ho's visas didn't all travel to Shanghai but they were able to use the papers to get a transit visa and escape elsewhere -- the United States, Palestine, and the Philippines to name a few destinations.

But the fact that Ho kept issuing Shanghai visas created a buzz among the Jewish community and the city earned its own reputation as a safe haven. "It's like gossip. All of a sudden the Jews heard about Shanghai visas, and they were desperate to escape. So the name Shanghai spread very fast like wild fire, and also the fact that Shanghai did not need any kind of document," said Manli.

Among those who received a visa was Eric Goldstaub, who was 17 years old when he received one of 20 Shanghai visas issued for his family.

When the Nazis annexed Austria, he started knocking on consulate doors in search of visas to leave, only to be turned down time after time. After 50 attempts, he stumbled upon the Chinese consulate, where Ho extended his welcome.

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KJ Schedule Devarim

Erev Shabbat

Friday, July 24th

Shaharit / Morning Prayer ... 6:15 am
Minha / Arvit 6:30 pm
Candle Lighting 7:42 pm

Shabbat & Erev Tisha B'Av

Saturday, July 25th

Shaharit / Morning Prayer ... 8:30 am
Shabbat Speaker: Professor Lev Hakak
Minha..... following Kiddush
Tisha B'Av Fast Begins 7:57 pm
Havdalla, on candle only 8:49 pm
Book of Eikha / Lamentations Reading
& Tisha B'Av Services 8:45 pm

Tisha B'Av

Sunday, July 26th

Shaharit / Morning Prayer ... 7:00 am
Tisha B'Av Services to follow
Minha & Arvit..... 7:00 pm
Tisha B'Av Fast Ends 8:37 pm

Weekdays

Monday to Friday July 27th to 31st
Shaharit / Morning Prayer .. 6:30 am

Erev Shabbat & Tu B'Av

Friday, July 31st

Shaharit / Morning Prayer ... 6:30 am
Minha / Arvit 6:30 pm
Candle Lighting 7:37 pm

Torah & Haftara Readings
Devarim/Deuteronomy TBA
Haftara from Prophets TBA

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"What a surprise waited for me! A nice reception, a friendly smile and the following message: Bring your passports and we will give you the visas for our country," wrote Goldstaub in his memoir.

Goldstaub passed away in 2012 at 91 years old in Toronto, Canada. He was survived by two sons and a daughter. "He was very active; he liked soccer, snow skiing. Even in his nineties he swam every morning and walked every day," Danny Goldstaub, his son said.

The significance of the Shanghai visa hasn't escaped his descendants. "I mean -- if you look at the family tree, without Dr. Ho, a lot of lives would not be existing right now," said the younger Goldstaub. "He saved a lot of lives at that stage."

Amid the ravages of the war, Japanese occupied Shanghai became a "Noah's Ark" that sheltered around 25,000 Jewish refugees fleeing the Nazis. In 1943, the Japanese occupiers cordoned off an area called the Restricted Sector for Stateless Refugees -- more commonly known as the Jewish Ghetto -- and made the Jews move in. Life was tough inside the ghetto, says Wang Jian, a history professor researching modern Jews in China at the Shanghai Academy of Social Sciences. Residents had to live in crowded, unsanitary rooms and face the threat of persecution by the Japanese military.

Despite the challenges, Jewish refugees established businesses and managed to thrive. The settlement soon took on the appearance of a German or Austrian city; a road was called "Little Vienna" for its cafes, shops and night-clubs. Theater groups and an orchestra formed, sports teams -- from soccer to table tennis -- sprang up, and over ten German publications [were] produced . . .

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Shabbat Kiddush

is sponsored by
**Carole and Lev Hakak
& Family**

in memory of
their beloved son
Jacob, z"l

Shabbat Speaker Professor Lev Hakak

*Professor of Hebrew Language
and Literature at UCLA*

*Will share a drasha on this week's
parasha / Torah portion
Devarim / Deuteronomy*

*Professor Lev Hakak dedicates this
sermon in everlasting blessed memory of
his and Carole's beloved first born son
Jacob Hakak, z"l (1980-2014)
on the occasion of his yahrzeit*

Refuah Shlemah

Abe Abraham
Moselle Amron
Mordechai Cohen
Sylvia Cohen
Esther Duke
Sassoon Ezra
Tilda Levy
Maurice Ovadia

Condolences

to the Family and Friends of
Marsel Rahamim, z"l

She is survived by her daughter,
Yvonne Ezer of Kahal Joseph, & family
*May Hashem comfort them together
with all the mourners of Tzion.*

In Memoriam

We remember these yahrzeit anniversaries
July 25 to Aug 1, 2015. It is customary to light
a memorial candle, donate tzedaka, & attend
Shabbat services.

9 Av / Shabbat, July 25th

Alice Acoca *Alice bat Esther*
Aziza Jacob *Aziza bat Farha*
Amalia Mussry *Amalia bat Rahel*
Mary Nathan *Mariam bat Bolisa*

10 Av / Sunday, July 26th

Ramon Zakoo *Yehya Ramon ben Ezra HaLevy*

12 Av / Tuesday, July 28th

Aziza Elias *Aziza bat Rahel*
Hacham Moshe Masliah *Moshe ben Yaacob*
Hayat Sarraf *Hayat bat David*

14 Av / Thursday, July 30th

Moshi Hagooli *Moshe ben Yehezkel*
Eliyahu Mordechai Mizrahie *Eliyahu ben Mordechai*
Pinchas ben Channah
Moshe Hagani

Correction: Tisha B'Av Fast

*In Los Angeles the Tisha B'Av Fast begins at
sunset on Saturday July 25th at 7:57 pm and
continues to Sunday, July 26 at 8:37 pm*

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Today, only a handful of remnants stand as testimony to this history although organizations like the Shanghai Jewish Refugees Museum are trying to change this. Ho was an unassuming man who grew up poor and fatherless in China, and rose to become a diplomat. Since Ho seldom spoke of the events in Vienna, the public knew little of his involvement while he was alive.

His story came to light by accident, when his daughter...wrote his obituary, in which she included a tale of him confronting the Gestapo at gunpoint to save his Jewish friends -- the only wartime tale he ever told her. A curator of an exhibition about diplomat rescuers picked up the obituary and contacted Manli. This made her curious ...to retrace her father's footsteps.

Ho spent the rest of his life in San Francisco, California. It wasn't until long after his death that the diplomat received recognition for his courage in saving thousands of Jews from the Holocaust. In 2000, Israel posthumously bestowed the title of "Righteous Among the Nations," one of its highest civil honors. ... The U.S. Senate passed a resolution honoring Ho's heroic deeds in 2008. And earlier this year, a commemorative plaque was placed on the former Chinese Consulate building in Vienna, which is now a Ritz Carlton Hotel. In Taiwan, where the Nationalist government fled at the end of World War II, he will be honored by President Ma Ying-jeou as part of ...events this summer to mark the 70th anniversary of the end of the war in Asia.

In his Chinese-language memoir published in 1990, Ho described how he was deeply moved by the Jews' plight: "Seeing the Jews so doomed, it was only natural to feel deep compassion, and from a humanitarian standpoint, to be impelled to help them." But we'll never know why he chose to keep his heroic acts a secret.

Tisha B'Av: A Day of Fasting and Mourning

When the fast of Tisha B'Av commences on Saturday night (whether the 9th of Av falls on Sunday, or whether it falls on Shabbat and the fast is postponed to the next day), there are certain differences that need to be mentioned. Meat and wine are consumed during the Se'uddath Hammafsekket (final meal) because it occurs on Shabbat. In fact, there are no restrictions as to what may be eaten. However, one must complete the meal before sunset. One should be careful not to adopt any customs on this Shabbat afternoon which might appear to be due to *avelut* (mourning).

Havdallah is made during the Arvit prayer. The blessing on the havdallah candle, *Bore Meore HaEsh* is recited during Havdallah, but there is no blessing on spices (*Besamim*) and the blessing on wine is deferred. At the end of the fast on Sunday evening, the blessing on wine for havdallah, *Bore Pri Haggefen* is made without a candle or *Besamim*.

During the fast itself, the five items prohibited on Yom Kippur, eating and drinking, bathing, anointing, wearing (leather) shoes and marital relations are likewise prohibited on Tisha b'Av. There are many different opinions concerning the wearing of Tzitzit and Tefillin on Tisha b'Av morning, The way mentioned in the "Ben Ish Hai", is to don them at home in the morning and read the Shema only, and they are not worn again the rest of the day. We must sit on a mat or something low from the night of Tisha b'Av. Ashkenazim may sit on regular chairs from the middle of the day of the 9th of Av, but Sephardim should wait till approximately 4:00 p.m.

"Eikha", or the Book of Lamentations, is read at night and again in the morning, in accordance with the Sepharadim. The Book of Lamentations is an intricate set of dirges and descriptions of Jerusalem under siege and of the destruction of the First Temple. The elegy bewails Jerusalem, once teeming with life and now sitting abandoned and alone like a solitary widow. It captures the horror of the siege: children pleading for water and bread in vain; cannibalism on the part of hunger-maddened mothers ("those who died by the sword were better off than those who perished by hunger"); nobles hanged; women raped; priests defiled. The prophet basically blames Jewish immorality and idolatry for the tragedy. Yet there is a fascinating outburst in Chapter 3 in which the believer, as it were, accuses God of being the enemy--like a lion lying in ambush to destroy his victim. The prophet comes close to losing his faith ("I thought my strength and hope in the Lord had perished") before the memory of God's past kindnesses restores it--barely. *May we merit to see the day when this and other days of sorrow will be turned into days of joy, happiness and good seasons. Amen.*

The Man Who Saved Tel Aviv

From the Los Angeles Times

When Lou Lenart was growing up in a Pennsylvania mining town, he endured beating after beating because he was Jewish. After he took a Charles Atlas bodybuilding course, he joined the Marines and fought in the Pacific. A few years later, he smuggled warplanes into Israel, helped found the new state's tiny air force and led an attack on more than 10,000 Egyptian troops who had advanced to a bridge within 16 miles of Israel's biggest city.

Lou Lenart was one of the jet pilots credited with holding off an Egyptian attack on Tel Aviv when the state of Israel was only weeks old. "It was the most important moment of my life, and I was born to be there at that precise moment in history," he told the Jerusalem Post in 2012. "I was the luckiest man in the world that my destiny brought me to that precise moment to be able to contribute to Israel's survival."

Lenart, hailed in Israeli headlines as "the man who saved Tel Aviv," died Monday at his home in Ra'anana, Israel. He was 94. He had congestive heart failure, his Los Angeles publicist, Edward Lozzi, said. In a long, swashbuckling career, Lenart airlifted thousands of Jewish refugees from Iraq to Israel, served as a pilot for El Al airlines, worked as general manager for basketball's Clippers when they were based in San Diego and helped produce a number of Hollywood films shot in Israel.

Lenart is featured in "Above and Beyond," Nancy Spielberg's 2014 documentary about Jewish pilots from the U.S. who established Israel's air defenses. Intrigued by stories of their groundbreaking work in Israel, playwright David Mamet likened Lenart and his colleagues to the giants of American history. "Meeting with guys like Lou Lenart and Al Schwimmer, it's like sitting down with Abraham Lincoln or George Washington," he said in a 2012 interview with the Israeli newspaper Haaretz. "When the pioneers did what they did, it was basically impossible."

Lenart kept a home in Los Angeles as well as one in Israel. One of the planes he flew as a Marine fighter pilot is on permanent display at the Proud Bird restaurant complex near Los Angeles International airport. But he is most closely associated with a 40-minute strafing and bombing raid on Egyptian columns that had marched up the Israeli coast from Gaza on May 29, 1948. With tanks and trucks, the troops were stalled at a bridge that had been blown up by Israeli commandos. In another day, they would have rolled into Tel Aviv.

With only a few hours' notice, Lenart and three other pilots hopped into Czech Avia S-199s — small, rickety planes that had been pieced together with parts from German Messerschmitts, dismantled before being covertly shipped to Israel and reassembled on a makeshift airstrip.

"We had never flown the planes before," he said. "We didn't know if they would fly or if

the guns would work." In fact, Lenart's guns jammed. One of the planes, piloted by a South African named Eddie Cohen, went down in flames. "We lost one-fourth of our air force that day," Lenart later said. "It was like a piece of your heart being broken off." But, surprised by the attack, the advancing forces ultimately withdrew. The bridge where they had bogged down is still known as Ad Halom — or "Up to Here."

Born Layos Lenovitz on April 24, 1921, in a Hungarian village near the Czech border, Lenart grew up in Wilkes-Barre, Pa., where his family immigrated when he was 9. His parents ran a small store, sometimes selling his mother's noodles door to door.

Lenart joined the Marines at 17 and nearly lost his life in a mid-air training collision. He went on to serve at the Battle of Okinawa and in bombing raids over Japan. In 1948, he attended a lecture on Zionism. Fueled by the deaths of 14 family members at Auschwitz, he volunteered for service with the emerging state.

Over the years, Lenart worked for several Israeli organizations. In 1988, he received the Silver Menorah award from the Israeli film industry. His film projects included "The Prodigal Father," "Iron Eagle" and "Iron Eagle II."

Lenart's survivors include his wife, Rachel Nir, daughter Mikael Lenart and grandson, Halal.

May his memory be a blessing
