

## Lutz, Carl

(Charles; 1895--1975), Swiss diplomat who saved thousands of Jews in Hungary. Lutz arrived in Budapest in January 1942 to serve as Switzerland's vice-consul, and was put in charge of representing the United States, Great Britain, and other countries that had cut off ties with Hungary.

Several weeks after the Germans occupied Hungary in March 1944, they began deporting Jews to Extermination Camps. Lutz tried to persuade the Hungarians to stop the deportations. After the *Horthy Offer*, which was to allow Jews to leave Hungary for Palestine, Lutz issued four group certificates of *aliya*, each for 1,000 persons. It was Lutz who issued these because, as Swiss Consul, he represented British interests in Hungary, including issues regarding the British Mandate in Palestine. Soon, the certificates were augmented so that not only the person on the list could immigrate, but his family, too. By that time, almost 50,000 Jews had been put under Swiss protection as potential immigrants to Palestine. Each of these Jews was also given a letter of protection that guaranteed their safety until they left for Palestine.

After the Arrow Cross Party came to power in Hungary in October 1944, Zionist Youth activists, housed in Lutz's office, forged 100,000 more of these documents. The authorities demanded that Lutz and Raoul Wallenberg separate the legitimate from the false papers and, to protect the delicate rescue operation, they gave in. When the Germans established two ghettos, one for document-holders, Lutz obtained buildings to house 3,000 more Jews under his protection. All but six survived.

In November 1944 Adolf Eichmann ordered the forced march of Budapest's Jews to the Austrian border. Lutz and other diplomats rushed to rescue as many Jews as possible; he, like his colleagues, plucked Jews out of the marching columns and returned them to Budapest.

When the Soviets invaded Budapest in January 1945, Lutz and his wife fled. After the war they returned to Switzerland, and in 1965, Lutz was designated as Righteous Among the Nations by Yad Vashem.

