Forgotten Heroes of the Holocaust Congressional Gold Medal Act

[Public Law 118–149]

[This law has not been amended]

[Currency: This publication is a compilation of the text of Public Law 118–149. It was last amended by the public law listed in the As Amended Through note above and below at the bottom of each page of the pdf version and reflects current law through the date of the enactment of the public law listed at https://www.govinfo.gov/app/collection/comps/]

[Note: While this publication does not represent an official version of any Federal statute, substantial efforts have been made to ensure the accuracy of its contents. The official version of Federal law is found in the United States Statutes at Large and in the United States Code. The legal effect to be given to the Statutes at Large and the United States Code is established by statute (1 U.S.C. 112, 204).]

AN ACT To award a Congressional Gold Medal collectively to 60 diplomats, in recognition of their bravery and heroism during the Holocaust.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. [31 U.S.C. 5111 note] SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Forgotten Heroes of the Holocaust Congressional Gold Medal Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The following diplomats will be honored posthumously: Per Anger (Sweden), Jose Maria Barreto Bustìos (Peru), Lars Berg (Sweden), Philippe Bernardini (Vatican/Italy), Hiram (Harry) Bingham IV (United States), Friedrich Born (Switzerland), Gilberto Bosques Saldivar (Mexico), Carlos de Liz-Texeira Branquinho (Portugal), Samuel del Campo (Chile), Aracy de Carvalho Guimarães Rosa (Brazil), Jose Arturo Castellanos Contreras (El Salvador), Carl Ivan Danielsson (Sweden), Luis Martins de Souza Dantas (Brazil), Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz (Germany), Harald Feller (Switzerland), Francis (Frank) Foley (United Kingdom), Jean-Edouard Friedrich (Switzerland), Carlos Almeida Afonseca de Sampaio Garrido (Portugal), Raymond Herman Geist (United States), Feng-Shan Ho (Republic of China), Constantin Karadja (Romania), Alexander Kasser (Sandor Kasza) (Sweden), Elow Kihlgren (Sweden), Joseph Willem (Joop) Kolkman (Netherlands), Julius Kuhl (Poland), Aleksander Lados (Poland), Valdemar Langlet (Sweden), Charles (Carl) Lutz (Switzerland), George Mandel-Mantello (El Salvador), Florian Manoliu (Romania), Manuel Antonio Muñoz Borrero (Ecuador), Salomon Jacob (Sally) Noach (Netherlands), Giorgio (Jorge) Perlasca

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(Spain/Italy), Ernst Prodolliet (Switzerland), Eduardo Propper de Callejon (Spain), Franjo Puncuch (Yugoslavia/Slovenia), Konstanty Rokicki (Poland), Sebastian de Romero Radigales (Spain), Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli (Vatican/Italy), Angelo Rotta (Vatican/Italy), Albert Emile Routier (Turkey/France), Jose Ruiz Santaella (Spain), Stefan Ryniewicz (Poland), Angel Sanz-Briz (Spain), Abdol-Hossein Sardari (Iran), Henryk Slawik (Poland), Robert Smallbones (United Kingdom), Aristides de Sousa Mendes (Portugal), Jan Spisiak (Slovakia), Chiune (Sempo) Sugihara (Japan), Ireanaeus Typaldos (Spain), Alexander (Sandor) Ujvary (Vatican/Hungary), Selahattin Ulkumen (Turkey), Gennaro Verolino (Vatican/Italy), Vladimir Vochoc (Czech Republic), Ernst Vonrufs (Switzerland), Raoul Wallenberg (Sweden), Guelfo Zamboni (Italy), Peter Zurcher (Switzerland), and Jan Zwartendijk (Netherlands).

(2) On September 1, 1939, Adolf Hitler and the Nazis began their invasion of Europe, which started World War II and threw the world into chaos. The Nazi plan of mass murder of the Jewish population was in full motion. As battles were being fought between countries, Jews were being rounded up and sent to concentration camps throughout Europe. This process began a mass exodus of people out of Europe, especially those in the Jewish community.

(3) During the war, members of the Jewish community used every tool and means at their disposal to flee Nazi tyranny. Thousands tried to flee on trains or boats to escape from Europe.

(4) While the armies of countries were fighting each other, a handful of diplomats, from around the world, stepped forward and took heroic actions to save Jews fleeing Europe. This was an incredibly dangerous process. If the Nazis discovered the actions of these diplomats they would be expelled, as a few of them were. Also, while worrying about the Nazis, diplomats had to worry about their careers and livelihoods back home. Many of them had strict orders from their home countries to not aid the Jewish population in any way.

(5) These diplomats used every means at their disposal to help Jews fleeing persecution. One of the most powerful tools the diplomats had to use was the issuing of passports and travel visas contrary to the instruction of the governments of the diplomats. This process alone is responsible for saving hundreds of thousands of Jewish families in Europe. This was not the only tool used as many of the diplomats were connected with the local populations and were great communicators for Jews trying to travel underground. They were able set up safehouses and getaways to hide Jews and especially Jewish children from Nazi authorities. In the most dangerous of times, several of these diplomats confronted the Nazis directly on behalf of the Jews and personally put themselves in grave danger.

(6) Every diplomat knew the dangers and knew what they were up against, and still pushed forward to save those in the most danger.

(7) The Congressional Gold Medal authorized under this Act will help remind humanity that when the diplomats were faced with terrible crises, they went beyond the fold, including risking their careers and the lives of themselves and their families, to engage in this humanitarian mission. The diplomats of today and future generations can look towards these heroes and be inspired by their lives of heroism and sacrifice.

(8) Nothing in this Act shall be construed as stating or implying that this group of honorees encompasses everyone who took this type of heroic action during this era. As the title attests, the "Forgotten Heroes" performed these deeds out of righteousness, with no expectation of public acclaim. The sponsors of this Act wish to honor this group of individuals for whose deeds the historical record is currently definitive and well-documented. Given that historical research is ongoing, in the event that robust documentation from professional historians, expert stakeholders, and public input identify others worthy of official recognition, future Congresses retain the right to recognize additional forgotten heroes of the Holocaust pursuant to future legislation.

SEC. 3. CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL.

(a) PRESENTATION AUTHORIZED.—The Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President pro tempore of the Senate shall make appropriate arrangements for the presentation, on behalf of Congress, of a single gold medal of appropriate design in honor of the 60 diplomats identified in section 2(1), in recognition of their brave and vital service of saving Jews during World War II.

(b) DESIGN AND STRIKING.—For purposes of the presentation referred to in subsection (a), the Secretary of the Treasury (referred to in this Act as the "Secretary") shall strike a single gold medal with suitable emblems, devices, and inscriptions, to be determined by the Secretary.

(c) PRESENTATION OF MEDAL.—The single gold medal presented under subsection (a) shall be presented collectively to the eldest next of kin of each of the 60 diplomats identified in section 2(1), who shall receive the medal as part of a delegation consisting of a senior official representative of the country that each diplomat served and the cochairs of the Forgotten Heroes of the Holocaust Committee.

(d) UNITED STATES HOLOCAUST MEMORIAL MUSEUM.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Following the award of the gold medal in honor of the 60 diplomats identified in section 2(1), the gold medal shall be given to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, where it will be available for display as appropriate and available for research.

(2) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum should make the gold medal awarded pursuant to this Act available for display elsewhere, particularly at appropriate locations associated with Holocaust remembrance.

SEC. 4. DUPLICATE MEDALS.

The Secretary may strike and sell duplicates in bronze of the gold medal struck under section 3, at a price sufficient to cover the

costs thereof, including labor, materials, dies, use of machinery, and overhead expenses.

SEC. 5. STATUS OF MEDALS.

(a) NATIONAL MEDAL.—Medals struck pursuant to this Act are national medals for purposes of chapter 51 of title 31, United States Code.

(b) NUMISMATIC ITEMS.—For purposes of sections 5134 and 5136 of title 31, United States Code, all medals struck under this Act shall be considered to be numismatic items.

SEC. 6. AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS; PROCEEDS OF SALE.

(a) AUTHORITY TO USE FUND AMOUNTS.—There is authorized to be charged against the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund such amounts as may be necessary to pay for the costs of the medals struck under this Act.

(b) PROCEEDS OF SALE.—Amounts received from the sale of duplicate bronze medals authorized under section 4 shall be deposited into the United States Mint Public Enterprise Fund.