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United States celebration of Holocaust Remembrance Day.  
http://www.ushmm.org

In 1980, a unanimous act of Congress established the United States Holocaust Memorial Council and mandated it to lead the nation in civic commemorations of the victims of the Holocaust,

called Days of Remembrance. This year, the national commemoration was Tuesday. The Holocaust is not merely a story of destruction and loss; it is a story of an apathetic world and a few rare individuals of extraordinary courage; and it is a remarkable story of the human spirit and the life that flourished before the Holocaust, struggled during its darkest hours, and ultimately prevailed as survivors rebuilt their lives.

# A day to remember

by Sara Ladenheim  
Editor in Chief

Each year, the world commemorates the attempted destruction of the European Jewish community. For one week each year.

That means memorializing seven days for six million men, women and children who entered the German killing machines throughout Europe with little hope of help and barely a chance at survival.

Columbia is not alone in holding memorial ceremonies for those who didn't survive the German crimes against humanity in World War II. Many cities worldwide also hold similar ceremonies.

On the official world Holocaust Remembrance Day 1999, called Yom Hashoah in Hebrew, a special ceremony that befitted a tragedy was attended by nearly 400 people.

The Holocaust is not an easy subject to approach in any circumstance. Six million people died simply because they were Jewish.

At the 1999 Remembrance Day for Jewish Martyrdom and Heroism, held at the Beth Shalom synagogue, 11 survivors overcame the tremen-

dous memory of the Holocaust to light a candle for those who were not as lucky as themselves.

Couples walked solemnly, and tears were shed as the congregation of mixed faiths and races equally shared in the survivors' gestures.

"Fifty-four years after the end of World War II, let us proclaim to the world that we have not forgotten our six million," said Rabbi Philip Silverstein, of the Beth Shalom synagogue.

"As the world sits by through the current genocide in the Balkans, let us all remember this Holocaust and prevent another from happening."

The state of Israel, which was founded in 1948 by native "Sabras," Zionist settlers of Palestine, and thousands of survivors, was also a topic of the evening.

Remembering what was born out of the ashes as a new nation, Silverstein praised the efforts of the various Israeli and American Jewish groups and their denunciation of the actions of Slobodan Milosevic.

"We must not let another Holocaust befall us," Silverstein said. "It is the responsibility of the Jewish people of the world to remember our Holocaust and never allow it to happen again."

The service continued with a special Shofar ceremony.

Shofars date back to the times of King David and are traditionally blown at occasions of remembrance. Felix Goldberg was introduced by his son Karl as a Holocaust survivor.

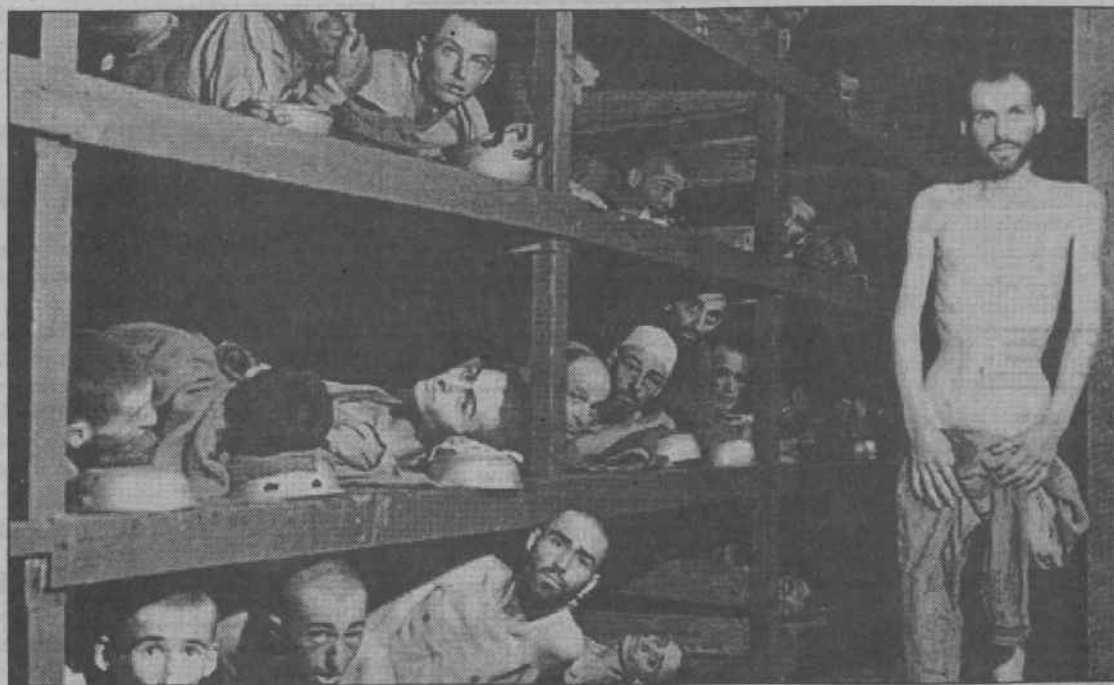
His melodic blowing of the Shofar was a cry from the past as a symbol of those whose cries went unheard and voices silenced by the gas and brutality that befell them nearly 60 years ago.

The sound emitted from the ram's horn was as choked up as the reading of the Kaddish, the Hebrew prayer for the deceased, by USC professor and Tree of Life Congregation Rabbi Sanford Marcus.

The Kaddish was sung, and the congregation solemnly prepared to leave the synagogue.

Marcus made the closing remarks brief and thoughtful.

"In this hour of memory," he said. "We must remember that human dignity sank to its lowest depth at this time. May we make a commitment to strive for peace and happiness for the future generations and for the world never to forget those whose memory we are memorializing today."



Photos courtesy of The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum.

Top: Nobel Prize-winning poet Elie Wiesel is among the survivors to be liberated at the Buchenwald concentration camp in 1945. Bottom: Jewish detainees on Cyprus wait through the first Yom Hashoah, 1947.

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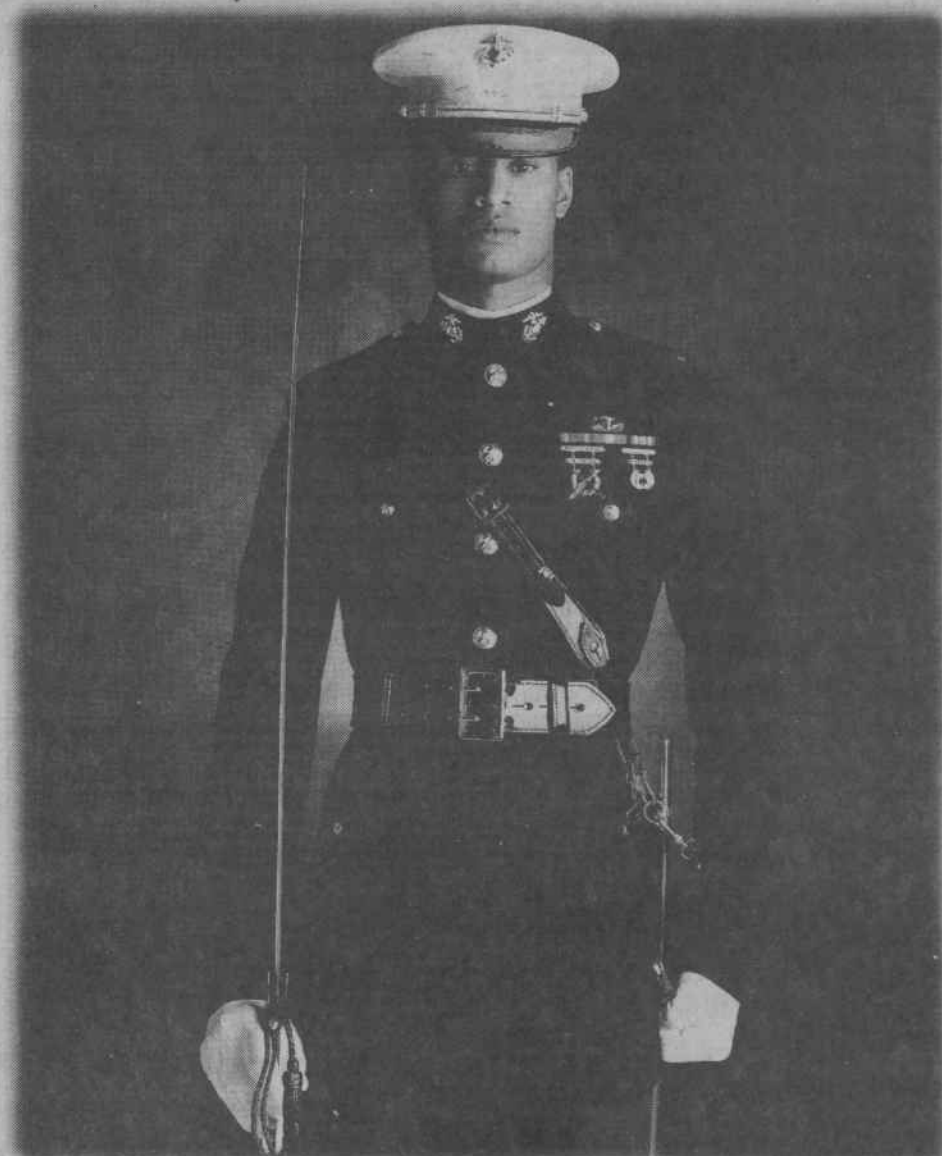
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