

Today Yad Vashem honors Mr. Cees Hos. His first wife, Albertine Hos-de Leede is being honored posthumously.

Chaja Line Polak was only a baby when she had to go into hiding at the home of the Hos family. Shortly after the war began, Chaja's parents met Cees Hos in The Hague. They knew each other from school and both now had families. Cees Hos had said to them, "if you ever have problems, you can depend on Tine and me."

When Chaja was 8 months old, in the summer of 1942, for the second time, Cees Hos was asked to help the family Polak. Chaja's father, Hans, who was active in the students resistance movement and had been hiding already for some time in the Hos's house but had to go to another address. Chaja's mother still remembers the pain in her heart the moment she put baby Chaja into Tine's arms and saw Tine walk away. Six months later, Chaja's parents came to hide with Cees Hos as well, so that they could live as family. Chaja had learned to call Cees and Tine "pappa and mamma" and her name had been changed to Lineke Hos.

Cees and Tine were both active in the resistance. Cees organised false identity cards and Tine brought food coupons for people in hiding. A few months before the end of the war they were betrayed and Hans and Anna Polak were arrested. In order to save Chaja, Tine Hos took her into her arms and pretended she was her child. Tine said to the Germans, doesn't she look like me?" Chaja's father didn't dare look at her while he was being led away because he was afraid he could not control his emotions. He never saw her again. Chaja went to another address and a few times to still other addresses. Luckily after a few months, she returned to the Hos's. Cees Hos wasn't there. He was arrested also, but after three months, the resistance had managed to free him from prison. He tried to rescue Hans Polak from Westerbork, but was unable to do so. Chaja's own memories begin after the arrest of her parents. One of these memories is that she was afraid of the Germans and Cees Hos showed her a hiding place under the wooden stairs in order to reassure her. Marie van Rooijen, a Jewish woman who was also hiding with the family Hos, had long black braids and Chaja was afraid that the Germans would be able to tell that Marie was Jewish. But Cees said, "Look, the curtains are closed and no one can see her. It is safe here." Also Chaja remembers that everyone sat at the table and that Marie and the children ate and Cees and Tine didn't. Chaja looked at Tine, not understanding, and Tine showed her the empty pan.

After the War, Chaja stayed with her mother, who came back from Auschwitz, with the family Hos until they found a house. Marie had lost her entire family and stayed with them about one year. Cees and Tine encouraged her to learn a profession so that she would not have to depend on anyone.

Sometime after the War, Cees and Tine with their children Eske and Peter emigrated to New Zealand. That was a very difficult moment for Chaja. Luckily, they returned to visit Holland in 1987. Chaja and her mother and Marie van Rooijen still have a close bond with Cees. Tine has passed away. Cees lives in Australia and is here today. It is an honor for Yad Vashem to award him, together with his first wife, Tine, the title of "Righteous Among the Nations" for what they did in the Second World War in order to save their fellow Jewish citizens.

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