

## LESSON 2: RESOURCE 5

### Nuro Hoxha



*“As devout Muslims we extended our protection and humanism to the Jews. Why? Besa, friendship and the holy Koran. This is a picture of my father that I hold to my heart.”*

I am the oldest son of Nuro Hoxha, who was well known as a teacher and a religious Muslim here in our community of Vlorë. I remember those terrible times when the Nazis moved into Vlorë from Greece, and the Jews went into hiding. I was ten years old. The Jews in Vlorë, Berat, and Elbasan had been living in Albania since 1490, and many fled here from Ioannina in Greece.

My father sheltered four Jewish families. They all were his friends. I remember my father’s words to those he took in: “Now we are one family. You won’t suffer any evil. My sons and I will defend you against peril at the cost of our lives.”

We hid the families in underground bunkers that extended from our large house. There were three generations of the extended families of Ilia Sollomoni and Mojsi Negrin, comprising twelve people. There were others whose names I do not recall. The bunkers were connected, and had many escape routes. It was my job to take food to the families in the bunkers and to shop for necessities. All the inhabitants of Vlorë were anti-fascist and all knew that many families were sheltering Jews.

Story as told by Sazan Hoxha (son of Nuro Hoxha)

*On July 21, 1992, Yad Vashem recognized Nuro Hoxha as Righteous Among the Nations.*