

Carl Bildt, Foreign Minister of Sweden to U.S.

Thank you very much it is truly an honor for me to be here as representative of the Swedish government although the speaker has just expressed the feelings on behalf of the Swedish people really because it is the parliament that is the representative of the people of Sweden and I cannot improve upon the remarks that he's done.

But let me just mention, in addition, to what can be said about the work of Raoul Wallenberg to other persons, both of these have been mentioned already. I came as a somewhat younger man in the late Soviet period for some reasons to Budapest and when in Budapest what do you do there's a lot to do, there's a lot to see, but I wanted to see the Raoul Wallenberg monument. It wasn't entirely easy in those days because you know that the monument that had been erected was not at the most central of locations to be put in the mildest possible ways but I went there; and I found that I was not alone there but I encountered this American man who happened to be there at the same time, that was Tom Lantos just by coincidence; we happened to meet at that monument sometime in the late Soviet period. His contribution has already been mentioned but his contribution has been vast, not only for the memory of Raoul Wallenberg but also for carrying the legacy further, for taking up the torch and working in this period of Raoul Wallenberg and I am very pleased to see that his wife is able to join us here.

The second person is of course Nina Lagergren and it is a particular pleasure to see you here. Nina has of course been living with the fate of Raoul Wallenberg more intensely and longer than anyone else in this room. And we should not forget that there was a fairly long period when I wouldn't say that Raoul Wallenberg and his fate was entirely forgotten that would be segued slightly but it was neglected, it was not at the center of attention certainly not in Sweden and neither was it in the United States. But Nina for of course reasons, not only of family but for all sorts of reasons she never gave up the search for the truth, the preservation of the legacy, and the hope that at some point in time we would not only know the fate of Raoul Wallenberg but also be able to carry the legacy forward in a more dignified and in a better manner but I think it is particularly happy to use that word that Nina was able to come over and be with us this very day.

On the legacy of Raoul Wallenberg, one could speak endlessly but I will not do that. Just to say that what he did is of course an inspiration and it is an obligation to all of us, whatever we have to do. Foreign ministers, individuals, senators, congressmen, or activists or whatever particularly activists perhaps in order to be able to fight injustice wherever we see it and to fight sectarian prejudice of whatever form, sectarian violence, sectarian hatred because we know that these things can start so innocently perhaps at one point in time could result in mass murder, could result in genocide and then for all we can do to rescue the individuals it's going to be too late to rescue all of those that would then suffer the fate that was suffered by so many during those horrible years in Central Europe that horrible time, a long time ago. Thank you very much.