

Speech
Mr. Eduardo Eurnekian
Chairman
The International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation
Swedish Embassy
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Dear Ambassador Clase, thank you for your moving words and for hosting this event.

Dear Mr. Brown, Ms. Brown, distinguished members of the Brown family, guests and friends:

It is an honor for me to be here, together with my friend and founder of the International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation, Mr. Baruch Tenenbaum.

Today we present the Raoul Wallenberg Centennial Medal to Mr. Gordon Brown, former Prime Minister of the United Kingdom from 2007 to 2010; former Chancellor of the Exchequer from 1997 to 2007 and Member of Parliament since 1983.

This award is bestowed upon Mr. Brown in recognition to his lifelong commitment to promoting and divulging the courageous legacies of Raoul Wallenberg and all his likes, women and men who chose not to stand idly by in face of evil and reached out to those who were persecuted by the Nazi murderous machine.

Mr Brown does not stand alone, for this award is also a token of recognition and appreciation to the brave British Rescuers for whom indifference was not an option. A few names come to our mind: Sister Agnes, Charles Coward, Francis Foley, Jane Haining, George Hammond and many other women and men.

One of them is here today with us. Sir Nicholas Winton, who last month turned 104!

Back in 1938, Sir Nicholas orchestrated the rescue of 669 Czechoslovakian children (most of them, Jewish), in the eve of World War II in an awe-inspiring operation which was later dubbed "The Czech Kindertransport", which included their safe-passing to Britain and finding foster families for them.

Sir Nicholas, you honor us with your presence!

Mr. Brown's singular sensitivity to the horrors of the Holocaust and his admiration to the rescuers were acquired at a very early stage of his life. I dare to say that his source of inspiration was his late father, Mr John Ebenezer Brown, a minister of the Church of Scotland who taught his son the importance of the recognition of good.

This has been a driving force throughout his adult life and it is not surprising that he authored a riveting book which deals precisely with role models. The book is entitled: "Courage – Eight Portraits" and each chapter is dedicated to monumental figures such as Nelson Mandela, Dietrich Bonhoeffer, Martin Luther King, Robert Kennedy, Cicely Saunders, Aung San Suu Kyi, Edith Cavell and of course, Raoul Wallenberg, one of the greatest heroes of mankind.

This same sentiment has led Mr. Brown to write the following poignant words in the visitors' book after the visit he made with his wife, Sarah, at Auschwitz:

"What happened here is a shared human story, a perpetual reminder of all the darkness of which the world is capable but also a story about what the world can endure and survive"...."In this place of desolation, I reaffirm my belief that we all have a duty, each and every one of us, not to stand by but to stand up against discrimination and prejudice"... "As we remember the worst of our past we must each commit ourselves to serve the best of our future".

In the wake of this harrowing visit to Auschwitz, Prime Minister Brown announced the creation of the "Hero of Holocaust Award" in tribute to the "selfless humanity" of Britons who helped save Jews and other persecuted groups during the second world war. By the way, Sir Nicholas was one of the living heroes to receive this award from the hands of Mr. Brown.

This is also a wonderful moment to pay tribute to other Holocaust heroes, such as Angelo Roncalli (later known as Pope John XXIII), Aristides de Sousa Mendes, Luiz Martins de Souza Dantas and many others who risked their lives to save the persecuted. The whole world owes a huge gratitude to these heroes, a gratitude that should never expire.

One of our Foundation earliest campaigns encourages parents to name their children after Raoul Wallenberg, Angelo Roncalli and other saviors. In this respect, I take the opportunity to thank Mr. and Ms Brian Mooyaart and their son Raoul who are here with us today. Brian's mother and Raoul's grandmother, the late Barbara Mooyaart-Doubleday was the person who made the first translation of Anna Frank's diary into English.

Their presences today bear a special significance as the young Mr. Mooyaart was named after Raoul Wallenberg.

A final word to say thanks to our host, Ambassador Nicola Clase who generously opened this highly symbolic venue to all of us; a venue that reminds us that the year 2012 marked the centenary of the birth of Raoul Wallenberg, a "Hero without a Grave" (a byname coined by Dr. Yoav Tenenbaum, who is here with us today).

As we all know,, Raoul Wallenberg disappeared after being arrested by the Soviet army in January 1945.

As we celebrate the centenary of Wallenberg's birth, we have multiplied our activities and also launched a significant reward of half a million US Dollars for reliable and scientifically verifiable information that could lead us to discover the true fate and whereabouts of this Swedish hero and of his chauffeur, Vilmos Langfelder.

Dear guests, we hope that this award will serve to elevate the recognition of righteous humanitarian actions.

Thank you very much for your kind attention.

Our congratulations to the Right Honorable Gordon Brown for this merited recognition.