

August 4, 2004

International Raoul Wallenberg Foundation
Via facsimile: 212-737-3275

Dear Friends:

Today we celebrate the 92nd birthday of a hero, Swedish diplomat and humanitarian, Raoul Wallenberg. As you know, as millions were annihilated by Hitler, Raoul Wallenberg courageously defied the Nazi reign of terror during the years of World War II. As the Holocaust raged on while the War gradually came to an end, Hitler charged through Hungary to attack one of the last remaining Jewish populations in Europe.

My wife Annette and I, both Hungarian born, were in the land of our origin when Hitler's forces ruthlessly and mindlessly tore through the country. Without the aid of Raoul Wallenberg, his "schutzpasses" and his safe houses, we would not be here today to join in the celebration of Raoul Wallenberg's birthday. We would not be here today to commemorate the bravery and selflessness that Mr. Wallenberg exhibited in one of the darkest periods of human history.

As survivors of the Holocaust, Raoul Wallenberg spared the lives of Annette and myself, two innocent victims at the mercy of one of the world's most vicious tyrants, Adolf Hitler. It is with gratitude and respect that we remember Raoul Wallenberg on his birthday. A hero unjustly punished and disappeared for illustrating the power of one to make a difference. May we never forget his work and may we never forget his sacrifice.

Warmest regards,

TOM LANTOS
Member of Congress