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MEMORANDUM

FROM: [Redacted] Analyst, Current Support Division  
Office of Soviet Analysis

SUBJECT: Report on Death of Raoul Wallenberg

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
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SUMMARY

A retired justice of Sweden's highest court quotes a Norwegian arms dealer as saying a KGB official told him that Raoul Wallenberg died about the end of March 1983 while under house arrest near Moscow.

The retired justice is Gunnar Linnander, who now lives near Stockholm and works part-time as an arbitrator on assignments for the International Chamber of Commerce in Paris. He and I have been friends since he was a UN adviser to the Foreign Ministry of Nepal from 1960 to 1963, while on leave from his work in Sweden's career judicial service, and I was a journalist living in New Delhi.

Linnander wrote to me in mid-August that he would be in New York in late September on an arbitration case and hoped to come down to Washington to visit my wife and me, as he and his wife have visited us in past years in Hong Kong and here. In that letter, he added that he had come across some curious information about a Sasha Pavlov, whom he understood to be the No. 2 man in the KGB, and he asked if I could further identify the man. After checking the unclassified Agency reference aid on Soviet officials, I wrote back that there were two Aleksandr (Sasha) Pavlovs among senior Soviet officials but none listed for the KGB.

After finishing his arbitration hearing in New York, Linnander flew down here on Saturday, 1 October, and spent two nights with us before leaving for Stockholm this morning. Although he did not say so specifically, I had the strong impression that his main purpose in coming to Washington was to tell the Wallenberg story that he related to me Saturday night. He knew I had gone into the US government, and before telling me the story he checked with my wife to confirm his suspicion that I now worked for the Agency. (My 15 August Outside Activity Approval Request on his possible visit had said I would acknowledge my CIA employment to him.)

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This was Linnander's story:

At the end of May or the first few days of June, he made one of his periodic visits to Geneva, where his wife Margareta lives part of the time as the representative of combined Swedish aid agencies working with UN and other international organs. In a social contact with a Britisher, the name of Raoul Wallenberg came up. The Britisher commented that "He died two months ago." Linnander was curious. He comes from the same generation (he was born in 1914, Raoul in 1913) and social group as the Swedish banking Wallenberg family, is a personal friend of Raoul's sister, knows various other family members, and is very familiar with Raoul's disappearance in Hungary at the end of World War II and subsequent questions of whether Raoul was being held in the Soviet Union.

The Britisher, whose name Linnander did not give me, explained that his information came from a Norwegian arms dealer who lives in Geneva. The Britisher arranged a lunch a day or two later at which Linnander could talk to the Norwegian, without telling the latter that Linnander wanted to ask about Wallenberg.

They met at a yacht club on the lake and talked in English, although the Britisher understood Scandinavian and said he would not mind their speaking a blend of Norwegian and Swedish. In a general conversation, the Norwegian claimed to have known and worked with President Marcos of the Philippines and Prime Minister Bhutto of Pakistan, and Linnander found him convincing rather than exaggerating. When Linnander worked the conversation around to the Wallenberg family as important bankers in Sweden today, the Norwegian responded with what Linnander found to be as much personal knowledge and apparent access to the family as he has himself. The Norwegian particularly knew Henry Wallenberg, whom Linnander says is now retired from the family businesses and living in the south of France.

Linnander then mentioned Raoul. The Norwegian replied, "Oh, he's dead. He died two months ago under house arrest in a forest near Moscow."

Linnander understood that a natural death was meant, although this was not made specific. He pressed the Norwegian on how he knew this. The Norwegian replied that two months earlier he had been visited at 3 a.m. at his Geneva home by Sasha Pavlov, whom he identified as the No. 2 man in the KGB. The Norwegian said Pavlov, whom he knew, pounded on the door, was finally let in, had been drinking some but was not drunk, and over drinks volunteered that Raoul had died.

Why, Linnander asked, had the Norwegian been told this? The Norwegian presumed that he was intended to pass along word to Henry Wallenberg. He told Linnander, however, that he had not done so--that he did not want to get involved in the case or the publicity that has periodically surrounded it. The Norwegian's motives in having told the Britisher and then repeated it to Linnander were not clear to Linnander, he told me, but Linnander speculated that

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he was possibly considered a good channel back to the Swedish establishment. Linnander promised not to disclose the Norwegian's name--and he made a point of this to me, not telling me the name. Although Linnander probed him for more information, there was nothing more of significance. The Britisher told Linnander as they were driving together back into Geneva that he had broken off the subject while Linnander went to the bathroom, warning the Norwegian that he had said enough already.

Linnander expressed to me a feeling of awkwardness about this report. He has not discussed it with anyone in the Swedish government, he said. He is afraid that a disclosure to one of his contacts in the cabinet would result in leakage to the press and a public attempt to identify and interview the Norwegian, which Linnander feels would be a breach of his pledge not to disclose the man's identity. Linnander said he had considered taking the story to the Swedish attorney-general, who he says has a somewhat independent position under Swedish law and could pursue it more discreetly, but he has hesitated to do that. One reason is that he is uncertain about who Sasha Pavlov is.

Linnander mentioned to me that Raoul Wallenberg was made an honorary US citizen some years ago. He seemed to be implying that the US government should take interest in this report. He did not directly ask me to report what he told me, but I assume he intended that I should do so. What he did ask was if I could help him identify Sasha Pavlov so he could better evaluate the story. We discussed the possibility that Pavlov is the No. 2 KGB man in Geneva, a level of official who might be in contact with arms dealers and wandering around at 3 a.m.

I told Linnander when he left this morning that I would, as he asked, try to find out something about Pavlov and write to him.

I believe this is a contact that should be followed up with caution. If it were possible to identify Pavlov as someone in a position to have such information and to tell Linnander, he might then be moved to tell the story to someone in the Swedish government. Although it might never be possible to be certain about the story, coming as it does after so many other conflicting official and unofficial Soviet accounts of Wallenberg's fate, a surfacing of the story in Sweden would be to US advantage in reminding the Swedish public of a case that had periodically soured Swedish-Soviet relations.

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