



HERO AND ADVOCATE FOR HUMAN RIGHTS

“Are all humans human? Or – are some humans more human than others?”

Lieutenant-General Romeo Dallaire, Rwanda's Saviour

Gen. Romeo Dallaire defied U.N. orders to withdraw from Rwanda. Without the authority, manpower, or equipment to stop the slaughter, he saved the lives he could but nearly lost his sanity.

In an indifferent world, Gen. Romeo Dallaire and a few thousand ill-equipped U.N. peacekeepers were all that stood between Rwandans and genocide. The Canadian commander did what he could, but sees his mission as a terrible failure and counts himself among its casualties.

The U.N. had sent Dallaire and 2,600 troops, mainly from Bangladesh and Ghana, to Rwanda to oversee a peace accord between the region's two main groups, Hutus and Tutsis.. Dallaire and his troops were about to become spectators to genocide. As bodies filled the streets and rivers, the general, backed by a U.N. mandate that didn't even allow him to disarm the militias, pleaded with his U.N. superiors for additional troops, ammunition, and the authority to seize Hutu arms caches. In an assessment that military experts now accept as realistic, Dallaire argued that with 5,000 well-equipped soldiers and a free hand to fight Hutu power, he could bring the genocide to a rapid halt. The U.N. turned him down. He asked the U.S. to block the Hutu radio transmissions. The Clinton administration refused to do even that.

Three days after the Rwandan killings began, with Dallaire's troops running short of rations as well as ammunition, about 1,000 European troops arrived in Kigali.. they landed and left again as soon as they'd evacuated their own nationals. Then Brussels withdrew all of its peacekeepers (the only significant Western contingent and the only one that was properly equipped) from the U.N. mission. Dallaire's depleted force was on its own.

After a 100-day reign of terror, some 800,000 Rwandan civilians were dead, most killed by their machete-wielding neighbors. Dallaire had sounded the alarm. He'd begged. He'd bellowed. He'd even disobeyed orders. “I was ordered to withdraw...by [then-U.N. Sec. Gen. Boutros] .. and I said to him, ‘I can't, I've got thousands (20,000 people) in areas under our control,’.. the situation was going to shit....And, I said, ‘No, I can't leave.’” Remarkably, with scant resources-indeed, with only one satellite telephone for the whole mission-Dallaire was able to maintain safe areas for those 20,000 terrorized Rwandans. But he could do little else, and the killing continued.

Dallaire still relives the pain and memories

Dallaire's pain is palpable as he remembers his yearlong mission. His words, raw as a wound, make a grim contrast to the carefully parsed regrets of the world leaders who actually had the power to stop the genocide

but turned away. He has just spoken at an Amnesty-sponsored conference in Atlanta on law and human rights, and he looks tired- older than his 56 years. His eyes are close set, raptor-like, but his gaze is warm and direct.

Eight years later, in daylight and in dreams, Dallaire still hears the cries of wounded children, the weeping of survivors, the voice of the man who died at the other end of a phone line as the general listened. He still can't escape the smell of death, the memories of hacked-off limbs scattered on the ground, and worst of all, he says, the "thousands upon thousands of sets of eyes in the night, in the dark, just floating and looking back" at him in anger, accusation, or eternal pleading.

With counseling for post-traumatic stress disorder, and a handful of pills a day, he is working to use his experiences to prevent another Rwanda. But the baleful ghosts remain, and the book he is writing about the slaughter is rousing them. "As I go over what I have written," he says, "more and more I see lost opportunities; more and more I see errors because of lack of intelligence or simply from mis-assessing a situation. I'd take a decision on the phone, and people would die within seconds. I was getting pressure from everybody not to use my soldiers." His voice fades to a whisper . "It's horrific because every day decisions were taken on life and death. Every day. Real people, real people."

Dallaire says that about 20 percent of troops and humanitarian workers on missions like his suffer much the same thing, as do 5 to 10 percent of diplomats. "They are casualties," he tells me. "High suicide rates, booze, drugs, pornography, finding themselves on skid row."

When Dallaire returned to Canada from Rwanda, he tried to drink himself into a stupor of forgetfulness. He raged at his family. He tried to kill himself In 2000 a few months after he was medically released from the Canadian Forces, he was found passed out drunk under a park bench in Hull, Quebec. "He was curled up in a ball," photographer Stephane Beaudoin, alerted by a police report, later told the Ottawa Citizen. "I never took a photo. I felt sad for him. I thought, 'This man has done so much for us. How did he come to be here?'" Dallaire's reluctance to give himself credit for what he managed to accomplish certainly contributed to his breakdown.

Excerpts are from article 'The General and the Genocide' by Terry Allen, Amnesty International NOW magazine, Winter 2002. Click on the following link for Terry Allen's full story.

http://www.thirdworldtraveler.com/Heroes/Gen_Romeo_Dallaire.html

Awards and recognition

1996 Made an Officer of the Legion of Merit of the United States, the highest military decoration available for award to foreigners, for his service in Rwanda.

2002 Awarded the inaugural Aegis Trust Award

2002 inducted as an Officer in the Order of Canada.

2002 Made an Officer of the Order of Canada.

2004 Awarded the Governor General's Literary Award for his book `Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda.

2005, Governor-General Adrienne Clarkson awarded Dallaire with the 25th Pearson Peace Medal.

2005 Made Grand Officer of the National Order of Quebec.

2006, the Center for Unconventional Security Affairs at the University of California, Irvine awarded Dallaire with the 2006 Human Security Award.

2007 As part of the 50th Anniversary commemoration of the founding of the of the Pugwash Peace Exchange, General Dallaire accepted Sir Joseph Rotblat's Nobel Peace Prize.

There is an elementary school named after Dallaire in Winnipeg, Manitoba[18], and a street named after him

in the Lincoln Park neighbourhood of Calgary, Alberta.

2007 Planted a tree at the Kofi Annan International Peacekeeping Training Centre, Accra, Ghana at the invitation of the Commandant, Major-General John Attipoe.

Dallaire has received honorary doctorates from a large number of Canadian and American universities.

- Doctor of Laws degrees from University of Saskatchewan, St. Thomas University, Boston College, the University of Calgary, Memorial University of Newfoundland, Athabasca University, Trent University, the University of Victoria, the University of Western Ontario, and Simon Fraser University, and an honorary Doctor of Humanities degree from the University of Lethbridge.

2006 awarded a Doctorate of Humane Letters by the Queens College of the City University of New York (CUNY) in recognition of his efforts in Rwanda and afterwards to speak out against genocide. He received an ovation from the crowd for his comment that "no human is more human than any other".

Named a Fellow of the Ryerson Polytechnic University, and an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.

He was granted the Aegis Award for Genocide Prevention from the Aegis Trust (United Kingdom); recipient of the Vimy Award, which recognizes a Canadian who has made a significant and outstanding contribution to the defence and security of our nation and the preservation of our democratic values.

Romeo Dallaire, champion of human rights and right-human-relations, continues his work today.

The Honourable Senator from Quebec. Dallaire was appointed to the Canadian Senate on March 25, 2005. He sits as a Liberal, representing the province of Quebec. Concordia University announced on September 8, 2006, that Dallaire would sit as Senior Fellow at the Montreal Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies (MIGS), a research centre based at the university's Faculty of Arts & Science. Later that month, on September 29, 2006, he issued a statement urging the international community to be prepared to defend Bahá'ís in Iran from possible atrocities. Senator Dallaire has worked to bring an understanding of post-traumatic stress disorder to the general public. He was a visiting lecturer at several Canadian and American universities. He was a Fellow of the Carr Center for Human Rights Policy, Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University. He pursued research on conflict resolution and the use of child soldiers. He has written several articles and chapters in publications on conflict resolution, humanitarian assistance and human rights. He is currently writing a book about the use of child soldiers. Dallaire and his wife, Elizabeth, have three children: Willem, Catherine and Guy.

Watch Youtube video Romeo Dallaire, Rwanda's Savior, for an overview of the Rwanda situation and Dallair'es involvement. <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R7GL1PEgUmE&feature=related>

Romeo Dallaire website: <http://www.romeodallaire.com>; Dallaire's personal website <http://sen.parl.gc.ca/rdallaire>

Email your appreciations to Romeo Dallaire: <http://sen.parl.gc.ca/SenWeb/contact/?lang=en&sen=47>

ROMEODALLAIRE ASTROLOGY - [romeodallaire-astrology-chart](http://www.romeodallaire.com/romeodallaire-astrology-chart)

Born June 25, 1946, Denekamp, Netherlands, birth time unknown.

Scorpio rising hypothesised. He has the look of an eagle, and Scorpio's lives are usually filled with birth/ death/ transformation/ rising from the ashes type incidents, which colour Dallaire's life. It most likely the first decanate because it is ruled by Mars and Pluto. This places Pluto – ruler of death in the 9th house of foreign countries, and Leo on the 10th house of profession – he is a general and ruler of men.

Dallaire's soul purpose with Scorpio rising is to be a warrior in the cause of humanity. The Scorpio soul mantram is "Warrior am I and from the battle I emerge triumphant." He was severely tested in the killing fields of Rwanda, and although it broke him for awhile while he succumbed to depression and alcoholism, he has arisen as if from "death." Now he continues his fight against injustice and political hypocrisy from a vastly elevated and credible status – a direct result of his valour in the face of the most horrendous experiences...

Soul purpose indicator Mars, is in the 10th house of status, and in the sign of the birth of the Christ – Virgo. This Soul has surely achieved his soul purpose and more, in this incarnation. As an aside, he has Saturn (the Devil) conjunct Mercury (one’s hands), and his book detailing his Rwanda experience is called “Shake Hands with the Devil.”

