

Keynote Address

Keynote address by Lt.Gen. (retired) Romeo Dallaire

Romeo Dallaire: Well good morning ladies and gentleman. It is truly most encouraging to see the turnout, and in particular, the turnout of the students, grads and undergrads to this event, as although you'll read books, and you'll read accounts, there's nothing stronger pedagogically than, in fact, listening to human beings speaking, debating with their eyes and their commitment to a subject of this nature. And so, thank you for being here, and also thank you colleagues, who have responded to come to this one day symposium that really could last three or four. And so, in the nature and meeting the challenge from Allan in regards to ensuring that we stay within the time constraints, I will do what my Marine corps colleagues taught me in 1980 in Virginia, I will power talk, and I hope that, in fact, most of my points will get across.

I thought it important to set the scene of 1993-1994, and then to go through a number of elements in which the media were involved, both locally and internationally during that year, where a country had finished of civil war and massacres, had signed a peace agreement, some of them under duress, and over the process of a year, barely 12 months, moved from a peace agreement to political stagnation to assassinations to massacres to civil war, and ultimately genocide, and then to a state, where the minority actually won the war, gained control of the whole country, and is now in a different path.

There are many factors in regards to Rwanda and the effects of that, but I think one that is pertinent, particularly to Canadians as we live in a nation that has two founding nations is the fact that the Franco-Anglo dimension of Rwanda was in the forefront, and not hidden in the back. The majority of the population spoke French. The government was a French government, out of le francophonie. The rebel forces were English speaking, and essentially introduced the English language as one of the dominant languages now, if not the dominant language in the structure of the nation.

The enjeu between the old colonial powers, and the Americans in Africa exists still today, and is heightened by an inability of the ex-colonial powers, and I think the crassness of the instruments of the imperial power of today in attempting to resolve their history, and marry it up with the history of these new independent nations. And we still see fundamental racism, we see abuse, we see raping of the nations for their resources, and ultimately the African continent, sub-Sahara particularly continue to be treated as a residual, as a problem, as a hassle, and not mainstream. The African continent is reflective of the 80 per cent of humanity that is still living in the blood, and the mud, and the misery, and the suffering, and the indignation of not being considered really human. The 20 per cent of humanity that's taking off to Mars, still considers that 80 per cent as a problem, and not as an equal, as an entity in which millions upon millions of human beings just like us exist. Until the international community, until the powers actually consider all of humanity as the same entity, we will not see humanity advance. It is not by going to Mars and leaving 80 per cent of humanity in the mud, and the suffering, and the indignity that we can say ultimately that humanity is advancing. It is only when those

people will have the serenity, will be treated with the dignity, have the hope and the aspirations for future generations that the whole of humanity will, in fact, advance.

And Rwanda is not only living in the context of the déchirement with the ex-powers and the complexity of ethnicities inside it's own nation, it's a country that is attempting to build from the past in efforts of reconciliation and bringing the nation back to a one single body. And it is my belief that, in fact, reconciliation in that nation, as in others, will be done by the women, particularly the mothers and the children. And through education, the difference amongst will be overcome.

Now, 1993-1994 was an era in the New World disorder. That's not what George Bush senior said, he said, "New World order", and in fact, many of us thought that we had entered the New World order, so much so that even though the Cold War had ended, and there was a peace dividend being demanded, the conservative entities of the powerful nations, and particularly the west, still believe that the era was an era just like the past that is the normal nation state, sovereign state situation, in which the people, the governments, and the military continued to advance these independent states into the future. And as such, required still classic military capabilities because there was a classic threat ultimately. And one could look at today the way the Americans are attempting to surround China to sometimes question whether or not there will ultimately 10 years or 15 years from now be a friction that will create possibly another classic upgraded war scenario. However, at the time, the Gulf War gave many in the west the feeling that things were going to be just like before.

And no new military thinking, no new diplomatic thinking actually was coming to the fore, and what we lived in Rwanda was the belief that, in fact, the whole of the international community would simply be going down a similar route as the past, but in a far more peaceful scenario. And so as the example of Rwanda, the mission was a classic chapter six. Both sides had stopped fighting. They had a peace agreement. They were in their trenches and waiting for the politicians to implement that peace agreement, and ultimately just like Cyprus, a green line or referee was required, and then it was in years the whole of the nation would be built in a what the west considered a democratic process.

However, that is not what was happening under the veneer of peace, both in classic peacekeeping, and in classic war fighting. We entered an era of conflict, where ladies and gentlemen, many of the diplomats, political, military and humanitarians stumbled, not only stumbled into this era of conflict, but also ad hoc did a lot of on job training, did a lot of crisis management, and hit and miss in many circumstances, sometimes putting too much resources at terrible cost of life, and other times as in Rwanda not getting involved at all, and created orphan nations, where in fact, these people simply didn't count.

In that era, discussions and debates were taken, and modes of thought in the international community were moving. The example of the Americans in Mogadishu in October, 1993, changed significantly the will of the western world to actually commit itself to the betterment of the developing world. Eighteen American soldiers were killed, professional

soldiers, who knew that everyday when they woke up, they could be dead in some place somewhere in the world. It was part of their way of life, their professional commitment, and 72 were injured, and 1.6 million people in uniform from that imperial power turned pale and ran.

The Americans had entered with the Canadians, and many other countries, and the UN into Somali because hundreds of thousands of Somalis were dying of thirst, dying of lack of food, medical supplies and the like. And when the Americans pulled out, and pulled the heart out of the mission, leaving it in the hands of Pakistanis, and Italians, and Canadians and UN, there was still hundreds of thousands of Somalis dying of thirst, lack of food and medical support. However, the price had become too high. The price of 18 soldiers was too high for the American government to actually continue in its stated aim of helping the Somalis who were dying by the tens of thousands. Ten soldiers were too much in the first 24 hours of the war in Rwanda, for Belgium, the ex-colonial power to sustain. It was a massive shock, I agree, and the Belgians pulled out, and convinced everybody else that we should leave, because we'd all be massacred, and nobody wanted to risk returning into another African escapade, where the risk of soldier's lives was too high.

One major power came to me within the first weeks, and said quite clearly after they did their assessment that they were not going to come and stop the carnage. There were bodies all over. We were already burning bodies with diesel fuel, because of the fear of disease, and the smell, and the wild dogs. They said, "You know, this country is of no strategic value. Geographically, it provides us nothing. It's not even worth putting a radar here. Economically it's nothing, because there's no strategic resources, only tea and coffee, and those resources already the market is falling out of those markets." They said, "In fact what there's too much of here is people", and they said, "Well we're not going to come because of people." And in fact, in quantifying that said, "That not only the government, but the people of that nation could possibly reconsider if for every soldier either killed or injured, there would be an equivalent of 85,000 dead Rwandans."

Are all humans human or are some more human than others? Do some count more than others? Millions were going into Yugoslavia. Tens of thousands of troops were going into Yugoslavia. Everybody was looking at Yugoslavia. Nobody came to Rwanda. They pulled everything out, and abandoned us in the field. There were more people killed, injured, internally displaced and refugeed in 100 days in Rwanda than the six years of the Yugoslav campaign, and yet they ripped the heart out of the possibility of stopping, or at least curtailing, or saving a number of black Africans. They don't count. In Yugoslavia, it was portrayed as long seething problems that educated people had debated, and it's religious, and it's ethnic, and it's been something studied and analyzed. As such, we brought in new terms, like "ethnic cleansing". That's what the problem was in Yugoslavia. In Rwanda, it was just a bunch of tribes going at each other, like they always do. Rwanda was black. Yugoslavia was white European.

Where was the media? Where was the media in that debate? How many got suckered in to the big game, perceived as a big game, set up as a big game? While when you look at

humanity, and the plight within the humanity, the big game, the real crisis was in a small country in dark Africa that nobody really was interested in. The media and its power is to my chagrin not controlled by the media. It is my opinion that because of the business dimension of the media, because of the essentiality created of certain events and certain priorities that the media, in the main, moves down the road of the mainstream crisis or thinking of the world powers, and what was missing in Rwanda was essentially the depth, the knowledge of really what was Rwanda.

O.J. Simpson, as Allan said, was on the airwaves. Tanya Harding's kneecapping of her colleague, her competitor in figure skating was sneaking in trying to take the airwaves. You had Nelson Mandela's election. You had Yugoslavia, and oh yes somewhere in there, a bunch of black tribesmen in Africa are killing each other. There was more coverage of Tanya Harding during the 3½ months of the Rwandan genocide by ABC, CBS and NBC than the Rwandan genocide. Now, was it because of a love of pathos? Was it because of a love of the excitement? Was it because it was on CNN's radar screen that that effort was done? Or was it the hand of someone above, guiding the media, and informing it in subtle fashions that, "Listen, we have absolutely no interest in going into another hellhole in Africa. We do not want to get involved in Rwanda. So don't get us involved." How much of that influence actually bayed upon the leadership of those three great media consortiums?

Ladies and gentlemen, the media like so many others failed. We failed. The media failed. The world powers failed. Individually we failed. How is it possible that in the news in the evening in a country like Canada with its depth of human rights and its belief in the individual, that its people can watch a newscast, where one of our own is being abused by our own judicial system, yet in the same newscast, they're showing thousands of human beings, barely 12 hours away, being slaughtered. We're uproared against our own judicial system abusing our own, but we take it in stride the destruction of human beings far away.

How can we be so becifal (sic), and in fact, in the media coverage, how can they be so becifal? The media before the war started was essentially internal with some local staffers, who were responding more often than not to the main reporters or journalists in Nairobi. Nairobi was a lot better and more interesting than Kigali. And so international involvement up until the start of the war was one of, "Is there an event? Do we go or do we just get the staffer?" And so in the months leading to the genocide, when we opened up the headquarters with the President, Habyarimana, there were a number of international press. When the president was signed in as part of the new government, there was international press. When there was a massacre in the northwest of the country, there was international press. But in essence, the international press were neophytes of Rwanda to the extent that one international media body was taking the information from a Rwandan staffer in downtown Kigali, who was part of the extremist movement. And so I get a call from London, oh did I mention that, saying, "What's going on? How come you're doing this, and this and this", which were false. The staffer was feeding false information to London, who was airing it until someone realized that maybe we got to get another angle to this. And thank God a person like Mark Doyle came on the ground, and

proved the whole situation wrong.

Ladies and gentlemen, people who came into Rwanda when the war started knew nothing of Rwanda or very little, and those who knew a lot were not necessarily listened to. Many of the stories were simply gruesome reaccountings. In the European press, there was a lot of discussion on recommendations on the loss of the soldiers, on the Anglo-Franco, American, European, colonial exercises going on at that point. But in the heart of it, why the reconciliation had failed over the years, and why did we let a potential peace process fall into disarray? It was nothing.

Within the country, as you will hear in the discussions and the debates of the panelists, media was exceptionally important. The country is known as a radio country. The voice of the radio is the voice at some villages in talking to them, of near God. In the displaced camps, in the refugee camps, at the height of the killing, you could still find people with portable radios. Where did they get the batteries? We couldn't even get batteries for our flashlights. How were they able to keep that going? And how did they continue to advance it? The events, in fact, the media response, and in particular, the response to the RTLM, the extremist radio. There was a government radio that did expound the party line of the single party nation, an nascent multi-party system, and there was a radio handled, or under the authority of the rebels called Radio Muhaburu, who gave their side of the debate. We came in there bare bum. We had no radio station. We had looked at Cambodia, how essential it had been. No radio stations were available in the inventory of UN, and it was dropped from the budget.

Not only did we not have a radio station to partake in the debate, to be a platform for both sides, to come with us and discuss, to sell our product for it became evident that none of the radio stations in Rwanda actually told the people that we were there. There was no information being passed on, and all they saw was a white vehicle with a blue flag going by at 70 kilometres per hour. That does not explain what we were doing there. And so many Rwandans didn't have a clue why we were there. And those who knew we were there, were told that we were to do so much more than the mandate had permitted us.

The peace agreement wanted the neutral international force to do this much. My report said about the same. By the time, the Security Council signed my mandate, we had that much. And although we fiddled in the margins to go beyond the mandate, we were brought back brutally on January 11, with the response to our desire to launch offensive operations, and in fact, disrupt the activities of the extremists. RTLM became the voice of the devil, and through January, and February and March, accelerated its concepts, its precepts that there are people, who should not live in that country, and here are the ways to eliminate them.

The war started, and all of a sudden everybody wanted to jump on whatever aircraft or truck to get to Kigali. They didn't know exactly what they were looking for, but there was excitement, and it had reached the CNN radar scope. And so within the first days, a number of journalists did appear, and within the first week, over 200 were sitting in Nairobi. I have a long time ago learned that 1) you never lie to the media ever, 2) you

don't play coy with the media, 3) you must establish a credibility with the media, 4) some of the reporters have got to establish personal credibility with you.

There is a great debate that went on about the January 11 fax, in which because I received orders not to intervene, many people felt I should have simply leaked it to the media, and then see the reaction. You will not get the depth of the story. You will not comprehend all the factors that are involved in these stories if you wait, or as I say, you work under the doctrine of in, out and a prayer for a scoop. You will not get the story. And so as an example, if the media had come and asked me what was going on, if they had come and queried at this stage of the evolution of the stagnation, and the process that was going on politically and security wise, and asked me what were we doing, they would have got the answer. And they could have reported what was happening, but I was not going to leak it. You cannot be ethical and fiddle. And so the problem of that event and that point rests in the inability to get within the entrails of the organization and the story.

And so ladies and gentlemen, it was fine to come and report that they were slaughtering them by the tens of thousands, and it was fine platoons of journalists would come in for three or four days, and then they'd leave so I could bring more in. And it was fine that we guaranteed their safety, and provided them with transport, and food, and lodging. Their people were on a budget too, so if we can do it for free, why not? And it was absolutely essential that every day they get their story. And I put the lives of my troops on the line to guarantee that people got their daily story. Not only in these places, where in fact, the catastrophe was evolving, but also in getting their stories out. I had officers and soldiers run the gauntlet to get the story to my headquarters in Uganda, from which it went to Kampala and then Nairobi for the technology was not available inside Rwanda. And only after time did the big outfits come in and set up their international capabilities. It was fine to do that, in fact, ladies and gentlemen, it was essential, because within the third week of Rwanda, where the UN had buckled under, and had decided that it was not only not going to reinforce, but it was going to abandon Rwanda, the only voice, the only weapon that I had was the media. If I could shame the international community into acting through the media, then I would have achieved my aim. And although there were valiant efforts done and courageous work done in the field, often it never went beyond the editor's desk. And the story never really got told, and that's why O.J. Simpson and Tanya Harding got a lot more press than 800,000 human beings being slaughtered daily.

The media is a two way street. I was able to give them what they required and more, but they were also instrumental in providing me with intelligence information. Many of the journalists were courageous enough to go between the lines, and they would come in, and I opened my headquarters totally to them. The only time I didn't want them there was when we were doing planning of operations. The other times, I saw journalists standing at the big map boards with my operations duty officers, and they're marking on the map, and then saying, "Yes I've been through there, and yeah there is a massacre site there, and yes there are about 50,000 people on the side of that hill over there." The exchange was transparent. The credibility had been established, and individuals had come into my realm of decision. People, as an example, like Mark Doyle stayed throughout, and he stayed throughout because he was there before. And he and I exchanged continuously.

Yes, establishing an intimate, or least a human link between the authorities and yourselves based on credibility will give dividends beyond your wildest expectations, and when it was said “off the record” with those people, it was off the record.

And so ladies and gentlemen, I have spoken too long, and I wish only to present to you the multifacetedness of the media, and how significant it can be considered as a weapon to advance a situation, as well as a conscience to humanity and to the local, both inside and beyond. I will give you what I consider the most perverse abuse of the media in Rwanda, perverse and the most unethical. I was against children being exported. Everybody wanted to come and take the poor children away, and I kept telling them that we don't export Rwandans, we help them. We build orphanages. We protect them. We feed them. We talk to them. We teach them how to laugh again, and so the money you want to move a dozen or two, I can build an orphanage and feed 1,000. And so my superiors gave me an order to permit this nation to come in and to take some of the children from Rwanda. The nation was France, and the front man was Bernard Kouchner and essentially the argument was that Paris could not handle any more seeing these children being abused and destroyed, and something had to be done. And so under duress, I let 60 children, who were badly injured, on a Canadian Hercules airplane, go to Nairobi, where a hospital aircraft was to bring them from there to Paris. And so the plan went on, the children in the Hercules aircraft landed in Nairobi, but the hospital aircraft was not there. They waited nine hours on the tarmac in the heat, and one child died, because the Kenyans didn't want them off the aircraft. And finally the aircraft came in, and the hospital aircraft, and we loaded them, and they went back home. And when we queried “Why was there a delay?” the candid response...was that if we had stayed with the original plan, the children would have arrived around midnight, and so in order to get maximum impact, we delayed by 9 hours so the children would arrive in Paris at 10 o'clock in the morning, and ultimately that led to an operation that I can be very caustic about its ulterior aims.

Ladies and gentleman, you are powerful individually and collectively, but you can be set up so easily if the depth of the subject is not there. Thank you so much.



Question Period

Allan Thompson: General Dallaire, thank you very much. You've set the stage for us today, and General Dallaire will be returning to this stage in the fourth panel as the chair. We have some time for a few questions from the floor. There are microphones in the middle aisle here next to the camera positions. We have a few minutes if people would like to come forward. I'll ask the first one while people take the stage. I know you've mentioned in the book and in other places that you sought permission from the United Nations to jam the broadcasts, particularly of RTLM, and that you were denied permission. I'm just wondering if you can address that point? Have we learned that lesson? Is there any sort of architecture internationally to intervene when media are being abused?

General Dallaire: When I said we entered a new era, the new era puts into question the absolute of sovereignty, and questions whether or not sovereignty is an instrument to move us forward, or is an impediment for a humanity in it's total to move forward. When RTLM started to attack not only the mission, but myself, when RTLM was launching in it's description of how to kill, it was obvious by any of the references that I had and those around me that RTLM was not operating with any rules. It was beyond rules. It was beyond limits, and that it was an overt instrument of genocide, and so I went to the UN, and the big powers, and I said, "I need two things; one a radio station, which ultimately Canada said they had one, but it couldn't get there, and two I need somebody to find that emitter, and close her down, either jamming it or ultimately if necessary destroying it." And the response in the height of the genocide was Rwanda is a sovereign state, the airwaves belong to that sovereign state, and we cannot intervene. Sovereignty is an instrument not to do something. Nationalism is an instrument to create differences and friction. We must question those who use those outdated instruments to not intervene.

The Americans in March, in fact March 16, 1994, three weeks before the genocide started, President Clinton went to the General Assembly and said, "Ladies and gentleman, the United States will not intervene anymore unless it's in its self interest", and he presented and got approved in Congress his presidential proposition number 25, that essentially says that. On April 7, in the working room of the Security Council, Madeleine Albright and colleagues said bluntly, "The Americans are not going to intervene, and they're going to help nobody who wants to". And the Americans argued the sovereignty of the nations, but ultimately were using that with their lawyers to not intervene. Sir.

Question from the floor: Sir thank you for coming. I have a question in regards to an Ottawa Citizen article that I think was two days ago that had to do with the fact that a French court supposedly has evidence that the RPF was involved in the shooting down of President Habyarimana's plane, and I was just wondering your reaction to that, because it was always believed that it was extremists who shot down the plane.

General Dallaire: As I said at the international tribunal, when in a bit of an unusual circumstance, I had to defend my book in front of an international criminal tribunal, where I was told, "What exactly did you mean in page 293 in the third paragraph?" As I said to the tribunal, I have five theories. I could give you six. I could probably modify them and give you eight. There are so many factors, with so many players in regards to that genocide, who started it, who gained from it, who lost, why, that speaking of the black box is only taking one dimension of it, and so as I told the international tribunal, yes I have ideas. Yes I have my references of my options that I felt things happened, but I don't have hard data. Will that black box provide some? Well let's hope so. Let's hope so, because it's still an enigma that deserves to be looked at. Thank you for the question.

Allan Thompson: A question from Douglas Anglin, who is a professor here at Carleton, who was one of those who briefed General Dallaire before his departure for Africa in 1993.

Douglas Anglin: Thank you very much for the splendid address. In looking over the program, I see little or nothing on the role of the Canadian media in this. They tended to ignore you when you were there, but when you came back, you and your family underwent a very painful period of abuse from the media. I hesitate to intrude on your privacy, but is there something you could say about how that effected you, and how it came about?

General Dallaire: Well I would only, if you may, respond by saying that I was surprised in particularly the French media in this country, how it was influenced by the French and Belgian media. How it was essentially taking the stories from there, and running with them, with no depth of discussion, or interview or whatever. That really surprised me. The media essentially was looking at, did I make mistakes, and if I did, how do we hang him, because in that time frame, if you remember, it was hunting generals. And so the media, with the Somali event, which I agree the media had to report. In fact, it's true the media that we've assessed many of our conservative institutions, and found them wanting, including the military, however, at that time, the aim was can we find a general, any general, who is in a bad way, or scandal, or made errors and the like. And so I just slipped in. The day after I arrived, I was interviewed by the CBC, and the whole tone of it was, "How come you let that happen?" And I was barely back in Canada after a year away, and four months in the civil war, and the first question was, "How did you let that happen?" And it went downhill from that. Thank you.

Allan Thompson: We have time for a couple more. I will identify the questioners who I know, but I should have asked people when you pose your question, please identify yourself, so that we can keep a record of the events. Christina Spencer.

Christina Spencer: Yes, thank you very much, General Dallaire. In the 10 years since Rwanda, the UN has gone through a little bit of it's own consciousness raising, looking at it's peacekeeping mandates and so forth. The responsibility to protect has come out. Does the international system now generally have the right tools, and of course the will to try and prevent this in future? And second of all, do you have specific recommendations you'd like to make to media now about how we handle these things?

General Dallaire: Well, if I may, I would say that about four years ago until Sierra Leone exploded, I often used the example that I don't know how many of you have seen the movie "Gorillas in the Mist", would explain Diane Fossey's work with the very rare 300 odd gorillas in the volcanoes in the northwest of Rwanda, and at the time I would say that to me if some outfit decided to go and wipe out the 300 gorillas, there would be more of a rush through the environment and so on than there would be if they started to slaughter thousands of humans in the same country once again. However, since then, we've seen the British in Sierra Leone, we've seen the French in Cote d'Ivoire. We've seen proactive operations in certain areas. As an example, we're wondering if it's proactive in Haiti, although we could have been in there a year ago. We also could have stayed when we had the situation instead of running away and let it deteriorate, but essentially there is different set of circumstances. My only fear many of the world powers

are responding to their ex-colonies, and they're operating outside of the UN, and so that to me is not a fully positive exercise. That is creating far more complex problems, and it is making sure that there are orphan nations that will exist, where nobody will actually go and help.

In regards to the media, there is nothing that the media can do if it really doesn't know the story, and so many of the media are caught up in Canada and other countries by budgets. So they've got nobody on the ground any more. However, with the instruments of communications of this era, you can get a far more in depth feel for what's going on. And so I would only comment for the future journalists: 1) get yourself a lot more cultured, know geography, learn some anthropology, learn some sociology, and maybe even some philosophy, and bring more depth to your questions and to your analysis. And 2) stay dynamic in the search for the truth of what's going on for you are an instrument of the absolute called "justice", and if you abdicate, or you are perfunctory, then to me, we will be weakened. The Arusha Tribunal is forgotten. It's the middle of Africa. The tribunal in the Hague is always present. Is that guy a worse man, if we can call him that, than the gentleman I went to respond to at the Arusha Tribunal? People were killed. Nations were destroyed. Situations still linger. Aruaha is forgotten because Arusha is not in Europe. It's not white. It doesn't count. Go and look at those places, where it doesn't count, because if you think 9-1-1 and train mishaps in Spain are bad, that 80 per cent that's still in the mud and the blood is just getting that much more impatient, and certainly very much more in depth, intellectually based media can help us enormously in seeking out getting that information, and prodding us to do things. So get off the front page banners, and get into the entrails of those stories.

Allan Thompson: We have time for one for one or two more, first from one of our panelists, Jean Marie Higiroy, and then we'll go to the microphone back here.

Jean Marie Higiroy: Thank you, I have a comment regarding what you said about Rwanda Radio. I was in charge of Rwanda Radio from July 31, 1993 to April 6, 1994. I was in that position as the representative of the opposition political party, and in that capacity I'm saying this for the sake of Rwandan history, I did give 60 minutes every week to UNAMIR.

General Dallaire: 30 minutes.

Jean Marie Higiroy: Thank you for correcting me.

General Dallaire: No, but you're right. Every Saturday, 30 minutes was given to us.

Jean Marie Higiroy: That's right ??? your spokesperson used to come to correct the misperception regarding UNAMIR. In fact, for many Rwandans UNAMIR was there to protect them.

General Dallaire: Exactly.

Jean Marie Higiroy: To defend them in the case of the resumption of the war. But your spokesperson, in fact, came to explain to them that, in fact, UNAMIR was not there to protect them, but only to make sure that the peace process was implemented. So after, of course, April 6, I had left. I imagine that the Radio Rwanda ran the official line of the government, but I just wanted to say that during my tenure, there were diverse political views, which were aired by Radio Rwanda.

General Dallaire: In fact, thank you very much for the correction, and it's in the book, and I omitted, and that's not very fair of me. We got 30 minutes a week, but what we discovered was that nobody in the small mission had the skills to do 30 minutes of programming, and in fact, there were some weeks, where we didn't even go. I found out that our spokesman didn't even use the 30 minutes, and so between not having interpreters for a long time, and not having media analysts for a long time, we didn't even have the skill sets in order to present a very lucid program. That being said, one of the greatest, well I can't say it that way, one of the great disappointments was, in fact, when I would meet with a lot of people, who were being displaced. You know imagine the city of Ottawa moving down the road with barely the few belongings they have, and women having children on the side of the road, and elderly dying, and so on. There was always this sort of look of astonishment from Rwandans in regards to the Blue Beret, because they believed exactly as you've indicated that the mandate, which was in the peace agreement that wide was to come and protect and defend the Rwandans, where in fact, ultimately the Security Council limited it to assist in establishing an atmosphere of security, and so we were doing that, and they expected us to do that, but that side never really got explained to the whole of the nation, and that's one of the great tragedies of that mission.

Allan Thompson: We have about 1 minute left. I'm in charge of keeping the trains running on time today. So we can take one very quick question, and General Dallaire, for news media representatives here, General Dallaire will be available briefly in the foyer at the lunch break for a scrum if desired, so perhaps there can be some more questions at that time. So we have this question here.

Question from the floor: I'm a Carleton University student. My name is Chi (sic). Thank you very much, General, for the speech on media coverage of the facts on the genocide in Rwanda. Actually, it is lesson, but now I would like to raise the question currently in China, the persecution of Falun Gong, which is a peaceful exercise, which has lasted for five years, and this persecution and genocide of Falun Gong prisoners was exactly following the same pattern that Rwanda has. But even more severe, it was started as a state run media, and followed by the systematically false media coverage, and deceiving people so that they found the foundation of the persecution.

General Dallaire: So what's the question?

Question from the floor: Yeah, my question is, how the international society, also the media can take their role and stop this persecution. Yeah, especially one thing is Chinese regime also exported the false media to Canada, even other countries.

General Dallaire: Yes, in fact, the prime minister and two ministers in Belgium wrote letters to the Canadian government telling me that I shouldn't have written in my book bad things about the Belgian military and their political involvement in Rwanda. So you don't even have to go that far to see how states can, in fact, corrupt and manipulate the information flow. Interesting though, RTLW was privately owned, and when we tried to assault it, we were told that "Hey that's a privately owned organization. It's not the government, and we've got to respect that sort of dimension to it." In regards to the media and international conflicts and the like, well you're just not interesting enough. That's it. You're just not interesting enough, and so it's not going to make it past the editor's desk if, in fact, the effort is even there, and so how do you make crimes against humanity, how you make such scenarios interesting is, I think, one of the dimensions of not only those who read and watch the media, but those who actually produce it. How do things like that keep or are alive, and continued to be looked into and the like? I mean three years after Rwanda, revisionists were already saying that there wasn't a genocide, that it was large massacres, and in fact, there were massive massacres on the other side too. And so by five years after, whenever I'd speak on Rwanda, I'd have to explain what had happened, because it had disappeared, even in the academic institutions. So history to North Americans as an example is what happened last week, and so if it's five years ago, you can imagine the effort you've got to put, and things like this keep, as I hope the Rwandan genocide alive in the minds of the western world in particular. Thank you.