

General Roméo Dallaire Denies the “Canadian Genocide” and Distorts Rwanda’s

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Is Roméo Dallaire a genocide denier?

After a (question free) talk at Concordia University this week I followed the famous Canadian general out of the room to ask why he [still supports](#) ruthless dictator Paul Kagame. Kagame is the individual most responsible for the mass slaughter in Rwanda in mid-1994 since his forces invaded the country, engaged in a great deal of killing and [blew up](#) the presidential plane that unleashed the genocidal violence.

In 1996 Kagame’s forces invaded the Congo to overthrow the government in Kinshasa and when their installed president kicked them out they reinvaded in 1998, causing an eight country war that left millions dead. According to a 600-page report by the UN high commissioner for human rights, Rwanda was responsible for “[crimes against](#) humanity, war crimes, or even genocide” in the Congo.

With Dallaire refusing to answer my question I asked a Radio Canada journalist seeking to interview the former general to ask why he supports Kagame. The reporter was there to question Dallaire about the use of the term “genocide” in the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls. Dallaire said he had “[a problem](#)” with the use of the word “genocide” to describe what happened to First Nations. “Is that an act of genocide? Is it?” he said.

“My definition of genocide, I read it very deliberately at the start of the Rwandan genocide, and it was a deliberate act of a government to exterminate deliberately, and by force and directly, an ethnicity or a group or an entity of human beings.”

Numerous media outlets picked up Dallaire’s comments. A *La Presse* headline read “[Dallaire denounces](#) the use of the term ‘genocide’” while Rebel Media’s The Ezra Levant Show reported on, “[Rwandan genocide](#) witness General Roméo Dallaire’s strong denouncement of Justin Trudeau’s agreement that the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women findings indeed constitute a ‘genocide.’”

While Dallaire is opposed to labeling Canada’s dispossession of First Nations a genocide, he has repeatedly employed the term to describe rights violations in enemy states. In recent years he’s compared the situation of [Darfur](#) in Sudan and [Baha’i](#) in Iran, as well as [Syria](#) and Libya, to Rwanda. If Western interventionists are targeting a nation Dallaire is happy to employ the “G” word or “R” comparison.

Interestingly, Dallaire's criteria for a genocide — “a deliberate act of a government to exterminate deliberately” — better applies to indigenous people in Canada than to the Tutsi in Rwanda. Dispossessed of [99%](#) of their land, Indigenous people have faced state-backed efforts to starve and sterilize them. They've also been made wards of the state, had their movement restricted and religious/cultural ceremonies banned. Residential schools and other so-called child welfare initiatives sought to eradicate their ways, or in the infamous formulation of the deputy superintendent of the Department of Indian Affairs from 1913 to 1932, Duncan Campbell Scott: “Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question.”

Prior to confederation, British forces conquered today's Nova Scotia through [terror, putting the heads](#) of Mi'kmaq soldiers on spikes and offering bounties to kill women and children. Founder of the Halifax fort, Lieutenant General Edward Cornwallis led the charge and by the mid-1760s the Mi'kmaq had been largely [wiped out](#) in Nova Scotia.

After British forces conquered Quebec General Jeffery Amherst's forces gave indigenous chiefs in the Great Lakes region blankets and a handkerchief from a smallpox hospital. Commander of British forces in North America, Amherst wrote:

“[You will](#) do well to try to inoculate the Indians by means of blankets as well as to try every other method that can serve to extirpate this execrable race.”

By the 1820s the Beothuk in Newfoundland were [extinct](#). On the West Coast in 1862 colonial officials are accused of [enabling the spread](#) of smallpox among First Nations, which devastated the indigenous population.

Unlike the Tutsi in Rwanda, indigenous people in Canada didn't end up in power after the “genocide”. Nor did Jews in Germany, the Herero in Namibia, Armenians in Turkey, Maya in Guatemala, etc. Rwanda is a peculiar case where the minority — 10% of the population — targeted for extermination ended up [ruling](#) after the bulk of the violence subsided.

That's partly because the genocidal killings were not a long planned attempt to exterminate all Tutsi, which even the victors' justice dispensed by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR) [effectively concluded](#). Instead, it was the outgrowth of a serious breakdown in social order that saw hundreds of thousands slaughtered by relatively disorganized local ‘militias’ fearful of the Kagame-led foreign invasion that eventually conquered Rwanda and drove a quarter of the population out of the country. Probably an equal — and [possibly a greater](#) — number of Hutu were killed.

Dallaire has propagated a wildly simplistic account of the tragedy that gripped Rwanda and Burundi in the mid-1990s. He has promoted the Kagame-inspired fairy tale used to justify a brutal dictatorship in Rwanda and its expansionism in the region (as well as Western liberal imperialism). According to the most outlandish aspect of this story, Hutu extremists murdered the [Hutu presidents](#) of Rwanda and Burundi and much of the Hutu-led Rwandan military command, weakening the Hutu government to its most frail point in three decades, and then decided to begin a long planned systematic extermination of Tutsi. In this depiction of Rwanda's tragedy, the individual most responsible for unleashing the genocidal violence is the hero who ended “the Genocide”.

In his 2005 book *Le Patron de Dallaire Parle* (The Boss of Dallaire Speaks), Jacques-Roger

Booh Booh, a former Cameroon foreign minister and overall head of mid-1990s UN mission in Rwanda, claims Dallaire had little interest in the violence unleashed by Kagame's RPF despite reports of summary executions in areas controlled by them. Booh Booh says Dallaire turned a blind eye to RPF weapons coming across the border from Uganda and he believes the UN forces under Dallaire's command may have even transported weapons directly to the RPF, "becoming an objective ally of one of the parties in the conflict."

Dallaire's criticism of the Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls is consistent with his political interventions. He has long been a cheerleader for Canadian and Western domination of the world. As I detail in [this article](#), the former general opposed calls to withdraw Canadian soldiers from Afghanistan, supported the overthrow of Haiti's elected government in 2004 and bombing of Libya in 2011. He has also [called](#) for increased military spending and for Canada to join US ballistic missile "defence". Now he appears to be denying a genocide perpetrated by a government he represented in the Senate and worked for in the military. Boil it all down and it simply becomes: 'Our side is good and our enemies are bad.'

But, of course, this is what passes for foreign policy in Canada.

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