



General Romeo Dallaire

He commanded the U.N. force sent to Rwanda in 1993 to help enforce the peace.

You sent the fax off (asking the United Nations for more troops to enforce the peace) and you signed it--

I signed it with the motto of the high school I was in, which in French is "peux ce que veux," meaning "you can do what you want," I suppose. I also added the motto of the brigade that I commanded, "allons-y," which means, "let's go"... I sent it and I went to bed, and probably slept one of the best nights I had because I felt that finally we were going to take a certain level of control that would permit us to do so much more, politically and militarily, security wise.

Then you woke up.

I woke up and this cable came in, signed by Kofi Annan in his normal staff responsibilities that essentially said cease and desist. Conduct no such operations. It's out of your mandate.

A message came later from the United Nations.

Yes. It's a cable that essentially is saying that there is no option for reinforcement, and that the options that are being studied are options of withdrawal or reduction of the force. It also indicates that although some countries -- the British, the French -- were inclined to [keep] a smaller force for a short period of time to see if there's any good will, the Americans come down categorically and say, "No, there's no way there's going to be a cease fire, so let's pull everybody out and get out of that quagmire and then see what happens afterwards."

When I got that order, I went to [my deputy, the Ghanaian General Henry Anyidoho.] ... I said, "Henry, they want us out. We've failed in the mission, we've failed in attempting to convince, we've failed the Rwandans. We are going to run and cut the losses, that's what they want us to do. What do you think about this?"

And Henry responded and he said -- now remember he had a large force there, he had over eight hundred troops, and he took it upon himself without consulting, as yet, his government and he said, "We've not failed and we're not going to leave. We should stay." ... So I stood up and I said, "Henry, we're staying, we're not going to run, we're not going to abandon the mission, and we will not be held in history as being accountable for the abandonment of the Rwandan people." It was just morally corrupt to do that. And that's when I went back and told them to go to hell, or words to that effect.