

PRESS RELEASE

BOOK ABOUT RWANDAN GENOCIDE WINS SHAUGHNESSY COHEN PRIZE FOR POLITICAL WRITING:

LGEN. ROMÉO DALLAIRE RECEIVES \$15,000 LITERARY PRIZE

Ottawa - March 31, 2004 - LGen. Roméo Dallaire's *Shake Hands with the Devil: The Failure of Humanity in Rwanda* - published by Random House Canada, has won the 2004 Writers' Trust of Canada's Shaughnessy Cohen Prize for Political Writing. Sponsored by CTV and supported by the Politics and the Pen event, the \$15,000 prize, now in its fourth year, is Canada's most prestigious literary award for political writing.

The Shaughnessy Cohen Prize, established in honour of the late outspoken and popular MP from Windsor, Ontario, is awarded to a non-fiction book that exhibits outstanding literary merit and enlarges our understanding of contemporary Canadian political and social issues.

The jury of Clive Doucet, Peter Mansbridge, and Margaret MacMillan selected this year's winner. They were unanimous in their decision and said of Dallaire's book:

It puts a heart-rending face on the costs of the world turning away from its responsibility to protect human rights in Rwanda. Dallaire details step by step the opportunities and how they were lost. *Shake Hands with the Devil* isn't easy reading, but it will be a case study and a cry for generations to come on why the United Nations needs reforming and how a beautiful country suffered. Dallaire's book is also a moving autobiography of a young French Canadian boy growing up in Canada with all the ideals, joys, and perils that a military career imposes. It's a book and an author Canada can be proud of.

LGen. Roméo Dallaire joined the Canadian Army in 1964. He was force commander of the United Nations Assistance Mission for Rwanda in 1993. On his return from Rwanda, he served as commander of the 1st Canadian Division and deputy commander of the Canadian Army. Dallaire was medically released from the armed forces in April 2000 because of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). He continues to assist the Canadian Forces and Veterans Affairs in matters related to PTSD and is also a special advisor to the Canadian government on war-affected children and on the prohibition of small-arms distribution. In 2002, Dallaire received the inaugural Aegis Award for Genocide Prevention in London, England. He is married and the father of three children.

Maj. Brent Beardsley, who collaborated with Dallaire in researching and writing *Shake Hands with the Devil*, accepted the award on behalf of Dallaire, who is in Kigali, Rwanda. Beardsley was an assistant to Dallaire when the Rwandan genocide took place.



Other finalists for this year's Shaughnessy Cohen Prize, announced March 15, 2004, each received \$2,000:

- **Jane Doe** for ***The Story of Jane Doe: A Book About Rape***, published by Random House Canada
- **Julian Sher** and **William Marsden** for ***The Road to Hell: How the Biker Gangs Are Conquering Canada***, published by Alfred A. Knopf Canada

The Shaughnessy Cohen Prize was presented this evening at the Politics and the Pen event held in Ottawa's Fairmont Château Laurier. An annual fundraising gala in Ottawa to benefit the Writers' Trust, Politics and the Pen is the highlight of the capital's spring social calendar, attracting cabinet ministers, parliamentarians from all parties, diplomats, senior civil servants, and members of the arts and business communities. More than forty authors attended tonight's dinner, including Jane Doe, Julian Sher, and William Marsden.

The Writers' Trust of Canada is a unique national charitable organization providing a level of support to writers unmatched by any other non-governmental organization or foundation. Through its various programs and awards, it celebrates the talents and achievements of our country's novelists, poets, biographers, and non-fiction writers. The Writers' Trust of Canada is committed to exploring and introducing to future generations the traditions that will enrich our common literary heritage and strengthen Canada's cultural foundations. For more information, please visit www.writerstrust.com.

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