

Official Transcript: Dennis Byron (Part 10 of 10)



Role:	President and Judge
Country of Origin:	St. Kitts & Nevis
Interview Date:	28 October 2008, 5 November 2008
Location:	Arusha, Tanzania
Interviewer:	Robert Utter
Videographer:	Max Andrews
Interpreter:	None

Interview Summary

Dennis Byron expresses satisfaction at the approach to reconciliation taken by the UN in Rwanda. He highlights the responsibility of Tribunal judges to ensure that justice is conducted fairly and impartially, and appears as such in both process and result. He notes that, in addition to delivering justice, the Tribunal also creates a factual record of events that occurred. He expresses frustration with the Tribunal for the unsatisfactory length of trials, inefficiencies in administration and infrastructure, and the extradition process of suspects.

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Part 10

00:00 **Robert Utter: Tell me about the effect of this service on you as a person. Are you the same person as you were before you came? If not, how, what effect has it had on you?**

00:14 Well, your question made me smile or, or, or it made me have to suppress a smile. The, the, coming here made me get re-married.

00:35 **RU: Ah.**

00:37 I, my marriage had broken down many years before and I had, I had, I had more or less joined the ranks of confirmed bachelorhood and then I came here. And somehow or other, I, I don't know exactly how to rationalize it, but I suppose, I felt lonely and in need of companionship.

01:15 And, it wasn't long before I addressed the issue directly and made a proposal to someone who accepted it and, and frankly, I can't imagine why I didn't, hadn't done it before, because it has really improved the quality of my life enormously.

01:40 Now I don't know if I should attribute it, attributed that to the work I'm doing here but that has been the most major change in my life since I've been here and it's been, I think, a change for the better.

01:51 **RU: We appreciated the invitation to your home and the great crowd there and the great hospitality. If your wife was part of that, which I know she was . . .**

02:02 Yes.

02:02 **RU: . . . give her our thanks as well for me please.**

02:04 Certainly.

02:07 **RU: What, what hope do you have for the future in seeing all of this, perhaps, irrational acts of humanity involved in this genocide?**

02:20 Well, hope. It's, it's, it's I don't know what to say. In fact, one of the, you know, a few years ago, a friend had asked me to be godfather to his daughter, who was given a name out of Homer's Odyssey.

02:44 **RU: Ah.**

02:45 And, and he gave me as a christening gift, a copy of the book.

02:52 **RU: Yes.**

02:54 I suppose when I was a kid I had read extracts of it but I was idle enough to, to read it again and it was very depressing because I recognized people. And I wondered – has humanity really developed? You know, do we see cycles of this type of behavior recurring?

- 03:23 I, I sincerely hoped that the result of our work would have supported the promise of “Never again,” but I listen to the news every day. I see Darfur, I see the violence emerging again in the, in the C-, DRC, you see. And, and so I wonder.
- 03:52 I had felt that one of the major lessons that the tragedy had taught was the importance of early intervention but I don’t know if even that lesson has been fully learned. So I am not sure what to hope for but I wish I could hope for something.
- 04:16 RU: Thank you very much, sir. Is there anything that I’ve not touched upon that you would like to add?**
- 04:25 Well, I would like to thank you. I, I think that your, you have pulled me out quite a bit. If, if I was asked to just make a speech on these issues, I don’t think that I would have had anything to say. So I must commend you for the quality of your, of your inquiries and I have enjoyed working with you in this manner very much.
- 04:56 RU: As have I, sir. Thank you.**