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SUMMARY OF TAPE No. RTL M 0101 of 12/12/1993

SIDE A:

- **Exclusive interview with Jean-Bosco BARAYAGWIZA of CDR, Charles NKURUNZIZA, former Minister of Justice, and Mrs. Marie-Claire MBONAMPEKA MUKAMUGEMA by Gaspard GAHIGI**

SIDE B:

- **The entire side is full of background noise, thus inaudible.**
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00min 01sec

Mrs. Marie-Claire MBONAMPEKA MUKAMUGEMA:

...the way things are now, we cannot use that to determine whether such a person is Tutsi or Hutu.

GASPARD GAHIGI, RTLM:

I would like to give the floor to BARAYAGWIZA. According to you, is the consideration of belonging to the Hutu or Tutsi ethnic group inborn?

JEAN-BOSCO BARAYAGWIZA of the CDR:

Before I answer that question, I will first go back to Ravi's statement. I would even think that the answer is in there. You asked us the following question: "Is there anyone among you who does not believe in the existence of ethnic groups?" Nobody gave an answer, but Ravi surprised me when he affirmed that "the ethnic groups do not exist", because he said that there were so many intermarriages that one cannot distinguish a Hutu from a Tutsi. He further said that those who might have remained pure, both the Hutus and Tutsis, are in equal numbers. I would therefore like to prove that Ravi's assertions, which probably reflect what he thinks, are wrong, or he is telling lies. Even in 1958, King RUDAHIGWA, the then monarch, asked himself the same question: "Who is a Hutu, who is a Tutsi?". This was before the Hutus started getting property and becoming wealthy. He posed the same question by saying: "Stop saying that the Hutus and the Tutsis still exist, because you are no longer able to distinguish them". That was in 1958! He was even supported by his close colleagues; I remember very well that GITERA and KAYIBANDA always said that they had a problem, that it was the Hutus who had that problem, that it was not true to say that the Hutus no longer existed, that there was no such a thing as a Hutu problem. That king was supported by a high-ranking personality of the time, one Bishop BIGIRUMWAMI, who also claimed that they [Hutus] did not exist. Who has proof of the existence of the Hutus, or of the Tutsis? As I said earlier, those words were being said at a time when the Hutus had no property, when they could not own cattle, when they could not have fine

features like those of the Tutsis who enjoyed a certain level of well-being. Now, Ravi takes us back to 1958, and recasts the question within the context of that period, but he says that the people are so cross-bred that one cannot distinguish them. It is true some of them are of mixed blood, and Mrs. MBONAMPEKA also said so, but they make up a negligible proportion. Some did not accept the cross-breeding, whereas others did not like it! In general, what I would say about this issue of ethnic mixing is that it has been one-sided.

3.6

First of all, in the majority of cases, it is the Hutus who married Tutsis women. Very few Tutsi men took Hutu wives; you can count them on your finger tips! Secondly, even the Hutu men who married Tutsi women are very few. They are just a minority. I can tell you, for example, that in my home area, in Mutura, the *Abagogwe* Tutsis are our neighbours, but it would take you a whole day to find a Hutu man who is married to a *Mugogwe*. And it could even take you years without finding a *Mugogwe* man who has a Hutu wife! The families frown on mixed marriages! Incidentally, the same applies to other regions.

Now, coming back to his question, he states that: "They intermarried to such an extent that there are as many Hutus as Tutsis. I hope Ravi is aware of this country's population. He admitted, though without conviction, that the Hutus exist or existed, just like the Tutsis. Today, we are eight million Rwandans. According to past statistics, the Hutus made up 90% of the population. Today, they are more than that. The Tutsis were 9% of the population. If we made a quick calculation, and said supposing out of those 8 million people, only 20% were of marrying age, the Tutsis would come to about 160,000, because they make up 10% of the population. I underestimated their number: they make up 10%, so that makes 800,000. Let us suppose that out of those 800,000, twenty percent can get married, that is to say, 160,000. Out of the 7.2 million Hutus, 20% or approximately 1.45 million can get married. It is obvious that ...if all the Tutsis were women, and they all got married to Hutu men, the latter would marry 160,000 Tutsi girls or women. About 1.3 million Hutu men would marry Hutu girls or women. So, what would they represent? It is impossible! You know very well that the figures I am advancing cannot be exact; the number of Hutus cannot be equal to that of the Tutsis simply because the Hutus married Tutsi women.

GASPARD GAHIGI, RTLM:

I would like to let you go on. You brought in those figures saying that you did not agree with what Ravi is saying. Let me give him the floor. In your opinion, is one born a Tutsi or a Hutu?

7.0

JEAN-BOSCO BARAYAGWIZA of CDR:

Charles gave some indicators for the Tutsi ethnic group, but those indicators applied specifically in the past, because today, you find some rich Hutus, who enjoy a good status and who admit that they are Hutus. Wealth is no longer one of the parameters for being a Tutsi. Not at all! Of course there are some Hutus who deny being Hutus. For some of them, the Hutus do not exist, not even the Tutsis. This category of people exists even among the Hutus. But that is no longer a characteristic symbol of belonging to the Tutsi ethnic group; that was a consideration of the past. The indicator that existed in the past and which is still valid today is not only the inborn element. Education is also involved. That is to say, culture. A Hutu child, ...let me take my own example, for I was born of a Hutu: my father is a Hutu, my grand father is a Hutu, my great grand father is a Hutu and all my mother's parents are Hutus. I can go up the genealogy of my family back to about the ninth generation. They are Hutus. They brought me up as a Hutu, I grew up in a Hutu culture. I was born before the 1959 revolution; my father did forced labour, as Charles said. My mother used to weed in the fields of the Tutsis who were in power. My grand father paid tribute-money. I saw all those things, and when I asked them why they would go to cultivate for other people, weed for other people and yet our gardens were not well maintained, they would tell me: "That is how things are: we must work for the Tutsis".

The Tutsi had to be brought up knowing that he was the chief, that the Hutu child was under his authority. Even in the schools where we went to study - I personally walked for ten kilometres from my home, in the Busasamana region - each one of us had to carry what to eat and we would be allowed time to eat at about midday. No Hutu would share his meal with a Tutsi; that was forbidden. It was inculcated in the Tutsis never to eat with Hutus and we were told to fear the Tutsis. It was not because we did not want to eat with them, more so when they brought delicious food - potatoes baked in palm oil - while for us we brought boiled maize grain! How we wished to eat with them (laughs), but all in vain, because it was forbidden. I know you are aware that I

work with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs: I have been to many foreign countries and I know very well that many Tutsis have kept that culture, especially those who live abroad. Those of you who have read the "Impuruza" newspaper know what I am talking about. I would like to add this element of culture and education to what Mrs. MBONAMPEKA and Charles enumerated as being the indicators of one's belonging to an ethnic group.

10.7

GASPARD GAHIGI, RTLM:

May be we shall come back to that later, but in order not to totally deny Ravi a chance to express himself, I would like to ask him if he agrees with Bosco's line of argument, whether Bosco credited him with certain remarks, or whether Ravi has anything to add. ... (inaudible)

Vincent Ravi RWABUKWISI, in charge of Kanguka newspaper:

Thank you GAHIGI. A short while ago, you did not allow me the chance to laugh; I was really dying to laugh, because this is very interesting. ... (two voices at the same time) ...

GASPARD GAHIGI, RTLM:

This is just a conversation; you are free to laugh (they laugh together).

VINCENT RAVI RWABUKWISI, in charge of Kanguka newspaper:

What is interesting is what BARAYAGWIZA said (sigh). What he said both touched me and made me laugh. He says: "In my family, I received Hutu education", and he adds: "no single Hutu married a Tutsi in our area in Mutura". Honestly, I was shocked, because that is very different from what is happening in our place and I think that is indeed where their problem resides: having received Hutu education. I believe that that is already a problem in itself. It is an obstacle. I think that once a Rwandan educates his child in a Tutsi or Hutu way, he is spoiling the child's future. You will excuse me, BARAYAGWIZA, I am not saying that you were badly brought up, but it makes me sad to hear that someone can receive Hutu education, because that will have some repercussions on his personality. Hence, when he meets a Tutsi, he will treat him

either as a foreigner or as someone richer than him. He says: "they used to eat well, my parents used to work on their farms". That constitutes a big problem. Sometimes the people of our region do not think like the ones from the North – from Rukiga – because they have never received such education. I hail from Kigoma, just next to Nyanza, and we went to school in that region. Some people would say that we were near the royal court and that we were "influenced by the culture there". We are Hutus by birth and we have no problem with that. At least that is my conviction. The Hutus and Tutsis in our region live in harmony and share everything. I even think that is why there are a lot of killings in the North. Massacres have always begun in that region.

12.8

...(inaudible: two voices at the same time) ...

GASPARD GAHIGI, RTLM:

I would like to tell Ravi that BARAYAGWIZA has just raised a new element in our discussion: he said that there is a Hutu culture and a Tutsi culture. Is it true? Are we therefore talking of a Hutu or Tutsi type of education or culture? He asserts that it is more manifest among those living abroad than those living in the country. Do you agree that there is a Hutu culture and a Tutsi culture? Let us start from there, and I think Mrs. MBONAMPEKA will have something to say on this, but in the first place, let us agree on whether those cultures do exist or not.

VINCENT RAVI RWABUKWISI, Kanguka newspaper:

No, I cannot deny the existence of those cultures when BARAYAGWIZA is already a concrete example. Hutu culture, Hutu education, Tutsi education do indeed exist. They do not only exist among the Hutus, but also among the Tutsis. Some Tutsi families tell their children that "those are Hutus, do not eat with them; do not drink the water they give you, because they might poison you; they are very dirty; they do this and that ...". This type of education exists and it is deplorable. But let me add that those who practice it are very few. He cited the example of the *Impuruza* newspaper, stressing the point that what is written there was sufficient proof that even the people who were educated in this region received Tutsi education. I consider that to be deplorable. That is my opinion and, indeed, this is the challenge facing our country today. Those parents who brought up their children as Hutus and the others as Tutsis misled us and they are the

root cause of the current conflicts. In our region for example, and even when I look at the families I associated with in the *préfectures* of Butare, Gikongoro, Kibuye, Kigali and Kibungo, which areas I visited quite often, one does not often find that element of inequality or discrimination among Hutus and Tutsis. That explains why there have been no killings in those areas during this time of tension. People there live in harmony without even knowing the ethnic origin of each other. For example, I reached the age of 22 without knowing that the school headmaster, who was, by the way, our neighbour, was a Tutsi, and a Tutsi of the upper class! It never occurred to me that that Tutsi element existed (inaudible) ...and I believed that it was not a problem.

15.0

Some of us were brought up that way and grew up in the conviction that the Hutu and Tutsi notions were mere book theories that meant nothing in the Rwandan society. That is what I was saying; it is the problem that is eroding our society and even our country.

Let me now briefly touch on BARAYAGWIZA's statement on Radio RTLM, in which he said: "in order to find a solution to the current problem in Rwanda, the Hutus and Tutsis should hold a round table conference to discuss and come up with a common understanding on the basic guidelines conclusive to peaceful cohabitation". We do not agree with such an idea in our area. We cannot accept that I, for example, attend such a meeting and sign against my name as a Hutu and another person as a Tutsi. I do not agree with the idea of coming together to write down the sticking points. No, there are no differences between us! To my knowledge, there is no such distinction in my native region. ... (two voices at the same time).

GASPARD GAHIGI, RTLM:

I can see you are already sketching out a conclusion, but we shall come back to that by examining what distinguishes a Hutu from a Tutsi. We shall discuss together what can help us secure reconciliation. In the meantime, I will give the floor to Mrs. MBONAMPEKA. We were discussing the basic characteristics of Hutus and BARAYAGWIZA came up with the idea of Hutu/Tutsi education: do you agree with him?

Mrs. Marie-Claire MBONAMPEKA MUKAMUGEMA:

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I sincerely agree with him, but not in the controversial perspective sense. We received good education in our family. We were being told that we were the sons and daughters of MBONYUMUTWA, who had gone through untold suffering, who spared no efforts in freeing himself from the yoke of feudalism. But he always reminded us that we were Hutus, Hutu girls or women; and that there existed some other ethnic groups. We would even be told furthermore that we were *Bagesera* and that such and such a thing was a taboo for a *Bagesera* son or daughter. In brief, we received that normal education in the Rwandan tradition, but it never contained any confrontational aspect. Moreover, we are conscious of the fact that we are Hutus, we are *Bagesera*, from the *Abazirankende* family. You therefore know already how to behave in a given situation; and what you should and shouldn't do.

17.2

This is embedded in the culture, because the parents pass on the education to their children, but without any adversarial intentions. Ravi feels uneasy when he is told he is a Hutu and that another person is a Tutsi. He thinks that that is already the beginning of a conflict between the two groups. There should be no conflict between the two, but each individual must know both his ethnic group and his clan. And, as I said, when they come to the problem of power-sharing and the issue of ethnicity comes up, they should not brush it aside. On the contrary, they should accept it as such and even take it into consideration.

GASPARD GAHIGI, RTL M:

Let me now give the floor to Charles NKURUNZIZA so that he can also tell us what he thinks about the issue of Hutu/Tutsi education.

Charles NKURUNZIZA, former Minister of Justice:

I think this is a very delicate issue, especially as it dates back to a long time. I told you that after the *Banyiginya* dynasty took control of this country and consolidated their stronghold, they introduced some administrative structures through which they became the only ones to produce kings (laughs). There was a poem comprising an esoteric code: They settled in a place; the

Banyiginya struck a blood pact with the *Bega* - it is said that this happened during the reign of MUTARA SEMUGESHI - and later, the *Banyiginya* declared that their reign was superior to that of the *Bega*; and that in addition, their drum emblem is decorated with the genitals of the *Bahinza*. In order to reign, the *Banyiginya* had to beget males, and the *Bega*, females. It was the blood pact the *Banyiginya* sealed with the *Bega* after consolidating their domination in the country. The pact stipulated that the boy produced by the *Banyiginya* had to become king and that the girl produced by the *Bega* would give birth to this king. This pact was violated at Rucunshu when the *Bega* also wanted to produce kings. They did not accept to be dominated, so it happened.

So, as I said, the problem today, is not about the existence of the Hutus on one side and the Tutsis on the other. On the contrary, the worrying issue in Rwanda, and this has been going on since then, is to know who must govern. Since that blood pact was sealed, some Tutsi clans were also excluded from power ...(inaudible). Some will swear to this.

I had a discussion of late with one old man who made me laugh. This old man, a friend of mine, told me that in their discussion, they convince you to remain away from power, the power structures being defined in such a way that some people must govern, and others are barred from doing so. If you were discussing with someone and he wanted to do you harm, he would tell you: "you take the *Kalinga* throne", because that would be a calamity. As a matter of fact, the *Kalinga* throne was reserved for some particular person and as for the others, ...(pout of disdain). That is how far things have gone, and I think it is at this stage that the question of culture comes in. Some people are convinced that they were born to rule; and there are some others, who were made to resent it. They believe that they cannot govern or even dare think of it! They are made to totally lose interest in governing. It is called a complex in the case of the Hutus. Whenever you say anything concerning power, they reply: "That is none of my business; there are some other people doing it".

The sole objective of "PARMEHUTU", the Party of the Movement for the Emancipation of Hutus, was to show the Hutus that it was possible (coughs) ...that they were like the others, that they are capable of governing, that they are intelligent, that essentially, they lacked nothing and that they too, could assume power. That is the crux of the matter, because there are some people who, in their culture, are convinced that they are the only ones who must rule and that the others have no right to do so. I believe this is the fundamental issue at hand. Otherwise, saying that there

are some trivialities, ...that some people have fine features, ... That is mere discrimination. We could even stop discussing this issue, because it is of no use to the Rwandans.

21.6

As for the rest, Madam said something which reminded me of... (he coughs) ... Excuse me, GAHIGI, when she says: "any child, be it Hutu, Twa, or any other, if it was well fed like the others, would certainly have a good stature, must certainly be handsome", that is true. During the time of the Revolutionary Movement, and this is not propaganda or anything else but a true story I am telling you, the Movement's objective was the unity of all the Rwandans, to such an extent that there was no distinction between Hutus and Tutsis. So, a teacher once had a problem: a lady civics teacher once asked a question: "How many ethnic groups do we have in Rwanda?" And a pupil answered: "There are three ethnic groups". The teacher asked which ones they were, but this time directing the question to another pupil, who answered according to what he was used to hearing around him. He said: "The '*militants*', the '*militantes*' and the friends of Radio Rwanda". (everyone laughs) ... Therefore, you understand that if we did not have people whose culture inculcates in them the belief that they alone have rule, we would not have encountered the type of problems we are facing now.

23.0

GASPARD GAHIGI, RTL M:

The issue is clear and I think Charles has enabled us to advance a step ahead. We have already confirmed that the ethnic groups exist and even tried to see their characteristics over the years in the history of Rwanda. Charles therefore tells us that the fundamental issue, and even Mrs. MBONAMPEKA had also hinted at it, is the struggle for power. I can see BARAYAGWIZA would like to say something, but I think that at this juncture, we are now faced with a real struggle, as Charles described it. At one point, the Hutus understood that they were capable of ruling. This triggered off the 1959 revolution and the power struggle began from then up to this day. I wonder whether BARAYAGWIZA wants to talk about this power struggle or has something else to add.

JEAN-BOSCO BARAYAGWIZA:

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Yes, I would like to start from where Ravi ended and then continue along those lines. As a matter of fact, Ravi wanted to say something but you took away the microphone from him. He was about to tell us how the people of Nduga developed this habit killing each other, and blaming it on their upbringing. We were taught that we are Hutus and the others are Tutsis. My answer is that in the first instance, neither my father, nor my grand father, nor anybody else, chose to be a Hutu. If there had been a possibility of choice, then he would have chosen to be a Tutsi so that he could be in the ruling class. As such, he did not want to teach me that I was a Hutu; he cannot be blamed for that. On the contrary, it is the authorities who insinuate that we are Hutus; and that they are the only ones to govern, as Charles pointed out a short while ago. That is the crux of the matter. Regarding the killings, they were not started by the people of the Nkiga region. The killings were started by the *Inyenzi*. They are the ones who started the killings when they attacked the country in 1990. And they are the ones who killed a lot of people.

Let me now come back to the problem of ethnic conflicts: it is not only in the Nkiga region that we have the problem; it is experienced everywhere else. You talked of Kibuye and said that they often have that problem there too. The same goes for Bugesera.. Remember that on the contrary, the 1959 revolution started in your region, not in Rukiga! We shall revisit this Rukiga issue later. I only wanted to clarify issues, and Mrs. MBONAMPEKA, by the way, has already pointed out that the fact that children were brought up as Tutsis or Hutus was not in any way designed to pit them against each other. That is the reality.

25.9

The only problem we have now is that this mentality is pitting us against each other because some people are trying to monopolise power. I said earlier that there are some people who deny that ethnic groups exist. Some others are even claiming that the ethnic groups have disappeared! All those people have one objective: to distract our attention while secretly they are trying to monopolise power. [song: *Tuzakomezwa kururwanirira* (We shall keep on fighting for our country) by BIKINDI and his group *Ilindiro*].

GASPARD GAHIGI, RTLM:

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...that people want to conceal the ethnic problem so that the others do not know that they are looking for power, ...go ahead, BARAYAGWIZA.

JEAN-BOSCO BARAYAGWIZA:

Yes! Notable among them are the RPF people who are asking everybody to admit that the ethnic groups do not exist. And when one raises the issue, they say that such a person is "unpatriotic, an enemy of peace, whose aim is to divide the country into two camps". However, it looks like right from the beginning of our discussion, we have proved that the ethnic groups do exist, that the ethnic problem does exist, but that today it is being linked to ...by the way, it is not only today; this dates back a long time ago, it is associated with the quest for power.

The RPF claim that they are representing the Tutsis, but they deny that the Tutsis are in the minority. They are 9% of the population. The Hutus make up 80%! So, their conclusion is: "If we accepted that we are Tutsis and accepted the rules of democracy, and went to the polls, the Hutus will always have the upper hand and we shall never rule". Look at what happened in Burundi: they also thought like that. Those who staged the coup d'Etat thought in the same way. Their mentality is like that of the *Inyenzi*, whose only target is power, yet they know very well that today, it is unacceptable to attain power without going through the democratic process. ... (inaudible)... They wonder: "How shall we go about acceding to power?", and they add: "The best way is to refute the existence of ethnic groups, so that when we are in power, nobody will say that it is a single ethnic group that is in power". That is the problem we are facing now.

GASPARD GAHIGI, RTLM:

Yes, I think we have discussed this power struggle among the ethnic groups. First of all, all throughout the history of Rwanda, the Tutsis have always fought for this power. Charles talked of this struggle with regard to the *Abega* and the *Abanyiginya*. Later on, the Hutus woke up; I think he also talked about that. They woke up and staged the 1959 revolution, saying: "We are also able to rule". Then the conflict started from then, until this date. And BARAYAGWIZA said that "the *Inkotanyi* are pretending that it is not an ethnic problem; and yet what is happening is that one ethnic group is intent on monopolising power". I would now like to give the floor to whoever has

anything more to say about this power struggle between Hutus and Tutsis. Mrs. MBONAMPEKA.

Mrs. Marie-Claire MBONAMPEKA MUKAMUGEMA:

... (she coughs) ... Thank you. I said it even during our last discussion, that the Hutus, who make up 90% of the population, were aware that they could govern the country; that they could wake up. And since we are in times of democracy, where people must be led by someone they elected, I do not see the reason why the Hutus should not continue [governing]. Regarding the belief that the Hutus are not intelligent, that they are incapable of doing some things, ...intelligent Hutus exist! There have been and there still are. They must certainly feel that they make up 90% of the population, but there are some other Rwandan ethnic groups, some white people and even some other people who come for business; but we must be responsible [sic]. We must be determined to use all our intelligence and energy, and do all in our power, in our individual capacities, to ensure better governance of this country. I do not mean that they are the ones to allocate posts to the Tutsis, ...but to me it seems ...

30.5

END OF SIDE A

SIDE B

Side B is inaudible. It is full of background noise.
