

# **IN MODERN POLITICS A PUBLIC OFFICE BEARER IS BETTER ELECTED THAN APPOINTED BY AN INDIVIDUAL?**

## **A CASE STUDY OF THE APPOINTMENT OF PHELEKEZELA MPHOKO TO THE POST OF VICE-PRESIDENT IN BOTH RULING ZANU PF PARTY AND THE ZIMBABWE GOVERNMENT (2014-15)**

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### **Abstract**

*The mission in this Paper is to look at the manner in which the Vice-President Honorable Phelekezela Mphoko was appointed to his positions in both the ruling ZANU PF and the Zimbabwe government. Was the appointment done democratically? If not what are the consequences of not complying with the democratic principles given the manner in which this appointment was made? In other words was the appointment by the people for the people and of the people? Hence is the importance of this Case Study. Turning to how the Author carried out the case study the choice was a matter between the state owned propaganda churning media such as the daily Herald and weekly Sunday mail and the partisan state-owned electronic media such as the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) and the Zimbabwe Television (ZTV) whose editorial policy is clearly in favor of the ruling ZANU PF at the expense of the opposition political parties such as the opposition MDC-T party. On the flip side of the State owned print and electronic media is the privately owned print and electronic media. The daily Newsday, Daily News etc and the weekly Standard, Financial Gazette, Zimbabwe Independent etc make up the privately-owned print media. The privately owned electronic media is dominated by the respected and dependable Internet. For the study the Author preferred the privately-owned media because they state facts and figures as they are the ground without fear, favor and prejudice. On major findings one of them was that a person partially appointed and not publicly elected becomes a servant of the appointer which comes at the expense of the people.*

*Keywords: Socioeconomics, Governance, Political economics, Transparency*

## INTRODUCTION

Left to the secrecy of his Munhumutapa Building offices, His Excellence President Mugabe could be ruining the fateful day he, without consultation or election decided to appoint Honorable Phelekezela Mphoko to the second Vice-President of both ZANU PF party and government. *Ndakaziva haitungamire* (meaning in practice and real life very rarely does hindsight come before foresight). For His Excellence President Mugabe he could have learnt a lesson or two from this old Shone proverb. The question that immediately begs an answer is: Ngeyi ndakaziwa haitungamire pana Va Mphoko (meaning why on VP does hindsight not come before foresight).

To betray the trust that His Excellence had bestowed on Honorable Vice-President Phelekezela Mphoko, VP Mphoko was, against the background of the majority or masses of Zimbabweans living in a sea of poverty and deprivation, reportedly scouting for a multi-million dollar up market house in Harare's leafy suburbs at a time the government was experiencing a financial squeeze of immeasurable proportions, the private media and in particular the factual reporting *Newsday* had reported (Mushava 2015). Honorable Mphoko's wife Laurinda had between December 2014 and February 2015 turned down 3 up market mansions among them a \$3 million castle in the capital's leafy Ballantyne Park on the grounds the property was too small for a person of VP's calibre. The Honorable Mphoko was appointed VP alongside Emmerson Munangagwa in December 2014 following a major shakeup in the ruling ZANU PF party which also saw the unceremonious ousting of former Vice-President Joice Mujuru for allegedly plotting to topple His Excellency Mugabe who turned 91, on 21 February 2015.

The second Vice-President, who is also National Healing and Reconciliation minister, like all government officials is entitled to stay in a government house among his other perks. Impeccable sources had told the private media and in particular the *Newsday* that Honorable Mphoko was initially scheduled to move into a government house left vacant by the late Vice-President Joseph Msika in the plushy suburb of Mandara but his choosy wife allegedly refused, saying that she wanted a house of their own (Mushava 2015)

The same source said that the VP's wife had gone around shopping in Glen Lorne, Borrowdale Brooke and Ballantyne Park, but was not pleased by some if not all of the properties on offer, "She rejected one in Glen Lorne that was going for \$1.5million, saying it was small. Before she rejected the \$3 million house in Ballantyne Park, she had rejected another one in Borrowdale Brooke worth \$2 million claiming many government ministers lived in the area and she was not comfortable with that arrangement," the dejection sounding source said.

Ironically, His Excellence President Mugabe's private Blue Roofed mansion is located in the same area. Honorable Mphoko who is also ZANU PF's co-chairman hails from the

Matabeleland region and reportedly has no residential property in Harare (Mushava 2015). Prior to his appointment as VP the comfort seeking Honorable Mphoko was staying at the 5 star Meikles Hotel from where he made frequent visits to His Excellence President Mugabe's office. (Mushava 2015)

The investor spooking policies such as the chaotic Land Reform Program of 2000 and the Indigenization and Economic Empowerment of 2007 policies chief among others, had resulted in local and foreign direct investors (FDI) shunning to bring their money to Zimbabwe preferring regional competitors such as Mozambique and South Africa to name just a few. The result of all this has been a cash squeezed government unable to pay its bloated 500 000 civil servants on time and many companies closing shop to turn thousand of retrenches into street vendors in order to eke out a living.

All that was said in the Introduction to this discourse in this Paper resonates with the maxim – In politics a public office bearer is better elected than appointed as was the case with the comfort seeking Vice President. Mbimbindoga akasiya jira muma sese (meaning co-operation makes work easier, as the old Swahili proverb says, "Many hands make light work!") Choosing a public office bearer such as a VP should have been better done through an election via a secret ballot by many accredited voters than through an appointment by one person and in particular, His Excellence President Mugabe.

This thought provoking Introduction to the discourse in this Paper leads to the Statement on the relevant and related Literature Review and Research Methodology which is designed to unveil the Research Findings from which the Paper Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations are derived. Details on the same are given below in detail:

## **RELATED LITERATURE REVIEW AND METHODOLOGICAL APPROCH**

There are two sources from which to carry out the relevant and related Literature Review and the Research Methodology of the study which are the lickspittle state-owned print and electronic media and the privately-owned print and electronic media. As aforementioned in the Abstract section of this Paper the lickspittle State-owned media is openly biased in favors of the ruling ZANU PF while the privately-owned media is blamed for all the misfortunes that confront the nation e.g. sanctions, hunger and starvation etc. That His Excellence President Mugabe is God given to win all the elections since independence from Britain in 1980 is the usual hogwash from the lickspittle State-owned print and electronic media notwithstanding that such elections were won through electoral fraud, gross human violations etc. As aforementioned in the Abstract section of this Paper the privately-owned media state it as it is on the ground without fear, favor or prejudice. Hence the preferred choice of source for all his information as herein contained.

With this brief rundown of the Statement on the relevant and related Literature Review and Research Methodology now done and dusted, up next is a detailed review of same.

### **New VPs between Rock and a Hard Surface (Zhangazha 2015)**

With the media speculations on succession politics now out of the way, the next logical thing to do is to assess the key realities that the two Vice-Presidents face before the discourse degenerates to focus on Honorable Mphoko who is the subject of investigation in this Paper. Whereas previous second and third secretaries have been acclaimed after provincial nominations, at “elective” congresses, Emmerson Munangagwa and Phelekezela Mphoko were and are Presidential appointees who were then presented to the party’s central committee meeting. It was only their principal His Excellence President Mugabe who was presented before congress, making it fairly apparent where the real power in the ruling ZANU PF party resides. The two Vice-Presidents essentially function at the pleasure and borderline mercy of His Excellence President Mugabe. In other words their allegiance first and foremost was to the President and not the electorate to create what is rock and a hard surface in between these surfaces. Apart from their constitutionally mandated roles as vice presidents of the country (not the party), they will also carry out further functions. Vice-President Munangagwa was to remain Honourable Minister of Justice while second Vice-President Mphoko would remain in charge Of National Healing and Reconciliation (Zhangazha 2015).

The above arrangement makes Honourable VP Munangagwa as essentially a defacto prime minister albeit under the watchful and eagle eye of His Excellence President Mugabe as his principal. He however does not have the power and ability to fire any members of parliament (mps) who refuse to tow the party line, which essentially remains the function of his principal, His Excellence President Mugabe. Second Vice-President Mphoko has what is evidently an easier role to play. He has been tasked with national reconciliation and healing. In representing the PF ZAPU of the Presidium he will try to spearhead development projects in the southern parts of the country which are essentially the three Matabeleland provinces of Matabeleland South, North and Bulawayo, but only with the express permission of His Excellence President Mugabe. This means that Honourable Mphoko’s vice presidency will largely be muted and function more on the basis of towing His Excellence President’s line to the letter (Zhangazha 2015).

The two vice presidents however face great challenges in relation to managing their public and political profiles to progressive effect. Being second in command by way of appointment is normally not in any way preferable for a political career. At some point one needs national electoral legitimacy to hold such a post as important as a vice president. Be it at

party or government level. So while the two new deputies may have been beneficiaries of not only factionalism but also the benevolence of president, they have their work cut out for them to be leaders in their own political/electoral right. In the event His Excellence President Mugabe leaves office between now and 2018, Munangagwa as first Vice-President (and second secretary in ZANU PF) is most likely to be his successor both in government and in the ruling party. He will have to go through the motion of leading his party in the elections scheduled for the same year, 2018. And that does work by way of appointment but by way of electoral will of the people. A development that will occur within the contest of the party continuing to be divided at grassroots levels while at the same time facing a stubborn, though weak for now, opposition. (Zhangazha 2015)

As it is one does not envy the two vice-presidents. Whatever they do, they can only do under the aegis of their principal who appears keen on control and continuity in his direct leadership of the party and government. And who will also not evidently hint on succession. Simultaneously they will have to become leaders in their own right within their new positions. This means that they are between a rock and hard surface. And all this resonates with the maximum that in modern politics a public office bearer is better elected in his new position than appointed in this case by His Excellence President Mugabe (Zhangazha 2015).

From what Zhangazha (2015) has said the appointments in December 2014 of Vice-Presidents Munangagwa and Mphoko were undemocratic but at the benevolence of His Excellence President Mugabe. This means that whatever the two Vice-Presidents do at party and government levels is to please one person at the expense of the people. The maxim of democracy as by the founders of democracy, namely Britain and the United States of America is that "People first" and an individual second. This maxim resonates with better management of the economy and its prosperity. Compared with its neighbor South Africa, the leading economy in the 14 member SADC region, Zimbabwe is the poorest nation to prop up the 14 nation regional bloc purely on the basis of the absence of democracy in its governance charter.

To His Excellence President Mugabe he is far from being a happy man as the blundering Mphoko, learns the ropes in his new roles of party and government vice-president. Details on this coming sooner than later.

### **Blundering Mphoko Learns the Ropes (Moyo 2015)**

For wrong reasons, by two months into his new position of Vice-President, VP Mpelekezela Mphoko had earned himself a nickname – Blundering Mphoko. The little-known vice-president was by February 2015 to portray himself as a responsive, populist and government reformer. He is however given to gaffes that expose how much he is out of sync with developments that

have been taking place in the 25 years he has been living outside Zimbabwe on diplomatic mission that took him to Mozambique, South Africa and abroad in Austria. Since his surprise appointment in December 2014, ahead of other more popular candidates in the name of well known Simon Khaya Moyo and many others Mphoko had hit the ground running as he embarked on his “meet-the-people” tours that have taken him to Bulawayo and Matabeleland North and South provinces. During his maiden tours he had spoken about under-development in the Matabeleland Region, devolution and the emotive Gukurahundi massacres – very topical issues in the Matabeleland region. With his hands up in the sky the blundering Mphoko had forcefully denied any involvement in the 1980s Gukurahundi in which as many as 20 000 people were massacred by security forces as they battled dissidents in the Matabeleland and Midlands provinces. The Vice-President then proceeded to sing from the same hymn book as ordinary residents who have perennially complained about marginalization by government from mainstream economic development programmes (Moyo 2015).

Straight away he painted himself a picture of a man who is not afraid to ruffle feathers – even at the risk of being labeled a controversial figure. True to his controversial spirit the blundering vice-president chided able-bodied people for engaging in street vending an occupation he said should be left to physically challenged members of society and proceeded to display an astonishing ignorance of government programmes, innocently asking his audience, “What is Beam?” Beam is an acronym for the Basic Education Assistance Module which was established in 2001 by the government to provide to vulnerable and under-privileged children. Afraid of further exposing himself from detachment, the blundering vice-president quickly changed topics and moved to the thorny issue of devolution – much to the delight of ZANU PF supporters at the packed ZANU PF provincial headquarters. “Can you tell me why Bulawayo’s factories and industries have closed down?” the blundering Mphoko asked the expectant crowd (Moyo 2015).

Dismissing the “it is sanctions and MDCs” answer, the blundering Mphoko laid the blame squarely at the feet of government through ZESA and ZINWA for depriving Bulawayo of electricity and water which is critical for industrial production. While ZESA is an acronym for Zimbabwe Electricity Supply Authority, ZINWA is an acronym for Zimbabwe National Water Authority, both of which are state owned enterprises or parastatals. “Without water and without electricity we are only joking there is no development that can take place”, the blundering Mphoko had said in answer to his own question.

“Bulawayo Power Station must come back to Bulawayo. It should not be run by ZESA. ZESA was not even there when it was constructed”, the blundering Mphoko said amid ululations and clap trapping from his gullible audience.

ZESA must only be there for national programmes, but not in my home. Bulawayo is a standalone city like Harare. And don't give our roads to ZINARA – Zimbabwe National Road Authority, they must be given back to the Bulawayo City Council (BCC). Those who pay rates must pay them to BCC which has its own departments for such things and not to ZINARA which must concern itself only with national roads. There is no need to confuse things *siyezwana bantu bakiti?* (Meaning do we understand each other my kith and kin?) (Moyo, 2015)

If His Excellence President Mugabe was listening he could have rued the fateful day he dared appoint the blundering Mphoko to the key position of Vice-President in both party and government apart from his ministerial position of Minister of Healing and Reconciliation. His level of detachment from reality was astonishing to say the least. For most of the time that he spent with these people the blundering Mphoko was not only totally offside but proved a wasted afternoon for both himself and his audience. In his continuing day dreaming the blundering Mphoko also demanded that the BCC be given control of the Agricultural and Rural Development Authority (ARDA) farms around the city because the agro based parastatal was failing to manage them efficiently to ensure productivity and benefits to the BCC residents. Like his name Mphoko which in street lingo means a rascal – *mphoko isadza rekusiira mbwa* (meaning Blundering Mphoko is at worst synonymous with a dog's breakfast) (Moyo 2015).

In sharp contradiction to this philosophy of blundering, Mphoko denied, His Excellence President Mugabe's ZANU PF had strenuously denied marginalized the Matabeleland provinces and was resolutely opposed to total devolution during the constitution making exercise of 2012. Government was supposed to set up provincial councils in compliance with the new constitution of 2012, but this has not happened. The new constitution was supposed to set up ten provincial councils in accordance with the new constitution of 2012 and made up of 8 provincial councils and two metropolitan provincial councils that are supposed to spearhead local development. The provincial councils are established to accommodate calls from Zimbabweans for a developed state since the 1999 Constitutional review exercise (Moyo 2015).

The blundering Mphoko had tasked former Bulawayo Mayor Joshua Malinga with reviving meetings to revive Bulawayo fortunes. Malinga was part of an early 1990s triumvirate that included late politicians Sydney Malunga and Welshman Mabhena, who courted controversy for their noisy protests against the region's under-development. The noise making Malunga was a fiery legislator for Makokoba, the very suburb the blundering Mphoko chose to begin his Bulawayo tours while Welshman Mabhena was governor of Matabeleland North. Notwithstanding his blundering start, Honorable Vice-President Mphoko appeared to have struck the right chord in Matabeleland provinces. But the question now is whether he will be able to deliver where other leaders from the same province have failed (Moyo 2015).

The blundering so far reported in this paragraph resonates with the maxim – in modern politics a public office bearer is better elected than appointed as was in the case of the reported blundering VP Phelekezela Mphoko.

From his blundering Mphoko typically shows that he is an individual appointee than an office bearer by popular vote as required by the dictates of democracy. His knowledge about Zimbabwe and its political and economic affairs is atrocious. According to His Excellence President Mugabe the Matabeleland provinces are not marginalized nor is he in favor of devolution for the Matabeleland provinces. ZINWA and ZESA are national institutions and were not instituted to deprive Bulawayo of its water and electricity. ZINARA is again there to distribute revenue to the various local authorities and was therefore not instituted to deprive Bulawayo of its fair share of revenue from road levies. Like factories anywhere in Zimbabwe, these closed shop due to the liquidity crunch in Zimbabwe spawned by local and foreign direct investors shunning to bring their money for investment in Zimbabwe but in neighboring Mozambique and South Africa where the investment climate is conducive for foreign direct investments.

When we thought we had seen and heard enough of the blundering Mphoko an equally jaw dropping report filtered through that the same controversial Mphoko was, in keeping with his tradition, reported knee deep in yet another debauched controversy this time involving the siphoning of cash from the financially hamstrung fescues. Details on this coming your way in just a moment.

### **Mphoko Drains Fiscus (MOYO 2015)**

Soon after his surprise appointment as ZANU PF party and government Vice-President, Mphoko a former diplomat operating from outside the country was reported staying at the top notch Rainbow Towers Hotel which had begun in mid December 2014 some days after the damp squib ZANU PF “elective” congress. The cost just on hotel accommodation had by end of January 2015 soared to US\$18 800. The cost of funding the former diplomat’s continued stay in one of the hotel’s luxurious suites which cost a maximum of US\$400 a night could go much higher as the cash-squeezed government continued to hunt for a new house for Mphoko. Disturbing reports say he had already rejected a US\$3 million house on the grounds that it was cheap. “He began staying there in mid-December 2014 and by end of January 2015 the profligate VP will have gobbled more than US\$18 800 in accommodation bills alone. This does not include meals and other expenses he is likely to incur”, one top government source had said with a worried look on his face.

The huge hotel bills are not sustainable for a government battling a debilitating liquidity crunch since after the disputed general elections of 31, July 2013. The cash squeezed



government had as a result of this failed to timeously pay civil servants or offer them salary increments. Bonuses were not paid on time last December 2014. In May 2014, the financially-hamstrung Zimbabwe government owed more than US\$750 000 in hotel bills for parliamentarians (Moyo 2015).

The previously unknown Mphoko who was appointed to the vice-presidency along with Emmerson Munangagwa has made headlines lately for the wrong reasons after he and his wife Laurinda rejected three houses among them a mansion in Harare's affluent suburb of Ballantyne Park worth US\$3 million claiming it was too small. By government protocol government sources had said that Mphoko was initially supposed to move into a house formerly occupied by the late Vice-President Joseph Musika in Harare's suburb of Mandara but Laurinda, his wife refused saying they wanted a house of their own, not the one vacated by others. But this is not withstanding the fact that the disowned house is presently lying idle with no occupants which is itself a waste of scarce resources. The profligate Laurinda, wife to VP Mphoko had been shopping for a house since mid-December 2014 to about early February 2015 and had viewed houses in the equally affluent Glen Lorne, Borrowdale Brooke and Ballantyne Park suburbs but had refused to take any of them including the US\$ 3 million mansion (Moyo 2015).

Mphoko had lived outside Zimbabwe since 1987 until late last year (2014) after having been assigned to the diplomatic service beginning his stint in the neighbouring Mozambique. He also served in neighboring Botswana, Austria in Europe before he was posted back nearer home in the neighboring South Africa where he was ambassador. On 1 February 2015, while on one of his public engagements in Bulawayo, the blundering Mphoko had angered vendors after declaring that vending should be left to disabled people conveniently forgetting that people have chosen "street entrepreneurship" not out of choice but have been forced to do so by the adverse economic situation obtaining in Zimbabwe since the year 2000 (Moyo 2015). Zimbabwe has been the only country in the SADC region in deflation as in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Deflation figures for Zimbabwe for the months of January and February 2015

Month	Deflation figures
January 2015	(1.28)
February 2015	(1.40)

Source: Staff Reporter 2015

As above Zimbabwe has been the only country in the SADC region of modest economic growth in serious deflation since the beginning of the year 2015. What does deflation in an economy of a nation mean to you? To start with the aggregate demand for goods and services in an economy weakens as a result of a liquidity crunch in any economy spawned by a liquidity

crunch fueled by low foreign direct investment (fdi). Prices fall resulting in companies closing shop to throw thousands into joblessness which in Zimbabwe is upward of 80% against a regional average of 17%.

For an incredible 27 years VP Mphoko had been out of Zimbabwe on diplomatic service abroad. He is obviously out of touch with reality at home. And to cruelly expose this weakness is a feel bad story by Chabwinja (2015). Details which promise a good prospect for you the Reader are on their way coming to you.

### **Mphoko Out Of Touch With Reality (Chabwinja 2015)**

Rabid fears that Vice-President Phelekezela Mphoko was terribly out of touch with reality concerning the plight of Zimbabweans having spent more than a quarter of a century (27 years) abroad as a diplomat were cruelly confirmed in early February 2015 during his charm-offensive in his home Matabeleland region. Mphoko (74) who had spent more than 25 years out of the country as a career diplomat appeared to try a tad too hard to dispel doubts over his capacity to deliver as vice-president and project himself as a hands-on man. He only succeeded in sticking his foot firmly in his mouth when he expressed shock that able-bodied men and women in Zimbabwe had resorted to street vending for a living (Chabwinja 2015).

Addressing mostly party supporters at the Bulawayo Provincial headquarters at Davies Hall the habitually blundering Mphoko intoned: "I have got my own view regarding vending where you find an able-bodied man seated selling tomatoes. There are better things to do for someone who is fit except for those who are indisposed, and physically challenged" He continued: "You should wake up and see what you can do for a living. We cannot tolerate a man who is fit sitting down and selling tomatoes.... No, let us do something better".

The bankruptcy of Maphoko's sentiments uttered while seated next to ZANU PF secretary for disabled Joshua Malinga at the top table was manifest in his utter failure to suggest even a single alternative. That is because a legitimate alternative is hard to find for those who want to eke out an honest living. Of course life in the criminal underworld is an option but sooner or later the long arm of the law catches up with you (Chabwinja 2015).

While he might not have meant it the import of his comments is that disability is synonymous with inability; the most disabled people can aspire to do is vend as their physical challenges preclude them from other careers, unlike the able-bodied. Needless to say, those selling tomatoes, airtime or hawking odds and ends on the streets are not doing it out of indolence or poor choice; they are a symbolic expression of the tragic economic circumstances wrought by nearly 35 years of ZANU PF misrule. Most people would jump at the slightest chances of formal employment given the benefits and security it brings in a healthy economy

but with massive company closures accompanied by massive joblessness and massive retrenchments being the order of the day such prospects are increasingly remote (Chabwinja 2015).

Ironically Mphoko's ruling party has celebrated the growth of the informal sector, which it has called the new economy because from a ZANU PF perspective selling tomatoes in the street is a form of employment. Hence the delusional argument by ZANU PF that the official unemployment rate in Zimbabwe is 10 – 11% and not the 80-90% sponsored by the private sector. On her country wide rallies towards the end of last year, His Excellence President Mugabe's wife, First Lady Grace Amai "Stop it" had admonished local government and the police for ceaselessly harassing vendors saying it was hard enough for vendors to try and put food on the table for their families in a difficult economy, and that the Zimbabwe Republic Police (zrp) were making their plight even worse off. While hailing His Excellence President Mugabe for indigenizing the economy, the lickspittle Affirmative Action Group Executive Director Davison Gomo, had in high spirit said: "The truth is that most people are now vendors and we are saying they should not be chased away from the streets. We must change the laws and remove colonial legislation that hinders people from freely conducting their business".

To top it all and despite abundant evidence to the contrary the paranoid ruling ZANU PF government forcefully insists that the unemployment rate is not above the oft-quoted 80% but less than 10%. In coming up with that hopelessly low figure for unemployment the paranoid ruling ZANU PF government considers men "sitting down and selling tomatoes", airtime vendors and street car washers among others as employed. If last year's economic trend is anything to go by and economic forecasts suggest as much, more people will be turning to vending as companies continue to drown in the turbulent sea of economic challenges buffeting the politically and economically cursed Zimbabwe left, right and centre (Chabwinja 2015).

As elsewhere alluded to in this Paper the rate of unemployment in Zimbabwe as per the true economic definition is upwards of 80% and not at all 10% as given in the ZANU PF philosophy of formal employment. According to ZANU PF who have presided over the catastrophic economic decline in Zimbabwe - hyperinflation quoted at 79.8 billion % in mid November 2008 to deflation quoted at (1.40) on 28 February 2015 means that in a recessionary Zimbabwe anything informal such as the selling of tomatoes)is as formal employment which to the Author is a populist stance for political expediency in a dying country and its economy.

The end of January 2015 is well remembered not for anything that is particularly good news for the suffering people of Zimbabwe but the bad news again about VP Mphoko hording the limelight for totally the wrong reasons – stirring the hornet's nest by accusing multitudes of

unemployed Zimbabwean men and women who are street vendors to look after their poor families as “lazy people”. More drama and theatrics coming your way in just a moment.

### **Stop this Hypocrisy Mphoko! (Madanhire 2015)**

Almost immediately after his thoughtless statements, VP Mphoko received a tongue lashing from the National Vendor’s Union of Zimbabwe (NAVUZ), among many others. According to NAVUZ, the VP’s expressions had exposed and reflected the ruling ZANU PF’s insensitiveness to people’s suffering and had shown that the habitually blundering Mphoko was totally out of touch with reality on the ground, considering that millions of Zimbabwe’s working class had turned to vending due to the high rate of unemployment in Zimbabwe – 90% against a SADC average unemployment rate of +/-25%. It is as obvious as the sun rising in the east and setting in the west that the careless VP’s thoughtless remarks could have insulted the majority surviving on vending country-wide to cost the ruling ZANU PF party votes come elections in 2018. Instead of launching a tirade against the scourging vendors he should have commended them for their industriousness and entrepreneurship (Madanhire, 2015).

One wonders how the VP’s security details could have felt, as most if not all of them are hawking to augment their meager salaries. It was then high time to remind the habitually blundering Mphoko that vendors are into it not by choice but that there are no jobs. With 90% unemployment rate forcefully denied by government, it means that only a fraction of the entire population of 13 million as per 2012 National Census is formally employed. And the “billion dollar question to pose before the careless VP Mphoko is: How does he think the majority are surviving? VP Mphoko’s remarks were very unfortunate and very shallow and ill-informed as they lack an appreciation of the prevailing adverse economic circumstances in the country. He must not forget that the sorry situation that Zimbabwe finds itself in is a typical product of His Excellence President Mugabe’s misgovernance. It is sincerely hoped therefore that the habitually blundering VP Mphoko will take time to loosen the ropes and come to the full realization that for as long as the habitually blundering ruling ZANU PF fails to address economic fundamentals in Zimbabwe ever in sorrowful crying and mourning - “ I am suffocating. Please help me” – vendors and street selling will be here to stay (Madanhire, 2015).

It is utterly surprising how the VP can blame the poor individuals struggling to earn an honest living as a result of His Excellence President Mugabe’s destructive and investor spooking policies. The suffering Zimbabweans demand an unconditional apology for VP Mphoko’s inconsiderate utterances. What does he think he is? Even the Author’s 90 year old rural grandmother, Makamutorepi (meaning where did you fetch VP Mphoko to plant him in the

ruling ZANU PF?) came short of dismissing VP Mphoko as sadza rekurasira mbwa (meaning VP Mphoko is a dog's breakfast) (Madanhire, 2015).

While VP Mphoko's booboo could be politically suicidal come election time in 2018, he showed exactly one of the biggest problems of appointments instead of being elected. VP Mphoko has only His Excellence President Mugabe to please and no one else, and quite unacceptably the one who appointed him only take his own vote as a reflection of his competency. Kurova imbwa takaviga mupinyi (meaning without beating about bush fires) the reality is that the habitually blundering Mphoko was a relatively unknown figure until his latest appointment in both ruling ZANU PF party and government. It appears his only claim to fame was being a diplomat. It appears he never experienced life in Zimbabwe hence his amazing detachment from reality. Had he raised his family as an ordinary Zimbabwean locally, he would have known the extent to which His Excellence President Mugabe had shattered Zimbabwe once touted Africa's bread basket at independence from Britain in 1980 (Madanhire, 2015).

VP Mphoko would have known why 60 000 employees have lost their jobs and why over 5 000 firms have closed shop in the last five years, and why farming is no longer a lucrative venture. He also would have answers to why His Excellence President Mugabe seeks foreign medical attention while the local health sector is on its knees and why the economy is in a state of comatose with university graduates stranded without jobs or if employed at all it is self job of selling rechargeable cards. Truth is ZANU PF has shattered Zimbabweans' dreams by continuously failing to stimulate the economy now in its 15<sup>th</sup> year of economic meltdown because of its destructive and investor spooking policies such as the indigenization policy. For VP Mphoko, however, his only achievement is to mend VP Munangagwa's political standing by direct comparison. Zimbabweans are now tired of this hypocrisy. With or without people like the habitually blundering VP Mphako, ZANU PF should work hard to restore the country's lost dignity (Madanhire 2015). Imimi Mwari we nyasha dai matibatsirawo! (Meaning God of mercy please help us!).

Economically everything has gone wrong in Zimbabwe – high numbers of retrenches turning into street vendors, unemployment rate upward of 80% deflation spawned by weak aggregate demand, prices falling down, companies closing shop in their thousands the only country in the 14 member SADC region without its own currency, a liquidity crunch spawned by low FDI inflows into the country simply because of investor spooking policies such as the Indigenization and Economic Empowerment policy.

These shenanigans and blind performances by VP Mphoko are synonymous with the maxim – in modern politics a public office bearer is better elected by the people than appointed by one person as was in the case of VP Mphoko. That person ceases to be a public servant, but

a servant for one person who is His Excellence President Mugabe. Gagare (2015) has more details on VP Mphoko as a Frankenstein monster. It is over to you Gagare (2015).

### **Mphoko a Frankenstein Monster (Gagare 2015)**

A Frankenstein monster is a fictional character that first appeared in Mary Shelley's 1818 novel Frankenstein or the modern Prometheus. In popular culture the creature is often referred to as "creature", "fiend", "spectre", "the demon", "wretch", "devil", "thing", "being", and "ogre" (Staff Reporter 2015).

According to Gagare (2015) Vice-President Phelekezela Mphoko was increasingly morphing into a Frankenstein monster for the then increasingly worried His Excellence President Mugabe as he has become something of loose cannon. His loose tongue had created serious discomfort for His Excellence President Mugabe himself and senior ZANU PF and government officials, insiders had said. VP Mphoko's pronouncements on the emotive Gukurahundi massacre, in which he erroneously absolved His Excellence President Mugabe of any wrong doing while laying the blame squarely on a "conspiracy of the West" has re-ignited the emotive Gukurahundi debate – a subject which His Excellence President Mugabe and most ZANU PF would rather have swept under the carpet. "Gukurahundi after the war had nothing to do with Mugabe – nothing! That is a fact" the habitually blundering Mphoko would say.

The irony of VP Mphoko's dangerous and malicious remarks was that His Excellence President Mugabe himself had said Gukurahundi was a "moment of madness that should never be repeated", while the late Vice-President Joseph Musika in 2009 revealed that His Excellence President Mugabe had personally apologized to him over the genocidal killing of 20 000 civilians in Matabeleland and Midlands provinces in the 1980s. The late VP Msika was skeptical of the apology though. Speaking at a 2009 ceremony to mark the killing of 11 ZIPRA cadres by Rhodesian forces in Jotsholo in Matabeleland North during the armed struggle VP Msika said: "When we asked him (Mugabe) about the disturbances he apologized to me personally but I was not convinced ..."

Apart from infuriating many government officials VP Mphoko's pronouncements had provoked a wave of criticism from his former ZIPRA and ZAPU colleagues and people from Matabeleland and Midlands provinces who bore the brunt of Gukurahundi (Gagare 2015).

His rubbished statements have been a subject of debate on social media with most people saying the Vice President (VP) was being thoroughly dishonest in his self serving narrative of the liberation struggle. One social media comment said: "Mugabe hired Mphoko from nowhere as reward for his prolonged loyalty. He wants him to fight in his corner and defend

him but like a Frankenstein monster he is slowly becoming a terrifying and destructive character to his handler”.

Many people had questioned whether it was the West that had trained or deployed the North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade which carried out the atrocities at the time His Excellence President Mugabe was Prime Minister. “Apart from piling unnecessary pressure on the President over Gukurahundi issues, he has also angered his ZANU PF colleagues by claiming that the Zimbabwe People’s Army (Zipa) was formed to rescue ZANU from collapse”, a senior government official had said.

VP Mphoko controversially credited himself and a few other nationalists with spearheading the formation of ZIPA to rescue ZANU PF from collapse. At the time, he said, the entire external leadership of ZANU had been arrested by the Zambian government following the untimely death of ZANU chairperson Herbert Chitepo. He said at the time that Bishop Abel Muzorewa, James Chikerema and Ndabaningi Sithole had requested the Organization of African Unity’s liberation committee not to give freedom fighters in Mozambique any assistance, including food, medication and training. This resulted in people dying like flies in the camps, VP Mphoko said.

“We had to protect the revolution and prevent revolutionaries from taking over. We then came up with a plan... We had to come up with a limited strategy to rescue ZANU from this crisis because there was nobody else. The most important thing here is that the formation of ZIPA was mainly to rescue ZANU from collapse. Any other interpretation is not correct (Gagare 2015).

Another senior Government official said that Mphoko’s assertions had angered senior government officials who were in ZANU at the time. The officials maintain that ZIPA was set up to bring together ZIPRA and ZANLA forces not to save ZANU. Mphoko – who had independent means of survival and does not rely on ZANU PF patronage – also ruffled Mugabe’s feathers by making controversial statements or pronouncements without consultation during his “meet the people tours” in Bulawayo and the Matabeleland provinces. During his tours VP Mphoko had touched on Gukurahundi and other sensitive topics including the marginalization of the provinces. He drew loud applause from a capacity crowd that had thronged the ruling ZANU PF party’s Davis Hall headquarters in Makokoba in Bulawayo when he told the audience that he would personally see to it that power and water utilities, ZESA and ZINWA are kicked out of Bulawayo (Gagare 2015).

VP Mphoko had also said that control of the roads, water and power stations should be handed to the Bulawayo City Council to stimulate development in the marginalized city. VP Mphoko had blamed government through ZESA and ZINWA for depriving Bulawayo of

electricity and water, both critical for industrial production. Government sources said it was such statements that had drawn the ire of His Excellence President Mugabe and other government officials who now say VP Mphoko's irrational behavior is akin to making major policy pronouncements without consultation. During his "meet the people tour", VP Mphoko's spirited attempts to distance himself from the Gukurahundi atrocities while effectively pointing fingers at others was also not well received. VP Mphoko had told his audience that even though he had been part of the dreaded Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) in the 1980s, he was in the diplomatic branch and not the one that was involved in the emotive Gukurahundi.

"Branch 2 is a diplomatic division of CIO whereas Branch 1 is an internal branch that was dealing with Gukurahundi. Victor Mlambo and Gordon Butshe, all former colleagues of (Dumiso) Dabengwa in NSO (National Security Organisation, ZAPU's intelligence wing) were seconded by Dabengwa to the internal branch of CIO. Manje mina ngingenangapi? (Meaning how do I come into all this?) Asked VP Mphoko

Government officials say his desperate bid to exonerate His Excellence President Mugabe is designed to compensate for his earlier touchy statements on the emotive Gukurahundi issue, but the damage limitation exercise has backfired (Gagare 2015).

But while doing everything he can to appease His Excellence President Mugabe and exonerating him of any wrong doing in the Gukurahundi massacres of the 1980s in the Matabeleland and Midlands regions, VP Mphoko must be careful not to do so at the expense of damaging diplomatic relations with the cash rich West and insulting the people of Midlands and Matabeleland provinces. Poor Zimbabwe needs development aid from the West which it is only willing to release in the absence of strained relations with Zimbabwe. People in the Midlands and Matabeleland provinces are not all that daft to believe that His Excellence President Mugabe was not involved in the Gukurahundi massacres but the West. The better advice to VP Mphoko is that he should let sleeping dogs lie. Why open wounds on a matter declared dead and buried some few decades ago? In any case what mileage does VP Mphoko hope to get from such an issue declared dead and buried many years ago

VP Mphoko's toxic revisionism ruffled the feathers of many people in the ruling ZANU PF chief among them his mentor, His Excellence President Mugabe. For more on the captivating story, Muleya 2015) is on standby to take us through.

### **Mphoko's Toxic Revisionism (Muleya 2015)**

Some people given a choice to face an ugly or terrifying truth or to conveniently avoid it, they would rather choose the latter. When they do that delusion or refusal to acknowledge reality takes over. This is what Vice-President Phelekezela Mphoko chose to do, in his yet another



controversial interview with the lickspittle state media in particular the Sunday Mail of 15 January 2015. The most salient points of VP Mphoko's interview include the Gukurahundi massacres in the South-western region in 1980s which were a Western conspiracy in the context of the Cold War and Southern African geo-politics not an ethnic conflict. In fact VP Mphoko claimed that the British created Gukurahundi. There was also the stunning assertion therein that His Excellence President Mugabe had nothing to do with it. Yet there was another new and unheard of contention that Zimbabwe People's Army (ZIPA) was formed in 1976 "mainly to rescue ZANU from collapse in Mozambique (Muleya 2015).

Vicious attacks on the history and memory of Gukurahundi – from holocaust – like denials, distortion to revisionism – are erupting in our midst as perpetrators and their supporters scramble out of panic and fear to clumsily obfuscate issues. In his self-centred narrative, VP Mphoko speaks of his heroics and starring role in the liberation struggle. The whole interview read like a memoir; a personal life story through which we must see and interpret the history of the liberation struggle. In some instances it degenerated to authoritarian levels as he claimed his claim is unassailable; everything else to the contrary is fictitious. However put under scrutiny, VP Mphoko's flawed narrative collapses on its own. First, he seems unaware or forgets an exhaustive narrative discourse and historical representation of the liberation struggle – its historiography – cannot be simply reduced to a biographical procedure. The modes and hopes of history are complex, especially given the taxonomy of the sorts of narrative games historians and participants in such events always play. Second, VP Mphoko's claim that Gukurahundi was a Western conspiracy was just false. It was an internal conflict with regional and international dimensions. Its genesis lies in the contradiction of the struggle and sustained mutual distrust and hostilities within the liberation movement manifested through Joshua Nkomo's troubled relationship with His Excellence President Mugabe. The hot Cold War, as Vladimir Shubin puts it, and attendant geo-politics provided a global stage for a local conflict with regional and international ramifications.

Locally it was political power struggle between ZANU and ZAPU, His Excellence President Mugabe and Nkomo to be specific. After winning elections in 1980, His Excellence President Mugabe and his ZANU PF party wanted at all cost to liquidate Nkomo and his ZAPU party to establish a one-party state. As part of a power consolidation strategy, His Excellence President Mugabe launched Gukurahundi; a campaign of fascist violence and brutality now a trademark of his party during times of crises to wipe out ZAPU and its support base. Therein lies the ethnic factor as ZAPU, which used to be national in outlook and rich, had by 1980 been pushed back to Matabeleland and the Midlands regions by ZANU largely using divisive identity politics for electoral purposes (Muleya 2015).

Third there already exists a large amount of writing in the state formation literature on Zimbabwe's first few years of independence and declassified archival material which further shed light on Gukurahundi's origins and dynamics. There were various stakeholders in Gukurahundi and invariably different interests.

As already stated, His Excellence President Mugabe's interest was to destroy his main rival, Nkomo and the then main opposition ZAPU. Apartheid South Africa as later shown by operation drama, wanted to destabilize Zimbabwe through its creature Super-ZAPU (different from local ZIPRA army deserters hounded out due to infighting) and clandestine aggression to keep the communist Soviet block and its purported proxies, the ANC/MK at bay. The West wanted to prevent Communism from spreading Southwards to Zimbabwe and South Africa so the Soviet sponsored ANC and ZAPU had to be crushed. Conspiracies and deception were then used to achieve the motley agendas. VP Mphoko toxic revisionism and distortion are simply dishonest (Muleya 2015).

Again this is solid confirmation of the maxim that a man appointed to public office is more dangerous than one elected by the people. In yet another captivating drama, the animals in George Orwell's *Animal Farm* had after staging a sterner war against an oppressive farmer, thought they were all equal. But upon testing the sweetness of power, the victorious pigs who had assumed the leadership office on the Animal Farm tilted the rules in their favour and the agreement that no animal shall sleep in bed was remodeled to say "no animal shall sleep in a bed with sheets".

VP Mphoko toxic revisionism and distortions are simply diversionary tactics. The real issues here are the unrelenting economic decline and the impending starvation soon to torment the cashless nation. Where to get the money to fight these two economic wars is proving insurmountable to the ZANU PF war machinery. Hence the need to spend more time discussing diversionary issues such as Gukurahundi massacres of some nearly 40 years ago. Discussing Gukurahundi of some 40 years ago does not bring food to the table. What brings food to the table is hard cash which has proven elusive now and for many more years to come. Good political and economic policies will restore Zimbabwe back to a regional food basket than the hopeless basket case of today.

The same scenario at *Animal Farm* was replicated in Zimbabwe when soon after the sterner war waged against British rule the two comrades in arms ZANU PF and PF ZAPU turned against each other for want of a one party in new born Zimbabwe. Muckraker (2015) has more on the story for which there is more to look forward to.

### **No Need for Orwellian Antics in Gukurahundi (Muckracker 2015)**

On 15 February 2015 VP Phelekezela Mphoko was, in an interview in the Sunday Mail, quoted at length trying to dispel the well known fact that His Excellence President Mugabe's ZANU PF regime had massacred approximately 20 000 innocent civilians, including women and children, in the Matabeleland and Midlands regions in the early 1980s saying it was a conspiracy by the West. When he is sleeping in a bed with sheets while his fellow comrades live in the chicken run, what else could he say? Does anyone in his good five senses need to sanitize the ruling ZANU PF of the Gukurahundi atrocities it willingly committed when all is clear that His Excellence President Mugabe dispatched the North Korean-trained Fifth Brigade to spill blood in a war which was justified as war against dissident banditry after the "arms cache discovery" of February 1982? Why then did His Excellence confess that it was "an act of madness" when VP Mphoko – who some now call Mboko which in street lingo means rascal – wants us to believe the West was responsible for the shameless massacres? (Muckraker, 2015)

Does His Excellence President Mugabe need to apologize for a crime he did not commit? Why then does the ruling ZANU PF party need to establish an Organ on National Healing and Reconciliation of which VP Mphoko is Minister when it was not involved in spilling blood in the aforementioned regions? Was VP Mphoko also part of the gang that was on the ground to ensure the ruling ZANU PF wiped out its fellow countrymen? (Muckraker 2015)

An autobiography by Fortune Senamile Nkomo: Father Zimbabwe, the life and times of an African legend says Nkomo asserted that both ZIPRA and ZANLA had hidden arms on returning to Rhodesia because of fear of attack by Rhodesian forces. After Entumbane clashes they had probably hidden more arms because of mutual distrust. According to Nkomo the war was premised on power struggles between the two revolutionary parties. As if there was sense in what VP Mphoko was saying, the Sunday Mail in an article headlined VP Mphoko opens up on Gukurahundi quoted him as saying: "Now I have always said Gukurahundi in the post-independence was a conspiracy of the West. This I maintain ...The Gukurahundi after the war had nothing to do with Mugabe – nothing! That is a fact ... Our people should be careful not to be used ....The Rhodesians, the British have always wanted war between the Shonas and Ndebeles because of these things" Someone should quickly wake up VP Mphoko from his deep slumber, who is may be reaping the fruits of selling out other ZIPRA cadres that he should immediately cease to trivialize an act that can best be described as genocide. Didn't the former ZIPRA military supremo Dumiso Dabengwa, who himself was charged for treason together with Lookout Masuku, shed light in 2014 when he said VP Mphoko was part of ZANU PF plot to dismantle ZIPRA tentacles? Unfortunately he thinks to be vice president automatically makes

him the propagator of falsehoods. From the kind of madness, VP Mphoko is not only dangerous to others but to himself too (Muckraker 2015).

VP Mphoko must be reminded as well that ZANU PF killings did not end with Gukurahundi, MDC supporters were abducted in their thousands and ruthlessly killed in 2000, 2002 and 2008 elections. Their crime? Supporting opposition politics ironically in a multiparty democracy. It is a mammoth task therefore for him to try and present the ruling ZANU PF party as a party of peace, when it is an avid instigator of not only violence but political interference. It is therefore better for him “to sleep in a bed with sheets” instead of opening wounds that must be healed. After all people in Zimbabwe need no reminder that after the so called damp squib “elective” ZANU PF congress of 2 – 7 December 2014, VP Mphoko was ironically appointed new Minister of National Healing and Reconciliation (Muckraker 2015).

Any person appointed to a public office is more dangerous than one elected by the people accredited to carry out the election. Let us get the facts right from the onset that VP Mphoko is singing for big supper from his master. His Excellence President Mugabe. He was appointed to his lofty positions on no merit and there is no better way to say thank you than to engage in his praise singing – Gukurahundi after the war had nothing to do with Mugabe. Thank God the people of Zimbabwe do not want another war which can be sparked by such careless utterances by the habitually blundering VP Mphoko.

VP Mphoko’s Gukurahundi outbursts were remarkably outrageous much to the embarrassment of all honest and peace loving Zimbabweans. He therefore must simply carry, like the Biblical Jesus, his cross. Khoza (2015) has more on the story with his story Mphoko must carry Gukurahundi cross.

### **Mphoko must carry Gukurahundi Cross (Khoza 2015)**

Vice President Phelekezela Mphoko (74) did very well when he openly and in black and white – for the record – said with a straight face that the 1980’s Gukurahundi atrocities were a Western conspiracy and had nothing to do whatsoever with His Excellence President Mugabe.

Gukurahundi after the war had nothing to do with Mugabe .... Nothing! That is a fact. I have always said the post - Independence Gukurahundi was a conspiracy of the West. This I maintain ..... People can say what they want, but that was a Western conspiracy”

Judged in the light of the aforementioned statement by him, VP Mphoko is forthright and honest about where he stands on the emotive and sensitive Gukurahundi issue. As a political lightweight and a dumb one for that matter, he had within two months of his appointment shown his true colours for all to see without any doubt at all. His short sighted agenda is very clear: To serve his own personal interests first using a public office he earned without merit, while singing

breathless praises for His Excellence President Mugabe and exonerating him from any wrong doing particularly on the emotive and sensitive Gukurahundi massacres (Khoza 2015).

VP Mphoko is only too aware that he has been accused of being a collaborator having worked for the dreaded men and women in dark glasses – the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO) during the turbulent 1980's when state security forces including the intelligence services he worked for went on a rampage beating up, maiming, raping, bayoneting and killing, in ruthless fashion, innocent civilians. The evidence of all this which is overwhelming for all and sundry to see is still there in the form of mass graves, remains of the dead and storytelling by survivors. When His Excellence President Mugabe assumed as the first ever black Zimbabwe Prime Minister on 18 April 1980, he was faced with the unenviable task of uniting a battered country which had been subjected to 90 years of repressive racist colonial rule from the Empirical Britain. There had also been a decade of escalating military activity which had served not only to accelerate the process of liberating the majority, but also to create some divisions within it. In addition, the new Zimbabwe had a powerful and hostile neighbor in the name of Apartheid South Africa, and then touted the largest economy in Africa (Khoza 2015).

It was obvious that integrating a country that had serious divisions within itself would be no easy task. In addition there were sporadic outbreaks of violence emanating from the guerrilla assembly points and other political rivalries countrywide. Such outbreaks had begun before Independence and continued throughout the early 1980's. This violence including the Entumbane clashes was committed by both ZANLA and ZIPRA ex-combatants, sometimes against civilians and quite often against each other. The underlying causes of all this was complex. By 1982 the new Zimbabwe had serious security problems in various parts of the country, particularly in the Western region where VP Mphoko lived and witnessed events as they unfolded. Army deserters, who His Excellence President Mugabe and his regime described as dissidents, and state sponsored provocateurs were killing civilians and destroying property. Using this as a pretext His Excellence President Mugabe's regime responded with a murderous security clampdown on Matabeleland and parts of the Midlands. What was apparent in retrospect and is now known is that the security forces deliberately and systematically targeted geographically and ethnically defined minority civilians in their campaign, suggesting a clear campaign of genocide (Khoza 2015).

One of the most tragic effects of Gukurahundi is that it served to harden ethnic differences in Zimbabwe, resulting in enduring tensions and even hostilities. Similar events in Sri Lanka, Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia provide sad testimonies to what happens when such conflicts are not satisfactorily resolved. While the signing of the 1987 Unity Accord between ZANU and ZAPU was an important step towards reconciliation there are many issues

that still need to be discussed by ordinary citizens of Zimbabwe and taken into account by its national leadership, if we are to prevent a recurrence of violence between future generations of Zimbabweans (Khoza 2015).

With double dealing leaders like VP Mphoko and his Gukurahundi collaborators who believe that deliberately distorting and lying about such events could exonerate the perpetrators we, as a nation, are going nowhere! VP Mphoko is fighting to save His Excellence President Mugabe and his own skin. His is a sinister agenda. In the process of currying His Excellence President Mugabe's favour thoughtlessly and crassly regardless of the consequences, VP Mphoko wants to clear his name and that of his master. There is no doubt that he is singing for his supper hovering around His Excellence President Mugabe's table while picking crumbs that fall from his master's table. He also erroneously hopes that he will cheaply get resources and presidential support to help him rise to power as His Excellence President Mugabe's successor without sweating for it like he did when he struck it rich to become vice-president in both the ruling ZANU PF party and government. It is a harebrained strategy by an evidently daft politician who seems to think that being reckless and making irresponsible statements time and again will carve out a permanent political base and niche for him (Khoza 2015).

VP Mphoko conveniently forgets that if vice-presidents were still elected in the ruling ZANU PF party during the 2 – 7 December 2014 congress, no one would have nominated him for leadership, he is not leadership material after all for many reasons, including that he is just dull and not a real world class politician. This is not meant to insult him but that his actions and mouthing offs are unintelligent, delusional and stupid. How does the indiscriminate killing of 20 000 innocent civilians by their government they helped elect into office in broad daylight become a Western conspiracy? How and why? If His Excellence President Mugabe is not responsible can VP Mphoko who then specifically is responsible? If any can he name the Western architects of Gukurahundi and see whether he won't be sued out of all his borrowed choppies largesse? For his outrageous remarks on Gukurahundi the Author's equally outrageous pronouncement for VP Mphoko is that he must simply carry his cumbersome Gukurahundi cross. Amen (Khoza 2015).

The first people to feel the pinch from the careless utterances of VP Mphoko are none other than the young generation in the Matabeleland and Midlands regions. The careless utterances by VP Mphoko have the potential to start another new chapter of another Gukurahundi massacre. The people of Zimbabwe living in perpetual penury and deprivation because of endless economic blues do not want another war but economic prosperity for Zimbabwe and the SADC region. VP Mphoko must take a leaf from this sermon of economic prosperity.

To round off this discourse is a compelling look or study of VP Mphoko and the tragedy of his ego-politics. Macaphulana (2015), a Pretoria-based Zimbabwean political scientist and semistician has more on this story.

### **Mphoko and the Tragedy of Ego-Politics (Macaphulana 2015)**

A big prize for extraordinary creativity can be awarded to the co-Vice-President Phelekezela Mphoko for weaving a now spectacular version of Zimbabwe's military and political history which no one including the extensively researching Author has encountered before (Macaphulana 2015).

In this pulsating narrative of history VP Mphoko is the gallant son of Zimbabwe who delivered weapons from ZIPRA to ZANLA in order to rescue ZANU from collapse in spite of the bloody enmity between the two erstwhile liberation army's and curiously, the only witnesses to this heroic of VP Mphoko are the now departed Solomon Mujuru and the late Joshua Nkomo and the nameless ZIPRA command. Strangely enough no one living is cited as an eye witness. How convenient! Dead men are known to tell tales. Contrary to the heroic narrative of VP Mphoko that can only be corroborated by the late heroes of Zmbabwe's liberation struggle there are many ZAPU and ZIPRA leaders and cadres who are alive who accuse him of having a storied double agent who long sold out to ZANU PF by being a "Report source on ZAPU and ZIPRA plans and activities' hence he has at long last been rewarded for his long service to ZANU PF. The neat and tidy unit and smooth co-operation between ZANLA and ZIPRA that VP Mphoko portrays and which he pretends to personify, is contradicted by bloody struggles within the struggle such as the massacre of unarmed ZIPRA cadres by armed ZANLA forces in Morongoro and Mgagao in Tanzania. In fact both sides attacked each other ruthlessly in many areas, including at Entumbane after Independence in April 1980. The purpose of this article is to recognize VP Mphoko's important message on dialogue on the Gukurahundi genocide and equally to expose some unfortunate self serving falsehoods that he has uttered to rationalize his current promotion which might as well be a reward for a long history of treachery and double dealing by a pretender and an opportunist whose ladder to the throne might have been built on limbs and bodies of the innocents (Macaphula 2015).

VP Mphoko's role in the 1960s and 1970s liberation struggle after the ZIPA experiment collapsed in 1976 is yet to be fully told. It will, however, emerge in the fullness of time and his claimed heroics and self-centred narrative of the struggle, including his purported starring role in rescuing ZANU from collapse in Mozambique, will be properly and rigorously tested. Ego-politics, in theology and politics did not only rise with the God-Ya-Weh telling Moses from a burning bush that "I am who I am and the one and only God". It was amplified by Rene

Descartes singing “I think therefore I am”, inaugurating a tendency that the European is the standard of humanity and all truth, the rest of humanity can only learn and imitate. It is equally ego-political for VP Mphoko to explain Zimbabwean history around his personal story, and to explain his political biography by hammering and chiseling to a shape that justifies him and his political fortunes. Like many other living heroes of the Zimbabwean struggle, knowing that all living heroes of the Zimbabwean struggle, knowing that all living heroes are suspect, VP Mphoko comes across as a dubious character whose mouth must be watched and his words studied carefully (Macaphulana 2015).

Once upon a time in Gumtree near Bulawayo, Macaphulana (2015) was lucky to come out of the late Vice-President Joseph Msika’s farm in peace and in one piece. He dared ask the temperamental politician “How could you, Mdala, call us lizards in a full Imbovane yamahlabezulu at the Large City Hall? There was temple silence for three minutes before he looked at his wife, then at my friend the politician who had brought me to his presence and then he burst out laughing. A coughing guttural laugh.

“You are playing wena mfana (meaning young man). When we address the crowds we are not talking to them, but to the president; these boys who walk behind us always are not just protecting us they are also monitoring our words and movements”. After that encounter, Macaphulana’s (2015) friend accused him of possessing strong muti (spell); Msika was nicknamed Bruno because of his reputation at throwing jabs at careless challenges but Macaphulana (2015) knew that he respected his kindly wife who was in the vicinity, and chose the bleeding truth with his insolence physically (Macaphulana 2015).

From that logic VP Mphoko’s colourful words might not have been for our ears although we are the audience the words are for the attention of the absent, but ever present Dear Leader. How else can we understand the ridiculous words: Gukurahundi after the war had nothing to do with President Robert Mugabe ..... Nothing! When even children know that His Excellence President Mugabe was the ruler of the country and the commander-in -chief- of the armed forces at the time of the genocide. Should we suddenly believe that His Excellence President Mugabe, the defiant strongman was once a hapless puppet under whose watch the British and the Americans carried out genocide, using him as the orator who was made to say if you want to kill a snake (Joshua Nkomo) you must crush its head. Are we suddenly to believe that the British made His Excellence President Mugabe say Nkomo was the “Father of the dissidents? VP Mphoko who totally reduced the Gukurahundi genocide to a Western conspiracy and exonerated His Excellence President Mugabe from culpability is not only an afraid man; but seemingly also a practical double-agent who has got an eye and nose for the buttered side of the slice. When he was shuttling between Nkomo and His Excellence President Mugabe while



based in Maputo after practically defecting from ZAPU following the collapse of the ZIPA initiative, what was his role precisely? Was he an honest messenger playing a constructive role to thaw relations between the two in the service of the struggle or self-serving double agent? All careful readers and thinkers on world affairs and life know that the Global North since 1492 when Christopher Columbus landed in the Americas has always had colonial and imperial conspiracies against the Global South. The book *Meet me in November* by Peter Stiff has Taffy of the Rhodesian Intelligence narrating how they sought to fuel the animosity between ZAPU and ZANU and how they killed freedom fighters through assassinations (Macaphulana 2015).

But VP Mphoko, the Rhodesians, British and the Americans were not in the fight in 1982 when his current counterpart Emmerson Munangagwa and Sydney Sekeramai met Nkomo, on their way to Bulawayo to discover hidden arms caches (they were known to be there as ZANLA and ZIPRA hid weapons around assembly points) on ZAPU farms or at that rally where Perence Shiri, then called Black Jesus, allegedly held a six month old baby by the neck, and then let the infant fall to its death in front of the mother and multitudes to demonstrate what must happen to “children of dissidents”. Gukurahundi had a colonial and imperial conspiracy in it, Macaphulana (2015) has written on this before, but it was also a plot that was opportune for His Excellence President Mugabe and ZANU PF who had their own machinations against Nkomo and ZAPU. Macaphulana (2015) would be the next Jesus if anyone expects VP Mphoko to confess this truth given his role in the Central Intelligence Organization (CIO), present position and the culture of retribution in his party but he should maintain his silence like many others than seek to mock the graves of his fellow ZAPU cadres and fellow victims of Gukurahundi. While the North Koreans trained the Fifth Brigade, the British who were training the Zimbabwe regular army under BMATT, armed them in certain respects as they provided equipment to His Excellence President Mugabe who was the darling of the West at the time. As Grey Mills had explained, it must be said for clarity’s sake the Fifth Brigade was not trained by British Military Advisory Training Team (BMATT). With no British training involvement the Fifth Brigade which comprised around 1000 ex-ZANLA guerillas, were exposed to a vastly different military philosophy, traditions and tactics as the rest of the army. The use of North Koreans illustrated what is perhaps a less well known problem faced by BMATT: that of the differences in systems, philosophies and tactics between Western and formerly Sino-Soviet block allies. The latter, BMATT contend rely on shock systems of attack with a mass conventional front where there is little initiative below command level (Macaphulana 2015).

The British system, BMATT maintained is the opposite: Where junior officers are encouraged to think for them, to show initiative and interpret leadership directives as the situation dictates. But the British collaborated in Gukurahundi for their own interests. Yet His

Excellence President Mugabe and other players also played their part for their own interests as well. The BBC Panorama archive has footage of a giggling Sekeramayi, watching as a British soldier demonstrates the use of a machine gun to a Fifth Brigade soldier. Foreigners and imperialists provided training and guns yes, but His Excellence President Mugabe gave orders and the Fifth Brigade carried out the orders. His new job cannot blind him so much to reality and change facts just like that. Besides his spectacular ego-politics, VP Mphoko is wise to say about Gukurahundi that “where people have died, you have to be careful”, and that there must be frank debate by citizens on genocide. True also is the observation that VP Mphoko makes that in actuality; there is not one Gukurahundi, he names two, the one before Independence and the one in Matabeleland and the Midlands after. One can identify many Gukurahundis. While the term Chimurenga defines the progressive revolutionary ideology of the struggle as advanced by ZANU, Gukurahundi is a violent strategy of dealing with the party’s enemies within and without, Zimbabwean historians will remember that the soldiers who dealt with the internal ZANU revolt in the 1970s in Mozambique were also called Gukurahundi. The witty Eddison Zvobgo called this “the gun idea” that came when other persuasive ideas had failed to discipline cadres. Those involved in the Nhari rebellion after they tried to arrest the leadership for corruption, tribalism and eclecticism were executed under the Gukurahundi in 1974. Such sayings as “ZANU ndeyeropa (meaning ZANU is from blood) can also be taken to mean how the party ruthlessly dealt with opponents and rivals (Macaphulana 2015).

For that reason the term Gukurahundi did not originate with the genocide in Matabeleland and Midlands; by early 1980s the name was already a trusted code name that referred to Jihad (Islamic for holy war) against anyone and anything opposed to ZANU and its leaders. Those young and old concerned Zimbabweans, who seek to explore this history, can explore Wilbert Zvakanyorwa Sadomba’s *War veterans in Zimbabwe’s Revolution* and among many other sources such as Norma Kruger’s *Zimbabwe’s Guerilla War*. In reality not in name, such recent victims of ruthless internal ZANU PF politics as Joice Mujuru, Rugare Gumbo and Didymus Mutasa are in actuality the fresh casualties of the party’s tried and tested Gukurahundi strategy that has always accompanied the Chimurenga ideology as when necessary. Martin Rupiya has written academically about how the ruling ZANU PF governs by operations. Such military operations as Murambatsvina, operation mavhotera papi and many other too numerous to itemize, have been carried out as parts of the Chimurenga ideology and they bear them the Gukurahundi strategy. For VP Mphoko to seek to attribute the `980s Gukurahundi genocide to a Western colonial and imperial conspiracy and in the process exonerating His Excellence President Mugabe, and by extension ZANU PF, shows he is either dishonest or actually does not understand the party he belongs to. The frank dialogue that VP Mphoko wisely counsels can

surely not begin from such a distorted framework of history and the truth. By its nature, politics involves the management of history and memory. Politicians over time get audiences to remember certain events and to forget others. What VP Mphoko will have Zimbabweans remember is a heavily-distorted version of history that delivers him as a decorated hero of the liberation war who even saved ZANU from collapse in Mozambique. However, like many of our African liberation war leaders VP Mphoko is a dented and tainted product of a history of war despots, treacheries and cozenage. A future Zimbabwe will not be founded on such fraudulent narratives as that ZANU PF and His Excellence President Mugabe are totally innocent, and only imperialists are guilty of the Gukurahuindi genocide. Zimbabweans have to look at the many sins of this generation in the eye and frankly contemplate solutions outside personal fantasies and deliberately distorted, misleading narratives such as the one VP Mphoko has treated us to. In the meantime it is VP Mphoko and the tragedy of ego-politics that must be condemned through and through. The problems emanating from VP Mphoko are a resonance with the maxim – in modern politics a public office bearer is better elected than appointed. In the case of an appointment the appointee is rather a servant committed to the appointing person than to the electorate in general (Macaphulana 2015).

By way of closing remarks the big question to ask is: Why in Zimbabwe spend energy, time and scarce resources on debating who killed who during the Gukurahundi massacres of the early 1980s and other related side issues when Zimbabwe and its economy are burning because of low foreign direct investments (fdi) inflows into the country since 1980 to 2013. The decline in FDI comes at a time other Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries such as lowly Mozambique and Zambia are experiencing strong growth. A recent report by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) noted that on a cumulative basis and compared to other countries in the SADC region Zimbabwe's FDI inflows amounted to US\$1.7 billion over the period 1980 to 2013. Table 2 below has comparative figures for Zambia and Mozambique of the SADC region.

Table 2: FDI inflows into Zimbabwe compared with Neighboring Zambia and Mozambique for the Period 1980 to 2013

Country	FDI in billion (US\$)	Ranking	%
Mozambique	15.8	1	63
Zambia	7.7	2	31
Zimbabwe	1.7	3	6
Total	25.2		100

Source: International Monetary Fund Report (2015)

For the Author who is a Zimbabwean citizen by birth, his first reaction to the depressing statistics in Table 2 above was to say: Shame, shame, shame on you the political leadership in Zimbabwe. Of the US\$100 FDI taken to the three countries for investment the once lowly Mozambique and Zambia compared to the once mighty Zimbabwe walked away with gold and silver in the FDI race while Zimbabwe once touted as a beacon of regional progress and hope had for all her running walked away with a wooden spoon for her trophy. Aive madziva ave mazambuko (meaning for Zimbabwe once touted as the second largest economy south of the Sahara after South Africa is now reduced to a hopeless basket case in the SADC region (Kachembere 2015). Experts blame such policies as the violent seizures of +/-6 000 white commercial farms to resettle blacks who are themselves not farmers at heart and latterly the ill advised drive to localize all international major firms for Zimbabwe's poor performance in the FDI stakes. His Excellence President Mugabe's government, however, blames Western sanctions; imposed on him and his inner circle at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century over allegations of electoral fraud and gross human rights abuses, for the country's economic woes (Kachembere 2015).

With the relevant and related Literature Review and Research Methodology out of the way up next is the Summary which gives a panoramic view of the Paper concentrating on its major highlights. Details on this coming your way in just a moment.

## **SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION**

The topic under discussion in this Paper is titled In modern politics a public office bearer is better elected than appointed: A case study of the appointment of Phlekezela Mphoko to the post of Vice-President in both ruling ZANU PF party and government (2014-2015). To resonate with this practice Mushava (2015) portrays VP Mpoko's wife, Laurinda, demanding the best ever house in Zimbabwe saying that the house which used to accommodate his predecessor, the late Joseph Msika was too small for him. This resulted in his continued stay in the expensive Rain Bow Towers Hotel where he was reported to have gobbled US\$18, 8 million in accommodation only excluding meals and other expenses between mid December 2014 and end of January 2015. And this was happening against the background that the cash squeezed government was failing to pay civil servants their monthly salaries and bonuses. Second to enter the discourse was Zhangazha (2015) with his touchy topic – New VPs between a rock and a hard surface – meaning the two vice presidents were in a dilemma on who to serve – His Excellence President Mugabe and the rank and file in both the party and the country given the nature of their appointment as opposed to election.

Next to join the discourse is Moyo (2015) with a double punch. His first punch is a disappointing revelation that the blundering VP Mphoko is proving costly as he learns his ropes in both the ruling ZANU PF party and government while his second punch in the discourse is an equally disappointing revelation that VP Mphoko's love for luxury is draining the fescues.

The fifth and sixth reporters to join the discourse both pointing accusing fingers at VP Mphoko are Chabwinja (2015) and Madanhire (2015). In his attacks at VP Mphoko Chabwinja (2015) accused VP Mphoko of being totally out of touch with reality in Zimbabwe after spending +/- 27 years on diplomatic duty outside the country. For his part, Madanhire (2015) makes an impassioned plea to VP Mphoko to stop the hypocrisy such as the Gukurahundi in the Matabeleland and Midlands region was a Western conspiracy and had nothing to do with His Excellence President Mugabe or his ruling ZANU PF party.

Gagare (2015) and Muleya (2015) join the discourse to lambast VP Mphoko for pressing the wrong button as far as the emotive Gukurahundi issue is concerned. Gagare (2015) does not hide his frustration at VP Mphoko's public appearance as a Frankenstein monster on the emotive issue to do with the early 1980s Gukurahundi genocide in which more than 20 000 innocent civilians were ruthlessly murdered for being Ndebele, who were then seen as opposed to ZANU PF rule. For his part in the discourse Muleya (2015) implored the habitually blundering VP Mphoko to stop his toxic revisionism which was putting His Excellence President Mugabe and senior ZANU PF officials at sixes and sevens because of the blatant untruths mouthed off by VP Mphoko simply because he was singing for his supper from His Excellence President Mugabe in return for his surprise appointment to the high post of Vice- President of both ruling ZANU PF and government.

And finally the trio to heap more pressure on VP Mphoko to stop his costly blundering was none other than the frustrated Muckraker (2015), Khoza (2015) and Macaphulana (2015). Muckraker (2015) clearly pointed out to VP Mphoko to stop the Orwellian antics simply because he had been appointed to the lofty position of Vice-President for him to start changing goal posts. For his part in the discourse Khoza (2015) had without beating about bush fires, ordered the habitually blundering VP Mphoko, like the Biblical Jesus Christ, the Son, to himself carry the cumbersome Gukurahundi cross. Macaphulana (2015) deplored that VP Mphoko was a tragedy of ego-politics who betrayed the trust that His Excellence President Mugabe had bestowed on him.

Given the overwhelming evidence as given elsewhere in this Paper including the Summary, which were loud and clear for all, it could be safely concluded that *In modern politics a public office bearer is better elected than appointed by an individual*. With the exciting Conclusion done and dusted next are the Recommendations primarily designed to address

what was not done right as in the study in this paper. Details on this coming your way in just a moment. So please don't go away.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

To address what was not done right as per the study in this Paper is the unbiased report by Langa (2015) of the *Newsday*, a daily print media in Zimbabwe famous for saying it as it is on the ground without fear, favour or prejudice. More details on this coming your way in just a moment.

Heal Zimbabwe, a human rights pressure group had piled bucketfuls of pressure on Vice-President Phelekezela Mphoko saying he was unfit to lead the National Healing and Reconciliation portfolio after his thoughtless and “insensitive” public remarks on the emotive Gukurahundi issue (Langa 2015).

VP Mphoko who was recently appointed the second Vice-President and doubles up as Honourable Minister responsible for the National Healing and Reconciliation portfolio had, in rough ride fashion, stepped on the toes of Gukurahundi victims in Matabeleland when he thoughtlessly announced that the ethnic massacres that left an estimated 20 000 innocent civilians dead in Matabeleland and Midlands was a conspiracy by the Imperial and colonial West spearheaded by none other than Britain and America. To date, victims of the 1980s massacre were still crying out for compensation and an apology from His Excellence President Mugabe and his ruling ZANU PF party.

“We believe that the victims and survivors of Gukurahundi deserve a remorseful apology than insults from the VP”, Heal Zimbabwe had apologetically said.

“The VP's insensitive remarks affirm his unfitting importance to lead the National Healing and Reconciliation portfolio (Langa 2015).

Heal Zimbabwe had gone on to say that the National Healing and Reconciliation portfolio required truth telling and not the beating about bush fires employed by the habitually blundering VP Mphoko. Truth telling is a requirement in order to institute healing, yet the Heal Zimbabwe, a non-governmental organization was surprised that VP Mphoko had erroneously decided to ignore the truth and had manipulated the facts towards his unpardonable selfish interests.

“As the voice of survivors and victims of violence, Heal Zimbabwe implores political leaders and government to encourage truth telling – objective narrating and forensic truth. In fact the challenge that stands in the way of time, national healing and reconciliation is that institutions and systems that perpetrated violence, torture and gross human rights violence have become the attempted spokespersons of the survivors’, the worried non-governmental organization (ngo) said (Langa 2015).

The pressure group said what was expected at the moment was a public apology rather than to justify the deaths of thousands of people under the guise of a conspiracy by the West which is but a pack of lies.

“Heal Zimbabwe strongly opposes any attempts to force the masses to forget the past without truth telling, justice, healing and reconciliation. The organization implores public office bearers and government leaders to desist from manipulating the truth at the expense of the masses. The trauma that Gukurahundi victims suffered, directly or otherwise, continues to haunt their lives”, Heal Zimbabwe continued to complain against fascist government ministers like VP Mphoko.

The non-governmental organization (ngo) said it was now imperative to fully establish the National Peace and Reconciliation Commission to deal with transitional justice without distortions (Langa 2015).

With the Recommendations now out of the way the Author is now duty bound to give the beloved Reader a cautionary statement to give him/her peace of mind and allay any fears he/she might have about the authenticity of the facts and figures as contained in this Paper. Details on this contained in the Statement on Key Assumption coming your way sooner than later.

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