COUP DE GRÂCE?
Plots and Purges:
Mugabe and ZANU PF’s
6th National Peoples Congress

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Executive Summary

Ahead of the crucial ZANU PF Congress of December 2014, RAU, together with the Zimbabwe NGO Forum, published *The Mortal Remains: Succession and the ZANU PF Body Politic,*² a paper which examined the issue of succession to President Robert Mugabe, viewed against both the State and ZANU PF Party Constitutions. That paper considered the ZANU PF Congresses of 1999, 2004 and 2009 in some detail. It is thus appropriate, given the importance of the 2014 Congress to the dynamics of succession and the ZANU PF body politic, that the paper be supplemented by this lengthy addendum, even if the issue has already been widely commented upon.

ZANU PF holds a plenary Congress every five years. At the Congress the seats of the Central Committee and two of its component parts, the Politburo and the Presidium (comprising the Party President, two Vice-Presidents and National Chairperson) are determined. With Mugabe in his 91st year ahead of the Congress, the build-up to the Congress was always destined to be fraught as those seeking to succeed Mugabe strategically positioned themselves.

A key factor in this positioning was control of the Provinces. Until its amendment, the ZANU PF Party Constitution provided that the Provinces submitted to Congress their candidates for the Presidium and Central Committee, and although these candidates were to be elected by the Congress, in practice they were merely endorsed.

It thus caused considerable alarm to the “Mnangagwa faction” that the Provincial Executive Council elections at the end of 2013 delivered nine of ten provinces into Mujuruite hands. Complaints about the manifest electoral improprieties around these elections were ignored by Mugabe and the Politburo. A fight back strategy was required.

Plan A was for the Mnangagwa faction to use its control of the media to undermine the Mujuruites in the hope of removing them from positions of power and conveying to others that support for Mujuru came with a high cost. A series of exposures of “obscene salaries” being earned by top officials began to appear in the State owned press. The tactic did nothing other than to incur the ire of President Mugabe, who in a public address called his Information Minister, Jonathan Moyo, believed to control such media, a “weevil”. Didymus Mutasa, the party Secretary for Administration followed the cue given by the President, stating that weevils must be dealt with by gamatox, a long banned insecticide. Thus the two camps became known as “weevils” and “gamatox”. Jonathan Moyo’s axing from government appeared imminent, notwithstanding Mugabe’s aversion to openly taking action against any party cadres and Ministers. Moyo sought an urgent audience with the President. The President thereafter said nothing further to denigrate Moyo.

The President (and his wife Grace) rather, seemed to have been persuaded that Didymus Mutasa and other “gamatoxes” were plotting to remove him from power at the impending Congress and install Vice-President Joice Mujuru in his stead. He appears to have given a green light to Moyo a group which became known as the gang of four, leading a larger group of twelve dubbed the “clean dozen” to prevent the plot and rid the party of senior Mujuruites.

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² RAU October 2014 (“The Mortal Remains”) available at www.researchandadvocacyunit.org
The means by which this was to be accomplished was partly through Grace Mugabe, who, as Mugabe’s wife, was rightly judged to be immune from criticism. With her status first elevated as incoming head of the Women’s League and a dubious doctorate from the University of Zimbabwe, Grace Mugabe began a campaign to denounce “factionalism”, which, with the aid of the state media was constructed to be synonymous with the Mujuruites. Rather than two factions competing from power, clever and saturation propaganda created the image of a solid ZANU PF headed by Mugabe under attack from a “putschist cabal” of Mujuruites who would not stop short of assassination to achieve their end.

With the ground thus prepared by Grace Mugabe, the plotters set about gaining control of the Provinces. Ignoring procedural propriety and using strong arm tactics, the nine provincial chairpersons were forced from office. Similar political muscle was used to control the selection process for the Central Committee. Wisely, given the strength of the resistance by the Mujuruites to these first two steps, leaving nothing to chance, the plotters engineered the (unprocedural) amendment of the Party Constitution to grant Mugabe the power to appoint the other members of the Presidium from the Central Committee. Mujuru, Mutasa and other senior Mujuruites, having been thoroughly vilified by the time of the selection process to the Central Committee, were unable to stand as candidates and unless the unlikely recipients of Mugabe’s munificence were not eligible for appointment to the Presidium.

Mugabe duly replaced Joice Mujuru with Emmerson Mnangagwa as a Vice-President of both Party and State. Six other senior ZANU PF members and leaders of the Mujuru faction were expelled from the party. Another 141 were suspended.

The saga unveiled Grace Mugabe as lacking both political nous and the gravitas seen as necessary for high office. It also exposed Mugabe as an uncertain and timorous leader – uncertain as to whom he may trust; unable to distinguish fact from fabrication in the endless palace intrigues around him; fearful of forfeiting the adulation of his supporters and intensely sensitive to any criticism. He thus, as events showed, prefers to delegate the unpleasant tasks of leadership, and, where he is unable to fall back on his default position of not making any decision at all, eschews agency in the decisions which must be made. The drifting and amorphous party which results, is given neither course nor frame by the Party Constitution, whose contents are changed, bent or ignored depending on the currents of internal realpolitik, where political brawn, rather than procedural nicety, determines outcomes and secures office. Those unable to thrive in a milieu where the only law is the survival of the fittest are trampled underfoot and looked upon with scorn, unless rescued by the power, munificence and compassion of Mugabe, to whom they are ever after to be grateful and beholden.

The essay details the drama around ZANU PF’s 6th National Congress, intending to bring together the many reports about the saga, and the often multifaceted and simultaneous events, into one continuous narrative, only fully coherent in retrospect.
I have often questioned the credibility of editors of media organisations publishing fabricated stories of factionalism within Zanu-PF. I have only came across this issue of Mnangagwa leading a faction through the Press and this is mere speculation as there is nothing like that....I have no problems with the Vice President (Cde Mujuru)....We have got good working relations at various forums and the talk of bad blood between the two of us is again framing on the part of the media. You can go and ask your editor on my behalf where do they get all these unfounded allegations – Emmerson Mnangagwa 28.10.12.  

I have no faction. I do not control any people. The people belong to Zanu-PF...Those who claim to belong to my faction are lying because there is no faction to talk of. We must not put individual interests ahead of the party’s – Joice Mujuru 17.11.12.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ahead of the crucial ZANU PF Congress of December 2014, RAU, together with the Zimbabwe NGO Forum, published The Mortal Remains: Succession and the ZANU PF Body Politic, a paper which examined the issue of succession to President Robert Mugabe, viewed against both the State and ZANU PF Party Constitutions. That paper considered the ZANU PF Congresses of 1999, 2004 and 2009 in some detail. It is thus appropriate, given the importance of the 2014 Congress to the dynamics of succession and the ZANU PF body politic, that the paper be supplemented by this lengthy addendum, even if the issue has already been widely commented upon.

The Question of Agency.

The dramatic and unprecedented events before, and after, the ZANU PF Congress of 2014 resulted in a purge of members of the Mujuru camp from senior positions in the party, and some from the party itself. As the events unfolded, it became clear that the purge was part of a clever and preconceived plan, even if one somewhat hastily assembled, and in the form of broad strategy and general tactics, rather than having been worked out to the last detail.

It is important in the context of succession dynamics to consider the difficult question of agency behind the intrigue.

- Was it conceived by Mugabe, who instructed his lieutenants and wife in the execution?
- Or did the plotters control Mugabe and his wife and force his hand?
- Or was it Mugabe and his wife, acting in collaboration with the plotters from the outset, and jointly conceiving the stratagem and tactics to attenuate the power and perceived ambitions of the Mujuru camp?

In other words, did Mugabe play the role of puppet, puppet-master or co-conspirator in the scheme? If the first, then it is clear that the key to the succession matrix no longer lies with Mugabe, but with those who orchestrated the purge of the Mujuru faction.

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3 Quoted in: I’ve no bad blood with Mujuru: Mnangagwa The Herald 28.10.12.
4 Quoted in: Mujuru Denies Leading Party Faction The Herald 18.11.12.
5 RAU October 2014 (“The Mortal Remains”) available at www.researchandadvocacyunit.org
In the earlier succession paper, it was suggested that Mugabe might wish to attempt to manage his succession while he is still able to do so. If he was a mere puppet in the intrigue, this would suggest that he has left the determination of the issue too late to be able to control events. The extent to which Mugabe is in control of the party he heads, already a subject of much discussion, drew heightened attention during this period and became the key national issue, impacting on all others.

**Puppet or puppeteer?**
The opaque and secretive style of Mugabe’s governance in the past makes it very difficult to determine whether he is playing his cards close to his chest, or in fact, not playing any cards at all. Mugabe is singularly coy in accepting responsibility for decisions generally. His self-disassociation from events is flagged by marked illeism⁶ in his speech. Most usually, when referring to his determinations, particularly if they are sensitive, Mugabe opts for the first person plural, rather than singular, even where the decision is clearly his and his alone. This is combined with a pretentious use of the subjunctive mood, even where unnecessary and grammatically incorrect. For example, Mugabe will frequently say “we would not want that” when he means, “I do not want that”.⁷ Where it is not possible for Mugabe to escape agency, by the use of “we”, he often resorts to referring to himself in the third person, a recent example being this: “The man has just won an election and you want to remove him?...”⁸ And, although Mugabe is frequently praised by party members (and occasionally even by opposition figures) as being a sagacious and masterful politician, the actions taken by him which inspire these accolades are not in the public domain. There is a reluctance to admit Mugabe’s hand in many of the notable events in Zimbabwe’s political trajectory.

The disinclination to claim responsibility for “Gukurahundi” is unsurprising. An estimated twenty thousand people were murdered during the brutal suppression of those of Ndebele origin in the Midlands and south west of the country in a campaign which was at root one of ethnic cleansing. While Mugabe described the period (1983 – 1987) as “a moment of madness”, exactly who suffered from this temporary derangement is neither stated nor known. The generally assumed responsibility of Mugabe himself, and Emmerson Mnangagwa (who was then Minister of State in the Office of the Prime Minister responsible for security and intelligence), arises solely from the positions that they occupied at the time and from principles of command responsibility, rather than any evidence that it was they who ordered such brutality to be unleashed.

Notable absences by Mugabe are evident elsewhere. After the rejection of the February 2000 referendum on a new constitution for the country, Mugabe seemed to quietly accept ZANU PF’s first ever loss in a poll. According to the ZANU PF narrative, the invasion of land which ensued

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⁶ The habit of referring to oneself other than with the first person singular and using, for example, for “he” or “we”.
⁷ The negative imperative is the other mood most frequently employed by Mugabe in his public addresses, an extreme version of which was emulated by his wife – see later in the text.
⁸ I’m Still in Charge, Says President The Herald 27.02.15. In the same interview President Mugabe stated in chiShona: “Mugabe is a God fearing man and he also goes to church, asking God to give him good health, praying for peace in the country, as well as praying for guerrillas (magandanga) who kill people” The translation appears as a quote in Grace Jumped the Gun Newsday 02.03.15. Other examples are given below.
immediately was due to the spontaneous anger of war veterans, their ire aroused by the rejection of a charter which would have allowed the expropriation of white farm land without compensation. The more obvious cause for the land invasions was ZANU PF’s urgent need to reassert control over their rural base ahead of an impending election. Yet the fact that the provisions on land had been inserted into the proposed constitution after the Constitutional Commission had finalised the draft, seemingly precisely to cater for the contingency of needing to develop this narrative, suggests advance planning. The invasions clearly received considerable state support. It is not known who instructed the provisions on land to be inserted in the proposed charter, who conceived the notion of so doing, and who agreed and arranged the logistics of the invasions.

Mugabe’s absence, coupled again with a false ascription of agency, was likewise apparent in the 2004 elevation of Joice Mujuru as Vice-President of ZANU PF and the country. This promotion, clearly in accord with Mugabe’s wishes, was done under the guise of a new-found and deep passion for gender equality by ZANU PF as a party, and ostensibly in obeisance to the demands of the Women’s League, to which agency was thus attributed.

Mugabe also stood well clear of responsibility for the displacement of an estimated 700 000 people in the notorious “urban renewal” programme of 2005, “Operation Murambatsvina”. The architect/s of this “operation” and the “reasoning” behind it are unknown.

Finally in this regard, it may be noted that when Mugabe lost the first round of elections in March 2008, rumours were generated that it was not he who was responsible for subsequent events. Mugabe, it was claimed, had been prepared to step down, but was prevented from doing so by unknown securocrats, who then proceeded to bludgeon the opposition MDC formations into submission, and their candidate to victory, in the June 2008 run-off.

Because of Mugabe’s habit of removing himself from the picture, it is extremely difficult to determine the extent to which Mugabe directs matters or is in control of his party. That none have a definitive answer to this question is well illustrated by two SAPES seminars held as the intrigue around the 2014 Congress began to take place. At the first, Priscilla Misihairabwi-Mushonga addressed the issue by stating very categorically that anyone who does not think that Mugabe is in control “is mad”. She recalled observing Mugabe’s remarkable lucidity of mind when she sat in Cabinet as part of the Inclusive Government (2009 -2013), and his propensity to

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10 See Michael Bratton Power Politics in Zimbabwe Lynne Reiner 2014. This is the general understanding. However, it appears that the belief that such clause had been inserted may have been a fiction generated by the State media. The draft distributed for the referendum, according to Ibbo Mandaza (interview with the author February 2015), a then Constitutional Commissioner, apparently contained no such amendment.

11 The fact that the supposed imperative of gender equality, so heavily emphasised in 2004, was abandoned without comment when appointing two male Vice-Presidents in 2014, exposes the cynicism behind the claimed motivation for Mujuru’s elevation.

12 See for example Jeff Nicolai Operation Murambatsvina: A Crime Against Humanity Under the Rome Statute? American University International Law Review Volume 21 | Issue 5 Article 2 2005 where it is held that Mugabe’s responsibility arises by necessary inference rather than any direct evidence that he ordered the operation.

13 Southern African Political Economy Series.

say one thing publically and do the opposite privately as part of Machiavellian scheming, ruthlessly annihilating opponents by skillful maneuvering while simultaneously exuding welcoming charm towards them. Three weeks later, at the same venue, with Misihairabwi-Mushonga ironically, this time, chairing the seminar, Dr. Lovemore Madhuku (who had not been at the earlier event) commenced his address by stating that anyone who thinks Mugabe is still in control “is mad”. The two are not the only respected political commentators to hold these diametrically opposed views, with the press reporting opposing views held by a variety of observers, sometimes in the same article.\footnote{Mugabe Backs Mujuru Attacks Daily News 20.10.14.}

**Agency and the 2014 Plot**

A perspective, held by friends and foes alike, that Mugabe’s dexterity as a politician has kept him in power for 35 years, is not a view held here. Without firm international interventions, authoritarian leaders can hold on to power more or less indefinitely by doling out repression and patronage in sufficient measure. An adroit politician would be one who does so without turning the country into a banana republic in the process.

Those who see Mugabe as an artful Machiavellian schemer believe that he has, over several years, cunningly played off the group characterised as the Mujuru faction against that characterised as the Mnangagwa faction, and, through a process of divide and rule, holds sway.\footnote{See for example Mugabe Using Divide-and-Rule Tactics-Dongo The Daily News 03.09.14.} The circumstances surrounding the elevation of Joice Mujuru to the post of Vice-President in 2004 is held up as an example of this.

At the time of the elective ZANU PF Congress of 2004, one of the two vice-presidential posts, and the one to be held by a ZANU candidate, rather than the other held by a ZAPU candidate, was vacant. The procedure by which elections to the Presidium (and thus to the Vice-Presidency of the party) then took place, was that each nominee for a post had to be advanced by at least six of the ten provinces. The Congress thereafter voted to “directly” elect the candidate from the nominees so selected. In practice, political pressure and horse-trading had always ensured that only one nominee for each post was presented to Congress, leaving Congress to endorse, rather than elect, the candidates.

Ahead of the 2004 Congress, it appeared that Emmerson Mnangagwa would claim the post in this manner. He reportedly had the necessary support of at least six of the ten provinces and it was simply a matter of translating this support into formal election, notwithstanding those opposed to his elevation, which apparently included Mugabe. Had he secured the post of Vice-President, the presidency would have been merely one hop away. Frantic maneuvering by the Mujuru faction, with the full, but less than completely overt support of Mugabe, scuppered the Mnangagwa faction’s plans at the 11\textsuperscript{th} hour. The ZANU PF Constitution was hastily and unlawfully amended to require that one of the two Vice-Presidents be a woman. Extreme pressure was brought to bear on the provincial leaders, to whom it was made known that Mugabe expected that such woman should be Joice Mujuru. Mujuru was duly put forward as the sole candidate for the position and “elected” at the 2004 Congress. Mugabe, appearing euphoric at his successful exercise of political muscle, imprudently stated to the gathering: “\textit{When you choose her as a Vice President, you don't want her to remain in that chair do you?}” Given what had transpired, the suggestion that Joice Mujuru had been “chosen” by Congress was hardly accurate.
The Mnangagwa faction had, however, been floored – and salt was rubbed into the wounds by the (unprocedural) dismissal or demotion of the provincial chairmen and several senior party cadres who had dared to support Mnangagwa.17

There are close parallels with events around the 2014 Congress in more than one respect. Due to Mugabe’s advanced age, the possibility of succeeding to his post now appears realisable. With the Mujuru faction having swept the polls in 2013 for each Provincial Executive Committee in nine provinces, with the disbandment of the apparently Mnangagwa-aligned District Co-ordinating Committees, and with Mujuru’s supporters clearly in the majority in the (de facto) all powerful Politburo, many, until shortly before the Congress, were of the view that Mujuru had the Presidency “in her handbag”18, and that her position as president-in-waiting was unassailable.

There are inevitable paranoias that accompany the exercise of extended authoritarian power by a head of state. Such a leader can never be sure of the authenticity of officially recorded support from the populace or the authenticity of declarations of loyalty from his19 supposed acolytes. Furthermore, should an underling have positioned him or herself so that he or she is perfectly poised to assume the leadership when the opportunity presents itself, the fear may arise that such a person may wish to create precisely such opportunity while circumstances are at their most favourable, and before they change.

From this perspective, the elevation of Joice Mujuru to the Vice-Presidency in 2004 was precisely to sabotage the prospects of Emmerson Mnangagwa and to place someone less threatening at the threshold of power. Yet by 2014, Joice Mujuru had become as powerful and as threatening as Mnangagwa may have been perceived to have been in 2004. Furthermore, it appears that Mugabe had accepted the notion that the Mujuru faction (and, predominantly, Joice Mujuru’s now late husband, Solomon) was behind the bhora musango campaign, which, according to the ZANU PF narrative, caused Mugabe’s loss in the first round of the 2008 presidential election.20 For these reasons, it may have been an easy task in 2014 to persuade Robert and/or Grace Mugabe that Joice Mujuru was preparing to take the final step to the presidency. With the two so persuaded, the plotters would have had a green light to proceed.

The Genesis of the Plot
It is difficult to determine the precise point when the plot against Mujuru was hatched. It could be said that had Mugabe been persuaded of nefarious intent by Mujuru as at September, 2013,21 he would neither have re-appointed her as state Vice-President following the July 2013 elections, nor have then selected a cabinet which was clearly constructed so as not to cause deep offence to either competing camp. If at this stage, it might be claimed, Mugabe had intended to eviscerate the Mujuru faction and support the Mnangagwa camp, he could have appointed Ministers from the latter camp alone, and spared himself the awkwardness, only 15 months later, of having later to dismiss 15 Mujuru-aligned Ministers, after the Congress. Against this, is the fact that had Mugabe done so, the alienated Mujuruite supporters would have had plenty of time to scheme ahead of the

17 See The Mortal Remains p 26 et seq.
18 Mujuru ‘has presidency in her handbag’ Nehanda Radio 02.12.13.
19 In Africa, such leaders have invariably been male.
20 See Mortal Remains p44. Under this campaign Mujuruite supporters had reportedly been alleged to have voted for ZANU PF but to have withheld their vote in the presidential election.
21 The Cabinet was sworn in on 11.09.13.
2014 Congress. It would also not be in keeping with the stated propensity of Mugabe to smile right up until the moment that he puts the boot in, as suggested by Priscilla Misihairabwi- Mushonga. The cabinet appointments were fairly even-handed, and although perceived by some to lean in favour of Mujuru, this was not to an extent that would have caused alarm to the Mnangagwa faction.

It is the provincial elections of the next few months, October and November, 2013 which would have caused panic in this camp. Being of dubious procedural propriety, the concern in the Mnangagwa faction may not have arisen from the supposed popularity of their Mujuruite rivals when the latter group secured the leadership in nine of the ten provinces. The alarm would have been caused precisely by the fact that the Mujuru faction appeared to have the political muscle and wherewithal to manipulate the results of provincial polls. And, if this could be accomplished, and accomplished with seeming ease, in respect of the provincial leadership, a similar result could be obtained when forwarding nominees for the Presidium at the impending Congress.

The reaction of the Mnangagwa camp to the provincial elections indicates that no plot against the Mujuru camp had been formulated at this stage. It was however, apparent that the Mnangagwa camp realised that a fight-back scheme was necessary.

The provincial polls brought the long-denied fracture within the party clearly into the public domain, and the deep antipathy been the groups began to be played out in the public media. If it had not been apparent before, the reporting of The Herald newspaper over this period in regard to the polls left no room for doubt that it was firmly aligned to the Mnangagwa side of the divide.

The provincial elections in Manicaland and Midlands were fraught with irregularities and several heated Politburo meetings were convened to address the issue. With the Politburo weighted with Mujuru supporters, Mnangagwa sought refuge in the constitutionally correct suggestion that the Central Committee should determine the way forward. The Central Committee resolved that elections for the remaining provinces should be held simultaneously, and in one day, and that "mistakes made in the provincial elections that have been held so far should be pointed out and corrected". The resolution was not followed, as President Mugabe seemed to regard ultimate authority as lying with the Mujuru-dominated Politburo, and it was the Politburo which eventually determined the issue.

The poll for Mashonaland Central province was likewise keenly disputed, and the losing Mnangagwa camp had expected the irregularities in the ballot to at least be referred to the Politburo, the tactic of having the Central Committee seized with the disputes having failed. However, Rugare Gumbo, party spokesperson and Mujuruite, announced the result for Mashonaland Central on State television, claiming that the election of the Mujuru-aligned candidate had proceeded without hitch. Regarding the announcement as unauthorised and precipitate, Jonathan Moyo, Minister of Information, and then seen as Mnangagwa-aligned,

22 Cabinet: Mujuru Triumphs The Zimbabwean 18.09.13.
23 A requirement of the Party Constitution which had not been followed for the two provinces.
24 On 08.11.13 during the 94th Ordinary Session of the ZANU PF Central Committee.
25 Mujuru, Mnangagwa Square Off The Zimbabwe Independent 15.11.13.
27 Zimbabwe has only one television broadcaster. There are no private television stations available in the country, other than those using a satellite platform and broadcasting from outside the country.
reacted by dismissing the entire board of the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation (ZBC) and sending its chief executive officer, Happison Muchechetere, and the head of technical services, Shadreck Mupeni, on leave. The basis for this was claimed to be mismanagement and financial impropriety.

Shortly before a Politburo meeting scheduled to discuss the provincial polling chaos, an editorial comment in *The Herald* urged Mugabe to exercise strong leadership and take action against the fraudulent ballots. When faced with circumstances such as these, however, Mugabe’s preferred course of action is usually to do nothing. Despite the obvious merits of many of the complaints, President Mugabe simply ordered that the results from the 2013 provincial polls in all Provinces were to be accepted. The Mujuru-faction, having secured the chairs of all except one Province (Matabeleland North), was obviously pleased with the outcome. Yet it cannot be said with certainty that the order was an expression of the President’s preference for Joice Mujuru as a successor. The decision may equally have been one of political expediency. The polls had only been held after several failed attempts. It is unlikely that ordering re-runs would have resolved matters, and would, in all probability, have simply exacerbated the situation and led to further acrimony.

It was thus apparent at this stage that Mugabe would not do anything to stem the advance of the Mujuru faction, and that party organs, such as the Central Committee would also be of no assistance. The Mnangagwa-aligned, however, clearly had control of all state media, and, as informed political commentators have noted in the past, this afforded them a considerable advantage.

**The First Attempts to Dislodge Mujurites**
The first fight-back stratagem against the Mujuru faction thus appeared to be to use this media to attack Mujuru’s supporters and to make it clear that support for Mujuru came at a price. On 10th December 2013, *The Herald* published a scathing article concerning ZBC boss, Happison Muchechetere, outlining his “feast amid penury”, and the fact that, together with extravagant allowances, he was taking home $40 000 per month from the cash-strapped broadcaster, while junior employees had been unpaid for several months. This was the beginning of what became known as “salarygate” – exposures in the state owned media of “obscene” salaries being earned by top officials. Leading this pack was Cuthbert Dube, former head of the ZBC Board; football body, ZIFA; and medical aid society, PSMAS. At this latter body alone, Dube was reported to be drawing a salary of some $535 000 (sic) monthly. The private media also took up the issue, and throughout January 2014, exposés of lavish salaries, particularly within parastatals, were published. The exposures clearly rattled Mujuru, who harboured no doubt that the exposés were part of a scheme to undermine her power base, and sought to halt the flood of copy on the issue, stating:

> “These issues (parastatal corruption) must not be discussed in the media but should be solved using proper channels…”

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28 Mnangagwa’s Faction Seizes State Media Infrastructure *The Zimbabwe Mail* 17.11.13.
29 This is Not How Comrades Behave *The Herald* (Editorial) 19.11.13.
31 Cuthbert Dube Demands his $535,000 Monthly Salary *Bulawayo* 07.06.2014.
She added:

“Be warned that this exposition of corruption among parastatals is one way by some people who want to destroy this country. Don’t be fooled to think that these people are not from within ZANU(PF). As they say, if you can’t beat them, join them, and then fight them from within.”

Included in the “some people” was Jonathan Moyo, who had been widely reported as having, (in 2004) justified his decision to join ZANU PF by saying that “the only way to “destroy ZANU PF is from within.”

Although Mujuru was immediately vilified as attempting to shield the corrupt, the strategy to undermine her supporters by the exposures was not, ultimately, successful. The private media joined the crusade and it became difficult for the campaign to remain discrete and confined to Mujururites. Several key allies needed by the Mnangagwa camp were sucked into the scandal, including presidential spokesperson, Deputy Minister of Information and general ZANU PF spin doctor, George Charamba. And, despite Mugabe expressing his disgust, stating that “looters must be locked up” and directing the Office of the President and Cabinet to investigate the matter and come up with legal instruments to cap salaries, there was general scepticism that any action would actually be taken by Mugabe – and none was. The likelihood was more that Mugabe was none too pleased by the exposures, which caused considerable embarrassment and discontent against his government, and vindicated the opposition’s claims of widespread cronism within parastatals. It also caused factional issues, which Mugabe and ZANU PF had long sought to conceal, continuing to be played out in the press.

In early June 2014, the Mujuru camp presented a dossier to Mugabe, complaining about Moyo’s use of the media against it, alleging that Moyo had appointed former MDC supporters to key positions in the state media and again, utilising the previous alleged statement of Moyo, claiming that this was part of a plot “to destroy ZANU PF from within.”

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33 Moyo, once an academic deeply critical of ZANU PF, was co-opted into its ranks in 2000, expelled in 2005, when he once again became stridently critical of the party and Mugabe, before being readmitted to the ZANU PF Politburo in 2011.
34 Moyo has denied saying this, claiming that what he actually said was that the best way to reform ZANU PF was from within. See Prof Moyo Sets Record Straight The Herald 24.01.15.
35 Mujuru Must Resign: MDC-T The Zimbabwe Mail 11.02.14. The accusation was revisited after Mujuru’s dismissal – Why The Opposition Loves Dr. Mujuru The Herald 15.06.15.
36 See – We Must All Resign Charamba New Zimbabwe 08.02.14.
38 Looters Face Jail Says, President The Herald 21.02.14.
39 Salarygate: Mugabe Disgusted ibid.
40 MDC: Salary Scam a Con, Mugabe Knew New Zimbabwe 02.02.14. Mugabe has a long record of not acting on instances of corruption by his officials. See The Birth of Corruption in Zimbabwe Newsday 09.02.14 for a full list of the main corruption scandals in Zimbabwe during Mugabe’s rule and Mugabe’s failure to act and the article: Mugabe fighting corruption? Forget it! By Ken Yanamoto in New Zimbabwe 09.04.14.
41 Mujuru Faction After Moyo's Head Daily News 11.06.14.
Mugabe appears to have been wholly persuaded by the dossier, which certainly had the desired effect. What the press described as “fireworks” erupted at the Politburo meeting of Thursday 5th June, 2014, as an “infuriated” Mugabe turned on Moyo accusing him of causing acrimony and divisions within the party. Game attempts by those in the Mnangagwa camp to defend Moyo, notably by Oppah Muchinguri and Saviour Kasukuwere, were reportedly brushed aside. Politburo members claimed that they had rarely seen Mugabe so angry. The party leader continued to spit venom against his Information Minister over the next few days. At a wake for ZANU PF stalwart, Nathan Shamuyarira, the following day, Mugabe referred to Moyo as a “weevil” in the party, thus adopting a metaphor reflecting the mantra of the Mujuruites that Moyo was attempting to destroy the party from within, a phrase which, significantly, Mugabe also used. At the burial of Shamuyarira at Hero’s Acre the next day, the tirade of a visibly incensed Mugabe’s continued, describing Moyo (sitting with Muchinguri and Mnangagwa) as “the devil incarnate” and “a counter-revolutionary”. Press reports quoted Mugabe as stating on these occasions:

“Don’t plant seeds to divide the people. Don’t make anyone in the party a political enemy, you may differ with the person and you attack him in the paper, that’s no ideology … it is a destructive ideology.”

“We now have weevils in our midst. ZANUPF has weevils within its ranks….Let's take care of these weevils.”

Didymus Mutasa, the following day, continued Mugabe’s metaphor:

Our weevils, if you know about them, which we are castigating now, please apply gamatox [a pesticide] on them. If you do that we will be left with one camp and not to say there is this camp and that camp.

Thus was born the unfortunate nomenclature of “weevils” (zvipfukuto in ChiShona) and “gamatox” to refer to the two factions. The vilification of Moyo was such that it was difficult to see how Mugabe could not follow through. Moyo’s dismissal was assumed imminent. Press reports claimed that Moyo then desperately sought a meeting with Mugabe on the Monday to try and rescue his position.

Moyo was not, as expected, sacked. It was clear that the salarygate tactic had failed not only on account of Mugabe’s unwillingness to act against those accused of being corrupt, but because it had positively raised his ire. There was clearly a need for a new approach.

2. PLAN B

It is probable, therefore, that in the period between the end of Shamuyarira’s burial at Hero’s Acre on Saturday, 7th June, 2014, until the conclusion of Moyo’s meeting with Mugabe the

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42 Fireworks Erupt in Politburo Meeting The Zimbabwe Independent 06.06.14.
43 Moyo Devil Incarnate, Counter Revolutionary VOA News 08.06.14.
44 Mugabe Hints at Weevil Moyo Sacking New Zimbabwe 07.06.14.
45 Gamatox Moyo Urges excitable Mutasa NewZimbabwe 08.06.14.
46 Reminiscent as it is of the description of victims of genocide in Rwanda as “cockroaches”.
47 Sink or Swim for Moyo The Daily News 09.06.14.
following Monday, the events which were to seal Mujuru’s fate were set into motion. It would not be realistic to view Mugabe’s three-day tirade against Moyo as a mere sop by Mugabe to pacify the Mujuru camp. This could have been accomplished in a far more temperate manner. Mugabe clearly had taken not merely the side of the Mujuru camp, but had adopted its perspective of insidious intent by Moyo, and thus his allies. Yet, by Monday evening, Mugabe’s vitriol against Moyo had vanished.

It may have been that those grouped around Mnangagwa had already been preparing to persuade Mugabe of perfidy in the Mujuru camp. If so, it was clear by then that they could not wait any longer to do so. Reports were later to emerge that the Mnangagwa camp was in possession of secretly obtained tape recordings in which Mujuru was said to have denigrated Mugabe in a coarse and deeply offensive manner, and demanded his departure from office. The recording reportedly captured a woman, who sounded like Mujuru, speaking in “deep chikorekore” (Mujuru’s home dialect), and stating that “This old Mugabe wants to enjoy the warmth of his faeces, he must go”. Furthermore, as noted earlier, circumstances were such that Mugabe and his wife, Grace, were likely to be particularly credulous and susceptible to claims of nefarious intent by Mujuru. It is quite likely that Grace Mugabe, herself first persuaded, through the “spy-tapes” or otherwise, was used as the medium by which such allegations could be channelled to Mugabe. It would be interesting to know where Grace Mugabe was, and who she was with, on Sunday, 8th June, 2014.

Part of the persuasive technique used to coax Grace Mugabe onto the side of the plotters seems to have been to warn her that, once she and her family lost the protection of her husband, the Mujuruites would turn upon her and she would suffer not only a loss of status, but of her farms and her ability to operate her extensive business interests. She subsequently made specific reference to this, claiming:

“[t]here are people who want to drag me against a tarred road when the President goes.”

**Plan B, Step One - Enhancing the Status of Grace Mugabe**

What would have been both a lure for Grace Mugabe, and a necessary step in the plot, was a move to strengthen her status and the political capital she held in her own right, rather than as an adjunct of that of her husband. Hitherto, the First Lady had not played a large part in the political fray. Deservedly or not, she had acquired a reputation with much of the public as a mere shopaholic, rescued from absolute vacuity only by a certain innate guile, deployed in the service of seemingly insatiable avarice. Her attempts to improve her academic qualifications had

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48 Mention of the existence of the tapes was first made in Mujuru No More: Secret Politburo Files. *Zimeye* 02.09.14.
49 The headline reveals that the translation is loose, the statement was “kavakuda kutodziirwa ne ndove kumusana ngakachibva...” Exclusive – Mugabe’s Secret Spy Tapes of Mujuru ‘Saying Bob Resting on Own Faeces’ *Zimeye* 17.10.14 (referred to hereafter as “Spy Tapes Zimeye”).
50 Allegations were made that Mujuru had spoken of depriving Grace Mugabe of the Mugabe farms when she (Mujuru) became President and this had caused a deep antipathy between the two. See Grace Shocker Rattles Mujuru Base *The Zimbabwe Independent* 01.08.14.
51 She spoke in Shona: “Pane vanhu varikuda kundizvuzvurudza mutara”.
52 Don’t Mess With Grace Mugabe – She could be the Next President of Zimbabwe *The Guardian (UK)* 15.07.15.
hitherto yielded abysmal results. This was in stark and unfortunate contrast to her supposed nemesis, Joice Mujuru, who had entered government at independence without an academic qualification to her name, but, by June 2014 was on course to being awarded a doctorate. Thus, only a few weeks after Mugabe’s “weevil attack” on Moyo and then sudden silence, Grace Mugabe registered for a DPhil at the University of Zimbabwe.

The second part of this device was to increase Grace Mugabe’s political capital by placing her at the head of ZANU PF’s Women’s League. While the League was then headed by Oppah Muchinguri, Muchinguri is likely to have stepped aside willingly. The then ascendancy of the Mujuru faction made it probable that Muchinguri would in any event have lost the position to Mujuruite, Olivia Muchena (who had long coveted the post), at the impending Women’s League Conference. With Muchinguri being part of the plotters (the four leaders were later referred to as the “gang of four”) who were hoping to ensure that both vice-presidential positions were vacant by the time of the Congress, and, hoping that the post of party Secretary for Administration would also become vacant, she may well have been confident that surrendering her position as head of the Women’s League would have been merely a prelude to obtaining higher office.

The proposal that Grace Mugabe head the Women’s’ League was apparently first openly voiced by ZANU PF’s Edna Madzongwe at a women’s caucus meeting of the party in Mashonaland West in mid-July, 2014. Oppah Muchinguri, together with senior ZANU PF women in the provincial executives and Politburo, then canvassed for support for Grace Mugabe’s appointment to the position in the remaining provinces, with the intention that 3 000 district chairpersons from all provinces would meet in a show of support at Grace Mugabe’s Mazowe Children’s Home Orphanage, as part of celebrations marking the occasion of her 49th birthday. The delegates duly converged as intended on the 25th July, 2014, and asked a coy, supposedly shocked and

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53 In 2004, Grace Mugabe was deregistered by the University of London where she was studying for a Bachelor of Arts (English) degree after badly failing most of her examinations with some marks as low as 7% - see Grace Mugabe’s Super-Speedy PhD Raises Eyebrows Around the World The Guardian (UK) 15.09.14.
54 Grace Mugabe to Study for Doctorate The Zimbabwean 02.07.14.
55 This was hinted at by Muchinguri herself. See: Why I let Post Go: Muchinguri The Herald 18.10.14. See also: Knife-edge tension at Women’s League Conference The Zimbabwe Independent 17.09.14. The 2014 conference was not, though, dissimilar from that of 2009. At the end of both conferences Mugabe denounced the vote buying that had taken place. The 2014 Conference was, however, spared the violence of 2009, when police details intervened and severely beat delegates from the rival Mujuru/Muchena and Muchinguri camps who had hurled chairs at each other - see Mugabe Slams Vote-buying in ZANUPF The Standard 19.09.09.
56 Saviour Kasukuwere, Jonathan Moyo, Oppah Muchinguri and Patrick Zhuwao.
57 It should be recalled that as the ZANU PF Constitution then stood, one VP had to be a woman.
60 Her date of birth is 23.07.65.
61 Grace Mugabe reportedly responded to the invitation as follows: “The situation is like that of a girl being proposed by a man; you do not say yes the very minute. So I will come and say girls let us go, after being mentored by Muchinguri.” Grace Mugabe also reportedly claimed that she needed time to consider the issue but that if it was the wish of the party leadership and members she would find it difficult to refuse – see Women back First Lady for Politburo The Herald 26.07.14.
62 Grace Mugabe stated: “I am overwhelmed and I am shaking right now. I cannot believe this is what you have decided, but this is God’s work, and those speaking here are mouthpieces of God.”
“overwhelmed”63, Grace Mugabe to accept nomination as the Secretary of the Women’s League at its National Conference set for the following month. However, the intention of creating the impression that the proposal came as a surprise was undone by Grace Mugabe’s revelation, after being “overwhelmed”, that the notion had been put to her already by war collaborators64 a month previously.65

After winning the provincial polls in 2013, the Mujuru camp had not rested on its laurels. With many of those opposed to Mujuru perceived as being “mafikizolos” or relative “Johnny-come-latelys”, the Mujuru group used its control of the Politburo to introduce new requirements66 for election to the party’s Central Committee, Youth and Women’s Leagues, in July 2014 and in anticipation of the Congress.67 These new electoral rules required that candidates for election to the executive68 of these bodies must have been party members for 15 years and members of a Provincial Executive for five years.69 Grace Mugabe certainly did not meet at least the latter criterion.

Within ZANU PF, anything other than the unrestrained eulogisation of Mugabe is considered a blasphemy. A concomitant has been outlandish sycophancy towards Mugabe by party cadres, with suggestions by the faithful at the more modest end of the spectrum that Mugabe is divinely appointed and, at the extreme, that he is divine himself.70 Accordingly, one means by which each faction within ZANU PF has traded barbs, has been to accuse the other of disloyalty towards the party leader. Few believed that Grace Mugabe would have been proposed as Secretary of the Women’s League without Mugabe’s consent. The proposal thus had to be considered as beyond reproach. A criticism of her candidacy would be conceived as a criticism of Mugabe, and could be, and was,71 used as a club to bludgeon opponents or to raise complaints about them to Mugabe.

The Women’s League duly “endorsed” Grace Mugabe for appointment as head of the body at its Conference on 15th August, 2014. The nomination was a valuable testing of the waters as to how ZANU PF cadres would react both to the fact of Grace Mugabe’s entry into politics, and, secondly, to the fact that ZANU PF’s internal rules and requirements for qualification as a candidate for the post had been brushed aside. The result did not disappoint. No party cadre had the temerity to openly voice dissent.

63 Mugabe’s Wife Set to Take Over ZANU PF Women’s Wing New Zimbabwe 25.07.14.
64 Those who had assisted the guerrillas in the independence war.
65 It should not escape notice that the proposal was thus made around the time when Grace Mugabe may have been approached about the scheme to unseat Mujuru, i.e. shortly after Mugabe’s attack on Jonathan Moyo and at the same time that she registered for her MPhil.
66 Ironically (and reminiscent of the moment when Mnangagwa had to draft the changes to the ZANU PF constitution which facilitated to Mujuru’s appointment as VP), the electoral rules were presented to the Politburo by Mnangagwa as party Secretary for Legal Affairs.
67 That the rules were intended to exclude mafikizolos was openly stated – see Factionalism Days Numbered: Gumbo The Herald 27.07.14.
68 Referred to in the party Constitution as “principal officers”.
70 For example: Mugabe a God-given leader — Kasukuwere The Standard 08.02.15; Obert Mpofu Outshines Mugabe’s Praise-Ingers The Standard 21.11.10.
71 See for example Under-fire Midzi Denies Sabotaging Grace Mugabe New Zimbabwe 25.08.14 and the allegations subsequently made to oust provincial chairpersons and those seeking nomination to the Central Committee.
In terms of the ZANU PF Party Constitution\(^{72}\), the Nation Conference of the Women’s League has “exclusive powers and authority to elect” members of the National Executive Council of the Women’s League.\(^{73}\) The Secretary of the Women’s League, who heads the body, is part of this Council.\(^{74}\) Despite this provision in the Party Constitution, the stance adopted by ZANU PF generally, and the Women’s League itself, is that the appointment of Secretary of the Women’s League is the prerogative of the Party President, and is made at Congress. The National Conference of the Women’s League thus felt they could only pass a resolution recommending Grace Mugabe’s appointment to the post. This is not the case. While the President of the party (Mugabe) appoints the other Secretaries as Heads of Departments within the Politburo, the Secretary of the Women’s League is an *ex officio* member of the Central Committee and Mugabe is obliged in terms of the Party Constitution to appoint her as Secretary for the Women’s League in the Politburo.\(^{75}\)

Notwithstanding the *ex officio* status of the Secretary of the Women’s League in the various party bodies, under the guise of campaigning for her appointment and showing support, Provincial Committees rushed to nominate her as their “candidate” for the Central Committee.\(^{76}\) They were joined in the show of support, by numerous other individuals and bodies, the Youth League, Church groups etc.\(^{77}\) A period of “Grace mania” began with the First Lady’s praise sung at every opportunity and numerous vehicles in the cities, particularly Harare, emblazoned with posters carrying her image.\(^{78}\)

Assisting the process, as had been planned several months previously, Grace Mugabe was capped with a doctorate from the University of Zimbabwe by her husband *qua* Chancellor on the 12\(^{th}\) September, 2014 (ironically at the same time as Mujuru).\(^{79}\) The Vice-Chancellor of the University, who, not long before, had been appointed by the President for an unprecedented third term in office,\(^{80}\) refused to entertain any questions on the matter or explain the circumstances in which the degree had been awarded after such an extremely short period of alleged doctoral study.\(^{81}\)

\(^{72}\) Section (149(2).  
\(^{73}\) The most recent version of the ZANU PF Constitution refers to this Council in the relevant section as the National Executive Committee but this is clearly an error.  
\(^{74}\) Section 151(2).  
\(^{75}\) This arises implicitly from the fact that the Women’s League has exclusive authority to appoint the head of the Women’s League and that first duty of the Secretary for the Women’s League in the Politburo is to head the Women’s League – see section 59(1).  
\(^{76}\) See, for example, Matabeleland Backs First Lady’s Endorsement *The Herald* 28.07.14; Harare Offers First Lady Key Slot *The Herald* 27.08.14.  
\(^{77}\) Leagues Throw Weight Behind Amai Mugabe *The Herald* 29.07.14; Youths Endorse Amai Mugabe *The Herald* 08.08.14; Churches Back First Lady for Women’s League Top Post *The Chronicle* 08.10.14.  
\(^{78}\) ‘Grace-mania’ Hits Harare as Many Rush to Show Support *New Zimbabwe* 08.09.14.  
\(^{79}\) The award had the desired affect and proved a useful tool in the propaganda campaign to improve Grace’s image. The benefits were only reaped from ZANU PF supporters (which is all that was required) and the ZANU PF aligned media immediately prefixed Dr. to Grace Mugabe’s other titles whenever her name was mentioned (hence “the First Lady, Amai Dr Grace Mugabe”). For others, the dubious nature of the award merely strengthened previous perceptions of the First Lady - which proved unsurprisingly resilient.  
\(^{80}\) Nyagura Under Fire Over Grace’s PhD *The Zimbabwe Independent* 10.10.14.  
\(^{81}\) Nyagura Explodes Over Grace’s PhD Scandal *The Zimbabwe Independent* 03.10.14.
The Mnangagwa-faction controlled state newspapers, the *Herald, Sunday News* and *Sunday Mail*, and electronic media also set into motion saturation coverage of the First Lady’s activities, marked by a slick of obsequiousness. Every flattery by eager party cadres was dutifully reproduced. The *Sunday News* reported Muchinguri as in full agreement with the praises accorded to Grace Mugabe and that she had:

> ...described the elegant First Lady as: “an Angel, a Queen and the nation’s own Cremora”, in reference to her near-perfect being, as well as her philanthropic disposition.

The same *Sunday News* Journalist, having noted how Grace Mugabe’s “academic exploits” had “added to her ever-growing status”, and that her style was akin to a female James Bond (sic), declared:

> her beauty left even journalists momentarily forgetting their pens and notebooks, in awe, with their eyes glued on the learned First Lady... the minute she opened her mouth she immediately showed everyone that not only is she a smart lady, but she is also an intelligent and shrewd politician.

Muchinguri was also reported as referring to Grace Mugabe as the “Queen Mother, the Queen of Queens…”.

The encomium around Grace Mugabe and her new political prominence may have been overdone by the plotters. It was such that it led to speculation that the public was being prepared for her to be appointed to one of the vacant vice-presidential positions at Congress, and this as a prelude to succeeding thereafter to the presidency. However, with her status thus elevated, the stage was set for the next act of the plot. A decision was taken that Grace Mugabe would address rallies in each of the country’s ten provinces. The central theme of her speeches was to be the issue of factionalism within the party. She would be presented as someone who would unify the party and expunge the scourge of factionalism. Her well-meaning efforts in this regard would be treated as spurned by Mujuruites, and the idea appears to have been that she would slowly ratchet up the pressure, and, carefully monitoring any backlash and reaction from the Mujuruites, gradually increase both the intensity of the attacks on those claimed to be fanning factionalism, and to be more and more direct as to whom constituted the targets of her attack should it prove, as was expected, politically safe for her to do so. It may have been the intention that this would lay the ground for others to openly name the targets of her vilification or, if all went well, to allow Grace Mugabe to do this herself and call for their sacking. Amongst these targets would be Joice Mujuru herself.

The preparations at the beginning of August, 2014, for the role Grace Mugabe was to play, took place against the backdrop of the Youth and Women’s League Conferences, ahead of which the Mujuruites had been exerting considerable power – particularly in relation to the former body.

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82 The article actually states that Muchinguri could not agree *less* with the eulogistic description, but this is obviously an error in the copy.
83 A popular coffee creamer.
85 Per Muchinguri. See Grace Mugabe For President *The Daily News* 09.10.14.
Apart from the not inconsiderable influence that these bodies exert themselves, the Party Constitution provides that the Heads of Departments of these bodies (now some 21 cadres\textsuperscript{87}) are \textit{ex officio} members of the party’s important Central Committee.

In a development which was later to be replicated in the party’s main wing, the provincial youth wings had already, in July 2014, been riven by suspensions of Mujuruites for fanning factionalism followed by the reappointment of those suspended.\textsuperscript{88} A month earlier, in June 2014, two months ahead of the Youth League Conference, there were reports of “rampant” vote buying by candidates for the executive of the body.\textsuperscript{89} Although party Secretary for Administration and staunch Mujuruite, Didymus Mutasa, said those engaging in the practice would be warned and told to desist, the practice continued to the Conference.\textsuperscript{90} Mujuruites secured control of the body, with Kudzai\textsuperscript{91} Chipanga gaining the most senior elective post,\textsuperscript{92} the Deputy Secretary for Youth Affairs.\textsuperscript{93}

A few days after the Youth League Conference ended, on the 13\textsuperscript{th} August, 2014, losing candidates and members of the Mnangagwa side of the divide, Tongai Kasukuwere, Lewis Matutu and Edson Chakanuka\textsuperscript{94} approached Mugabe at State House to complain about vote buying, the manner in which the elections had been held and to present a petition in this regard. They were accompanied by plotters Saviour Kasukuwere (Tongai’s brother) and Patrick Zhuwao.

Treating the matter with due seriousness, Mugabe resolved that a further meeting be held at State House two days later where the issues could be aired – and aired they were, with uncharacteristic...

\textsuperscript{87} The amended Party Constitution provides for 20 members “nominated” by each Conference plus the Secretary of the body – subsections 35(4) – (7) – increased from the previous 17. The Constitution does not provide that these members must be the Heads of Department, but that appears to be the practice.

\textsuperscript{88} For example, in Mashonaland Central, Mujurú’s home province, the Provincial Executive of the Youth League (at which Luke Mushore the main wing’s Provincial Chair was present) reversed the suspension of the Mujuruite chair and suspended three Mnangagwa supporters who had been responsible for his ouster by 21 to 37 votes – see ZANU PF’s Mash Central Fight Takes New Twist The Zimbabwe Independent 11.07.14.

\textsuperscript{89} Vote-buying Rocks ZANU PF Youth Conference Newsday 10.06.14.

\textsuperscript{90} Vote-buying Mars ZANU PF Youth Polls The Standard 10.08.14.

\textsuperscript{91} Sometimes given as Kudzanai.

\textsuperscript{92} Pupurai Tongarepi (aged 44) was appointed to head the Youth League by Mugabe after the Congress, replacing Absalom Sikhosana, who had occupied this position for over 15 years and was aged 63. The Youth League membership is restricted to those aged between 15 and 30 – section 187 of the Party Constitution.

\textsuperscript{93} The party’s Constitution is obscure with regard to the manner in which the head of the Youth League, the Secretary for Youth Affairs, attains office. Section 198 requires that the National Conference “elect members of the Heads of Department” (and is thus differently worded from the elective provisions relating to the Women’s League – see above in the text). Section 205 lists the “principal officers” of the Youth League, which comprise the various “Secretaries” as Heads of Departments, together with The “National Secretary for Youth League” (sic) and “Deputy Secretary for Youth League” (sic). These posts are referred to as National Secretary for “Youth Affairs” and Deputy Secretary for “Youth Affairs” in other sections. In terms of Section 39 the Party President may appoint a “Secretary for Youth Affairs to the Politburo.” It is thus unclear whether the Conference should elect the Secretary for Youth Affairs, and the Party President, if appointing a Secretary for Youth Affairs in the Politburo, is required to appoint that person so elected, or whether the Party President merely appoints the Secretary for Youth Affairs to both the Politburo and the Youth League. The provisions relating to the appointment of the Secretary and Deputy Secretary are identical. Yet in practice the Secretary has been appointed by the Party President, and the Deputy Secretary elected by the Conference.

\textsuperscript{94} The deposed Deputy Secretary of the Youth League.
frankness in what was described as an “explosive” meeting. Mugabe had directed that all available Government Ministers, Politburo members and Provincial Chairpersons were to be present.

Tongai Kasukuwere and seven provincial youth leaders commenced the fray by giving evidence of vote buying by Mujurites. Singled out as the main culprits in this regard were Webster Shamu, John Mvundura and Temba Mliswa, while Didymus Mutasa, Simon Khaya-Moyo Dzikamai Mavhaire, Munacho Mutezo, Walter Mzembi, Olivia Muchena, Ray Kaukonde, Andrew Langa, and Kudakwashe Bhasikiti were all accused of interfering in the vote. Furthermore, Matutu forthrightly warned Mugabe that there was a plot to remove him from power by Mujurites in the Presidium:

"You are now isolated Mr. President because all those sitting with you at the high table (Mujuru, Mutasa and SK Moyo) no longer want you, they are plotting to unseat you." Mugabe was apparently incensed with Mujuru as a result. Mujuru responded by denying that she had any ambition to take over the presidency and countered that the allegations were themselves a plot to remove her from the Vice-Presidency, asking Mugabe “Is this the way you want to remove me from the Vice-Presidency?” Mugabe reportedly responded that “It is the people who elect leaders”.

Mujuru’s ally, Webster Shamu, accused the youths of trying to foment a “Nhari type” rebellion against Mujuru. And newly elected youth leader, Kudzai Chipanga, boldly asked Mugabe as to which faction he belonged.

True to form, Mugabe took no action at the State House gathering, simply referring the matter to the next Politburo meeting for consideration. Despite Mugabe’s obvious displeasure with them, the Mujurites were not cowed. Days after Mugabe left Zimbabwe for China, the very next week, on 23rd August, 2014, Mujurites proceeded with an immediate attempt to purge the Youth League of some key members considered hostile. Harare Province Youth League leader, Godwin Gomwe was first in the firing line, while Temba Mliswa reportedly led moves to remove Vengai Musengi and his deputy Joseph Nyariri in Mashonland West. Youths opposed to Mujuru thus resolved to meet with Mugabe immediately on his return from China in regard to the suspensions, and claiming that they feared being prevented from doing so, accosted him in

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96 Mugabe’s Real Dilemma ibid.
97 Mugabe, Mujuru in Stormy Meeting The Zimbabwe Independent 22.08.14.
98 Mugabe, Mujuru in Stormy Meeting ibid.
99 Mugabe, Mujuru in Stormy Meeting ibid.
100 The reference was to a rebellion by Thomas Nhari and other against the ZANU leadership during the war (November 1974).
101 Grace Ejects Youth Leader The Zimbabwean 17.09.14. Chipanga’s attack was, according to the article, motivated by the fact that he had been accused by Grace Mugabe as belonging to the Mujuru faction and ejected from the meeting at her farm on the 7th August, 2014. He was quoted as having asked: “President (Mugabe), I would like to know from you if you belong to any of the factions that exist in the party. I am asking this question because the First Lady barred me from Mazowe because I am perceived to belong to a faction led by Mai Mujuru.” Whatever faction Chipanga belonged to at the time of his election, he subsequently forswore any allegiance to Mujuru.
102 Mugabe’s Real Dilemma ibid.
103 Youths Targeted in ZANU PF Purge The Herald 27.08.14.
104 On 31st August, 2014.
large numbers at the airport itself. Mugabe confirmed that a Politburo meeting would shortly take place to discuss the Youth (and Women’s) League issues. He also diverted from the main theme of his address to attack ZANU PF’s Harare Province Political Commissar, Shadreck Mashayamombe, who had had the temerity to approach Mashonaland West politician and Politburo member and plotter, Patrick Zhuwawo, advising him to find “a political home” for Grace Mugabe in his Province and outside the capital. Mugabe’s reaction to the idea that someone other than he should exercise such political power was caustic:

“I want to hear why she (Grace) should leave Harare, going where? I would also want to know where the emperor of Harare got his powers from.”

On the day of the scheduled Politburo meeting, the 3rd September, 2014, *The Herald* published a significant editorial, which, seemed to be an unprecedented criticism of Mugabe. The editorial bemoaned that fact that “no heads had rolled” as a result of the “bhora musango” campaign, no heads had rolled following the provincial elections the previous year despite “vote buying and manipulation” and no heads had yet rolled over the vote buying in the Women’s and Youth League elective conferences:

*Zanu-PF’s inaction on saboteurs since 2008 explains the prevailing problems. Unless those behind the shenanigans are made to answer for their actions, they will continue their nefarious agenda safe in the knowledge nothing will happen to them. To this end we hope and we are sure we speak for the generality of Zimbabweans, that the special Politburo meeting will not be another talk show. Heads must roll or must be seen to roll to foster discipline down to the grassroots. Where the alleged irregularities are proved, results must be nullified so that intra-party democracy triumphs.*

“ZANU PF’s inaction” can only be read to mean that of Mugabe, and *The Herald* could not have been urging or have expected the Mujuruite-dominated Politburo to take action – the call was really to Mugabe to exercise his powers as leader and act “decisively”.

Mugabe declined to do so. The results of the Youth and Women’s League conference elections were allowed to stand. Mugabe merely directed that the suspensions of the Youth League members were to be reversed and, it seems, that there were to be no further suspensions of party members before Congress to prevent the on-going chaos in the party caused by suspensions and counter suspensions by the factions.

**Plan B, Step Two – the Rallies**

Grace Mugabe’s first rally was held in Chinhoyi, Mashonaland West on 2nd October, 2014. As required, the First Lady denounced factionalism, stating that, instead of fighting amongst

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105 Also written as Zhuwawo.
106 Mugabe the Brains Behind Grace’s Political Rise *Newsday* 03.09.14.
107 See above in the text.
108 Time ZANU-PF Showed Some Teeth *The Herald* (editorial) 03.09.14 and Politburo Urged to be Decisive *The Herald* of the same day.
themselves, the ZANU PF leadership should attend to service delivery. What was to be the leitmotiv of all the rallies was then made apparent. With regard to those leading the “factions”, Mugabe’s wife stated:

_We have been hearing that some people have been leading factions for a long time and now we hear that they are receiving money from the US to remove President Robert Mugabe… We see them dancing kongonya^{111} here as if they love the president, they are good at chanting slogans in the public, but deep down their hearts they don’t love him…. At night, they are busy plotting his ouster claiming that he is old hence he must go so that they can take over._

At the second rally, on 6th October, 2014, at the ZANU PF Conference Centre, Gweru, Midlands Province, Grace Mugabe made the first reference to the need to remove provincial chairmen, whom she claimed were ineffective and that some senior party politicians were consorting with the MDC-T and western powers. She also castigated those whom she alleged were bribing delegates ahead of the December Congress and called upon them to desist from the practice.

The third rally, in Harare two days later, was billed as a “mini unity accord” as Grace Mugabe portrayed herself as magnanimously bringing together those^{112} who had spoken for and against her ascendency, and as part of a claimed role as the unifier who would stamp out factionalism in the party. However, the suggestion that Mujuruñites were to be forgiven and brought back into fold appears to have been abandoned at the rally in Masvingo the next day.^^{113} Egregiously, Grace Mugabe commenced this rally with the slogan “Pamberi ne [forward with] the one party state”^{114}, a ZANU PF slogan not heard for two decades.^{115} At this rally, Grace Mugabe inched closer to disclosing that that Mujuru herself was a prime target and subject of her excoriation. She claimed that that those who wanted to rule in place of her husband were unable to do so and, having been placed in their positions by Mugabe, could just as easily be removed. Those giving allegiance to such people would thus find themselves isolated she warned:

_Some of you here were called [by Mugabe] and were warned, but you did not listen. You know what’s next. There are many people who can take the job that you have. You are a crook. If you harden your head, what if the person you are fighting for loses? What will you do? Where will you go? ….. “Most people were being spoon-fed by my husband. He worked for them, yet today you hear them saying they want to rule the country. Are you able to rule? Leave us alone, you are revolting, you are not able to rule the country._^{116}

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^{111} Originally a defiant and mocking dance style imitating a male baboon revived during the liberation war, by the time of Grace Mugabe’s address, it had become known for its lasciviousness and associated with an erotic dancer receiving much tabloid style attention at the time.

^{112} Godwin Gomwe (for), Amos Midzi and Shadreck Mashayamombe (against).

^{113} On 09.10.14.

^{114} Full Text of the First Lady’s Speech in Masvingo The Herald 10.10.14.

^{115} Although the preamble to the ZANU PF Party Constitution makes reference to the agreement in the 1987 “Unity Accord” to “unite all the peoples of Zimbabwe under a single political party” and the idea of establishing a one party state was much discussed in the 1980’s. This objective appears to have been abandoned by the end of that decade.

The rally in Mutare the next day, Friday, 10th October, was, significantly, the most poorly attended and marked by clashes between youths led by Harare leader Godwin Gomwe and those supporting Manicaland supremo, Didymus Mutasa. Grace Mugabe chided Manicaland province as being the worst culprit as far as factionalism was concerned and indirectly criticised party leaders in the Province by decrying the successes achieved by the opposition MDC-T there.\(^\text{17}\)

Having shied away from continuing the attack on Mujuru herself in Manicaland, the First Lady made her most overt attack upon the Vice-President in Gwanda, Matabeleland South, after taking a weekend break from rallies.\(^\text{118}\)

> Some people like to ride on the back of the President, they think that being VP (Vice President) means sitting in the office and Mugabe working for them... We don’t want that, we want people who are capable. We don’t want! We don’t want! We don’t want a liability. We don’t want such – one who spends time sitting with no ideas...\(^\text{119}\)

In addition, Grace Mugabe made repeated and pointed references at this rally to her husband’s power to make senior appointments under both the party and state constitutions, stating also that the fact that a person was a vice-president of the Party did not ensure that they would be a vice-president of the country.\(^\text{120}\)

Most of the non-ZANU PF aligned press had little doubt that, although no names had been mentioned, the First Lady’s address was an attack on Joice Mujuru, running headlines such as “Grace Savages Mujuru Again”,\(^\text{121}\) “Grace Mugabe Calls for Vice President Mujuru’s Ouster”\(^\text{122}\)

At the following two rallies, in Lupane, Matabeleland North(13th October) and Bulawayo (14th October), Grace Mugabe seems to have made no reference, overt or covert, regarding the Vice-President, choosing only to chide those vying for a vice-presidential position. At the first rally of the two, however, before Grace Mugabe took to the podium, a spat developed between Philip Chiyangwa and Temba Mliswa, when the former chanted the “pasi ne (down with) Gamatox” slogan. It was also, significantly, believed necessary to warn “those hired to come here and boo the First Lady not to even try it.”\(^\text{123}\)

However, the last two rallies signalled a change in tactics. At a closed door Provincial Committee meeting\(^\text{124}\) ahead of the penultimate rally in Bindura, Grace Mugabe reportedly revealed the existence and content of the “spy tapes”. The attack on Joice Mujuru then recommenced with renewed vigour:

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\(^\text{118}\) The rally was on 13.10.14.
\(^\text{119}\) First Lady Tears into VP Aspirants The Herald 14.10.14. The report is mainly in chiShona.
\(^\text{120}\) First Lady Tears into VP Aspirants ibid.
\(^\text{122}\) Newsday 14.10.14.
\(^\text{124}\) The report does not indicate if the Committee is that of the PEC or PCC - Spy Tapes Zimeye 17.10.14.
The youths have alerted me about someone who is spearheading factionalism in this (Mashonaland Central) province and I told Baba (President Mugabe) to ‘baby-dump’ that person. I told him that if he does not dump the person, we will do it ourselves…. you can no longer deny that you are a faction leader. Enough is enough, even those men who are being used by this faction leader, we will dump them when we dump the person.\(^{125}\)

The faction leader is moving around saying Mai Mugabe has money, yet the (same) person has diamond mines and has about 10% shares in almost every company. That is greed. That is corruption, yet the person goes around saying a lot of rubbish about Amai Mugabe. That is why I am saying to Baba (Mugabe), if he does not dump the person in the street to be devoured by the dogs, we will do it ourselves. Dumping her is the only way forward, dumping the baby so that she can be exposed to the elements. If we expose her, even flies or wild dogs will be repulsed with her corrupt activities, which stink.”\(^{126}\)

At the final rally in Marondera, Mashonaland East, Grace Mugabe was particularly acerbic in her attack on Mujuru, though again refraining from mentioning her by name. She claimed that the “demon of factionalism started in Mashonaland Central” (Mujuru’s home province) and went on to accuse Mujuru of being behind parties opposed to ZANU PF and in alliance with them, seeking to stop elections in 2013 and to remove President Mugabe from power:

And to that same person (leader of the faction) I was referring to yesterday (Thursday), the MDC was started in your house, Mavambo was started in your house, corruption was started in your house and factionalism was started in your house.

Then, in statements which were to prepare further the ground for what was to come,\(^{127}\) Grace Mugabe turned her ire upon Provincial Chairman, Ray Kaukonde, accusing him of using his wealth to support Mujuru and fan factionalism, and that he was supporting an inept leader who could not stand against President Mugabe.

The crowd at this rally, by Grace Mugabe’s own observation, was much reduced, and she used the occasion to rebuke those who had snubbed her rallies. Significantly, clashes between those chanting the *pasi ne Gamatox* slogan, and those who found the slogan objectionable, were such that police intervention was required.

After the rallies ended, Grace Mugabe continued the invective against Mujuru and her allies from the safety of her Mazowe farm the following week, where she not only felt safe to mention Mujuru by name but directly charged that “instead of acquiring wisdom from President Mugabe she [Mujuru] was busy plotting against him so that she takes over.”\(^{128}\)

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\(^{125}\) Dump Mujuru Grace Tells Mugabe *Newsday* 17.10.14.

\(^{126}\) ‘Flies and dogs will resent her,’ Says Grace Mugabe *Bulawayo24* 17.10.14 and *Newsday ibid*. The statement left no doubt that Mujuru was the person to whom Grace Mugabe was referring - as the *Newsday* article then added after the quoted statement “The Mujuru family has a significant shareholding in the troubled River Ranch diamond mine among many other investments in major businesses in the country.”

\(^{127}\) The removal of the provincial chairpersons.

\(^{128}\) Quoted in Resign Now *The Herald* 24.10.14.
Grace Mugabe demanded that Mujuru resign or face dismissal. Calling Mujuru “ungrateful, power hungry, daft, corrupt, foolish, divisive and a disgrace” to ZANU PF and Zimbabwe, the First Lady said:

*Mujuru should just do the honorable and resign...It is not good to be fired. It would be better if Mai Mujuru resigns today than wait to be fired by President Mugabe... If you are here and you support Mai Mujuru, you should immediately leave because what I am going to say will cause you diarrhea. You should tie up your pants.*

In addition, Grace Mugabe accused Mujuru ally and Provincial Chairperson, Ray Kaukonde, of paying youths to cause disturbances at her rallies, and of “conniving with the opposition MDC and whites to reverse the gains of independence”.

On 16th November, 2014, at a meeting with youths, once more held at her Mazowe farm, Grace Mugabe claimed that Mujuru denigrated her and her husband behind their backs, that she had recording of this, and again called for Mujuru’s resignation:

*If you can’t accept that leadership is from God, you lose the plot. You can’t be number one in extortion, number one in corruption and number one in plotting against the party. It amounts to treason...She must resign forthwith. She is not seeing that the writing is on the wall in bold print saying we no longer want you, you showed us you are not competent.*

Youth leader, Leopold Chakanyuka, responded:

*Anyone who comes between you and the President has declared war. If they want war we will take guns because you and the President are untouchable and your family is untouchable.*

Harare Youth League Chairman, Godwin Gomwe, reportedly added that they would prevent anyone who criticised Mugabe in the media from attending Congress.

**Overview of the Rallies**

On the 7th August, 2014, women and youths had converged at Grace’s Mugabe’s farm in Mazowe supposedly as a show of support for her nomination to head the Women’s League. The report of the *Zimbabwe Independent* on the event was both insightful and prescient. The First Lady’s belligerent remarks made when addressing the crowd were correctly reported as directed at Mujuru and her allies, even though Grace Mugabe had named no names. Furthermore, the paper reported that Grace Mugabe’s nomination to head the Women’s League was evidently made “to try to derail Mujuru’s ascendancy to the presidency after Mugabe”. What was not known by the paper, the Mujuruites, and possibly even the plotters at that stage, was how this was to be accomplished. However, Grace Mugabe let slip a comment, the true significance of which could only be appreciated in hindsight. After warning that those who defied her were “playing with fire” and that while she had a “small fist” she would “put stones inside it to enlarge it, or even put on gloves to make it bigger” she then stated that she was a “monya [bouncer] for

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130 Grace Mugabe Goes on a Warpath *Zimbabwe Independent* 08.08.14.
“hire” – and this, as has been seen, was precisely the role she played through her ten rallies. There was also a candid admission of this by Oppah Muchinguri at the fourth rally in Masvingo where she stated:

We realised that there were some who wanted to take over from Mugabe but we plotted against them and decided to use our mother [Grace Mugabe] to come and take over because she is a worthy candidate...We had to do this because it was the same people who were undermining us and intimidating us to support their cause to replace baba VaMugabe [father Mugabe] but we have put it to an end by the coming in of Amai [mother i.e. Grace Mugabe].

Before Grace Mugabe began her rallies, the initial path was cleared for her. This set the tone for her rallies and did not make it appear as if she was promoting maverick polices and discussing factionalism which the party had previously wished left out of the public domain. There were three significant developments marking this process: firstly, trenchant criticism of two prominent Mujuruites by President Mugabe himself; an astounding interview with war veteran, Christopher Mutsvangwa, published in The Herald; and the meeting with the Youth League at State House already mentioned.

Addressing the pre-Congress Youth League Conference, on the 8th August, 2014, Mugabe decried the poor organisation of the Conference, stating that arrangements for food and transport had not been properly organised, requiring the First Family to step in and help feed the delegates. Didymus Mutasa, as Secretary for Administration, was responsible for the logistics. Mugabe stated:

It’s very bad. We will organise ourselves after this in a better way and I am looking forward, I am seeing what is happening and alas when it comes to Congress don’t cry... I can’t have a Central Committee or Politburo which is that inept.

Although he did not mention Mutasa by name on this occasion, he was more direct after the Women’s League Conference the following week. Including Webster Shamu in his line of fire, President Mugabe directed his criticism at the departments headed by both Mutasa and Shamu (Administration and the Commissariat), lambasting the shambolic arrangements for the conference and the disarray in party structures. The remarks suggested that Mutasa, at least, would not survive Congress.

The day after Mugabe spewed this venom, a remarkable and unprecedented attack upon Mutasa and Mujuru was published in The Herald, in the form of an interview with Christopher

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132 Party Leaders Anger President The Chronicle 09.08.14.
133 Mugabe Lambasts Mutasa, Shamu The Zimbabwe Mail 16.08.14. See also You Have Failed to Administer Organise ZANU PF: Mugabe Newsday 15.08.14.
134 RAU predicted as much when presenting the Mortal Remains in October 2014. RAU did not foresee that this would be part of a wholesale and unprecedented purge, believing, even at that stage, that the axing of a Vice-President was as unthinkable as it was unprecedented and out of kilter with Mugabe’s general modus operandi.
135 ZANU PF aligned student bodies also then called for Mutasa’s axing, see ZANU PF Students Bay for Mutasa’s Blood Newsday 23.08.14.
Mutsvangwa, the Deputy Foreign Affairs Minister. The strident tone of the interview is well captured by this opening salvo by the abrasive war veteran in regard to a question referring to “reports” of factionalism within ZANU PF:

an ambitious coterie of political chancers .... has also recruited lumpen elements with criminal intent ... pursuing a fascist agenda as they employ Nazist tactics to try to wrestle power and then proceed to resurrect a post-Rhodesian political agenda. The coterie is totally opposed to the revolutionary history of the party whose regalia and banners they are so much wont to flaunt.

Mutsvangwa went on to state that:

Now ever the busy-body, Mutasa, he has been angling to abuse the illustrious record of another cadre, the Vice President Teurai Ropa Mujuru. In a scheme that sidesteps fellow comrades who fought alongside her, there is some coaxing at instigation of Mutasa and cohorts on VP Mujuru to make her challenge H.E, Mugabe. This conspiracy is directed at the man who has given VP Mujuru post independence high offices from the onset of the Republic, an honour and recognition that has not been accorded to no other of her peers (sic).

Mutasa, Mutsvangwa claimed, is a “pretender” and “self-styled kingmaker” who “discards the party constitution”, attempts to “sideline” Mugabe and “aspires to crown VP Mujuru next leader.”

Mutsvangwa then proceeded to belittle the roles played by Mutasa and, to some extent, Mujuru, in the independence war, maintaining that Mutasa was a coward who had done everything possible to remove himself from zones of danger and that the legend that Mujuru had downed a Rhodesian helicopter, was manufactured by Webster Shamu:

Mutasa and his cohorts, leaders ... never had anything do with the critical 1973-80 period of the armed struggle. The only legitimacy they accord themselves is the hazy clamour for the political ascendancy of Vice President Mujuru to the top national post. Why they want to foist her on Zimbabwe outside of the circle of her other many wartime comrades and without bringing them into that exercise, only the putchist elements and perhaps herself can explain...

Let me finish by putting down the lies about downing an enemy helicopter which were developed by Webster Shamu in a bid to shore-up (Mujuru’s) war credentials and elevate her above fellow comrades. Let’s be careful not to be misled by ordinary people and war cowards we only started working with after the liberation war.”

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136 Also MP (ZANU PF) for Norton constituency.
137 A somewhat odd statement, given that Mutsvangwa then goes on to denigrate Mujuru’s war record himself. Mutsvangwa uses Joice Mujuru’s nom de guerre (“chimurenga” name) Teurai Ropa (“spill blood”).
138 In The Herald interview Mutsvangwa makes this statement in chiShona. The translation appears in New Zimbabwe 16.08.14.
139 The outburst also set a pattern of denigrating individual’s war records in the mudslinging which was to follow.
The interview was extremely significant. Any pretense that the party was not deeply divided had been abandoned. And the cause of the division was openly declared to be a plot to oust Mugabe, orchestrated by Didymus Mutasa, and with the intent of placing Mujuru at the head of party and government. Having stated matters so openly, there could then be little doubt as to whom Grace Mugabe was referring in the more guarded attacks made during her later rallies. The Mutsvangwa interview starkly disclosed the depth of the antipathy between the opposing camps. Also remarkable was the fact that Mutsvangwa made such comments seemingly without fear of any adverse consequences, despite the fact that the party’s National Disciplinary Committee was under the control of Mujuruites at the time. Party spokesperson, and Mujuru ally, Rugare Gumbo, responded to the interview by suggesting that disciplinary action would be taken against Mutsvangwa.

What war veteran Mutsvangwa said is uncalled for and not expected from someone who has been in the party for that long, he knows how to communicate if he has any issues with his leadership...This is an internal issue and it will be dealt with following the party's rules and regulations as laid down in the procedures and action will be taken accordingly.140

None was.141 Did Mutsvangwa make these remarks confident that he would be shielded from any disciplinary action by Mugabe?; or was he aware that Grace Mugabe would be making similar albeit more circumspect comments in the same vein shortly and that it thus would be difficult to discipline him for remarks which were being echoed by the First Lady? Or were they made with the knowledge of the “spy tapes” as some suggested.142 Either way, Mutsvangwa’s outburst set the tone for Grace Mugabe’s rallies, which began just over two weeks later.

If Mutsvangwa’s interview was intended to pave the way for Grace Mugabe’s rallies, thus suggesting close planning by the plotters, this is contradicted by the fact that the plotters had not considered the need to articulate a convincing raison d'être for Grace Mugabe’s rallies. When it was announced that Grace Mugabe would commence her “campaign”, the public was left wondering as to exactly what it was for which she was to campaign. Her position as leader of the Women’s League was already assured. This lapse fueled speculation that Grace Mugabe had higher office in mind, and possibly eventually the presidency itself. The second rally was thus hastily dubbed as a “thank you tour”, before the plotters settled upon calling the rallies “meet the people tours”, a moniker readily adopted by State and independent media alike. It is quite possible that the idea that Grace Mugabe should hold rallies throughout the country was conceived belatedly, and merely concretised a vague notion that she would somehow use her position as head of the Women’s League to launch attacks on the Mujuruites through this body, and probably from the safety of her Mazowe farm.

Despite the haste with which the details of the scheme appear to have been conceived, the decision to use Grace Mugabe to continue the attack on the Mujuruites was devastatingly effective. Rightly or wrongly, there was a perception that Grace Mugabe’s rallies had, at the very

140 ‘Reckless’ Mutsvangwa to be disciplined, Gumbo New Zimbabwe 19.08.14.
141 In early September, 2014, however the Mashonaland West Provincial Executive purported to suspend Mutsvangwa for failing to attend meetings. Mutsvangwa claimed that the suspension was invalid – Deputy Minister Mutsvangwa Suspended Sunday Mail 07.09.14.
least, the consent of her husband. The matter was succinctly put by the Youth League Chairperson for Harare Province, Godwin Gomwe, in relation to those perceived to be against the First Lady’s increasing political stature:

*It’s now clear that they are working for the removal of the President because you can’t claim to love the President and yet you don’t love the wife.*

Attendance at Grace Mugabe’s rallies (and general adulation of and obeisance to the First Lady) became a matter of political survival, and even those who were the subject of her attacks made sure they were seen at the events. But they were caught between a rock and a hard place. To overtly complain about the First Lady’s behaviour and the slurs against Mujuruites was immediately interpreted as meaning that one was against President Mugabe and his continuation in office. Yet to remain silent was to accept the charges and to allow the onslaught to continue unabated. Notably, when Mujuru-aligned youths and supporters clashed with Grace Mugabe’s supporters at her rallies, they claimed that they were not demonstrating against the First Lady herself, but rather against the use of the *pasi ne gamatox* slogan. However, then Zimbabwe National Liberation War Veterans Leader, Jabulani Sibanda, in a characteristically outspoken manner, refused to be cowed:

> “If you want to find me guilty of not attending the First Lady’s rallies, I plead guilty on that one and I won’t attend unless the programme changes. I can’t attend a function where they say ‘Pamberi ne Mazoe Crush’. That slogan is unknown in Zanu-PF.....All able-bodied people should stand up... and block attempts to stage a coup both in the boardroom and in the bedroom.”

He was suspended from the party shortly thereafter and arrested for insulting the President.

Nonetheless, despite the effectiveness of this ploy of using Grace Mugabe, the plotters proceeded with extreme caution, seemingly intent on protecting her from any hostile backlash. Thus Grace Mugabe appears to have been instructed to be circumspect in her attacks on the Mujuruites. At the rally in Masvingo, Grace Mugabe had made a veiled attack on Mujuru by referring to her husband’s power to both appoint and fire Vice-Presidents. The rally which followed in Manicaland, Mutasa’s stronghold, was then marred by clashes between party youths from both camps. Grace Mugabe refrained from attacking Mujuru in this Province, only to make her most overt attack on Mujuru at the very next rally in Matabeleland South, stopping just short of mentioning Mujuru by name. This appeared to be too direct an attack for the plotters, who moved in to do damage control. Thus Jonathan Moyo angrily denied that the First Lady had been referring to Mujuru in her Gwanda address, implausibly claiming:

>This is some infertile imagination of the creators of this story. She was addressing the qualities that a Vice President and second secretary of Zanu-PF should have....the people writing this story admit that no name was mentioned, and they say just because there’s only one Vice President it means it is referring to her.*

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143 Mazoe Orange Crush is a popular cordial. Mazowe crush became a slogan referring to Grace Mugabe’s campaign given her holdings in Mazoe (also spelled Mazowe) a major citrus producing area of the country.

144 Jabulani Sibanda Arrested *The Herald* 29.11.14.

145 At a Politburo meeting on 13.11.14, along with other senior party members.
President Mugabe was later to comment that his wife had “jumped the gun”. 147

The attack on Mujuru in Gwanda also reportedly caused some disgruntlement in sections of the security sector. 148 At the following two rallies, Grace Mugabe thus made no reference to Mujuru, overt or covert, perhaps while the plotters considered their position. Reflecting fears of a backlash, however, at the next rally it was deemed necessary to warn those with Mujuruite sympathies not to express any hostility they might harbour towards the First Lady. 149 Possibly believing that the cat had been let out of the bag in Gwanda in any event, and that previous rallies had proved any backlash to be manageable and not too damaging, at the penultimate rally in Mashonaland Central, Grace Mugabe directly demanded that Mujuru be removed (albeit again avoiding referring to her by name). Some of the anticipated backlash did then occur at the final rally, where attendance was greatly reduced and police intervention was required to control clashes between the rival groups.

In addition to the precipitate directness of her attacks on Mujuru, there are other indications of Grace Mugabe’s ineptness in fulfilling the task which had been set for her. At the fourth rally on the 9th October, 2014, Grace Mugabe made the first of several references to her husband’s power to make appointments, noting that he could just as easily remove those who had been given positions. It is probable that this was part of a scheme to prepare the ground for the suggestion that amendments should be made to the Party Constitution to allow the party president, Robert Mugabe, to appoint the Presidium. Recall that as the Party Constitution then stood, candidates for these positions required nomination by six of the ten provinces, and the election of these candidates then took place at Congress. Following the First Lady’s comments about Mugabe’s power of appointment, an article appeared in the Sunday Mail on the 12th October, 2014, arguing that the election of the Presidium was at the root of factionalism in the party. The article quoted plotter, Patrick Zhuwao, and maintained:

Observers said this situation saw these non-appointed officials creating their own centres of power, which resulted in factionalism that manifested itself in vote-buying, violence, intimidation and general disloyalty to the President. They pointed out that the party constitution was at loggerheads with the 1987 Unity Accord as regards to how people could occupy the two VP posts. Article 4 of the Unity Accord states: “That Zanu-PF shall have two Second Secretaries and Vice Presidents who shall be appointed by the First Secretary and President of the party.” 150

At Grace Mugabe’s sixth rally in Gwanda the next day, she again made reference to Mugabe’s appointing powers, but compared the Party and State Constitution rather than the Party Constitution and the Unity Accord as the plotters probably intended. As a result, when reporting on the rally, The Herald found it necessary to do the job properly, claiming that the First Lady’s

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147 Grace Jumped the Gun: Mugabe Newsday 02.03.15.
148 Infighting Divides Security Sector The Zimbabwe Independent 05.06.15.
150 President Should Appoint VPs Chair The Sunday Mail 12.10.14.
remarks concerning appointments reflected “growing demands” that the President’s powers in this regard be aligned with the Unity Accord. *The Herald* set out the argument in detail.\(^{151}\) That the First Lady had been asked to refer to the Unity Accord in her speech finds support elsewhere, and may well be the explanation behind her bizarre resurrection of the “pamberi ne one party state” slogan made around the time that the issue of appointments was first raised.\(^{152}\) It is quite possible that, having been given the Unity Accord to read, and asked to demand at her rallies that it be followed, Grace Mugabe’s eye had fallen upon clause six in the agreement, just two lines below that dealing with the question of the appointments of the Vice-Presidents.\(^{153}\) Clause six of the Accord reads: “ZANU PF shall seek to establish one-party state in Zimbabwe”.

In addition to these slips, Grace Mugabe’s skill at oratory left much to be desired. Certainly she faced an inherent difficulty. The ten rallies were held over a short two week period and received saturation coverage by the print and electronic media. It order to avoid repetition, the First Lady felt compelled to address a patchwork of topics in addition to the themes of factionalism, vote buying, and accepting money from hostile western powers. She thus addressed, among other issues, service delivery, ZimAsset\(^{154}\) the allocation of housing stands, demolition of illegally constructed homes, economic self-sufficiency for women, the cleanliness of the cities, vendors, typhoid, multiple farm ownership, sub-standard Chinese products, homosexuality, condoms, the under-utilisation of land, political violence, child rape, HIV, misuse of party assets, gold smuggling, gold panning, and migration to South Africa. As *The Herald* somewhat euphemistically reported in regard to one rally:

> She spoke for just under one-and-a-half hours, her wide-ranging speech touching subjects such as legal protection for widows from their in-laws; giving women title to land; a call to action against child rape and farming tips.\(^{155}\)

With most of these topics, the First Lady presumed to lecture the population in a castigating and abrasive manner, demanding that people desist from a host of activities and behaviours, frequently punctuating her speeches with “Stop it! Stop it!”. President Mugabe tried to temper the adverse effect of these tirades with a gentle dig at her, subsequently referring to his wife as “Amai Stop it”\(^{156}\) and suggesting that he was a hen-pecked husband.\(^{157}\) Grace Mugabe’s berating of her audience was, however, interspersed with attempts at humour. A joke she told in Masvingo, which she appeared to find highly amusing, would have struck many others as puerile and crass.\(^{158}\)

Unfortunately, the hectoring style was also coupled with an even less palatable coarseness and vulgarity of language. Thus Grace Mugabe chose to refer to Mujuru as being “baby dumped”

\(^{151}\) First Lady Tears into VP Aspirants *The Herald* 14.10.14.
\(^{152}\) Made at the Masvingo rally.
\(^{153}\) Clause 4.
\(^{154}\) The name given to the Government’s “economic blueprint”.
\(^{155}\) First Lady Tears into VP Aspirants *The Herald* 14.10.14.
\(^{156}\) First Lady Undergoes Op *The Herald* 23.01.15.
\(^{158}\) It was reported thus: “A Zimbabwean lady got married to a Chinese national and they had a child. A few weeks later, the child died and the aunt who was mourning kept saying she knew that the child was going to die within a very short period. After some interrogations the aunt said the death of the child was obvious because Chinese products were not durable.” This is the reporter’s own translation of chiShona used.
rather than simply “dumped”, thus conjuring up an image, with which too many Zimbabweans are familiar, of rotting victims of infanticide found in concealed plastic bags.\textsuperscript{159} Her statement that Mujuru’s body having been thus “dumped” would repel even flies and dogs has been noted as has her statement that her speech would induce diarrhoea in Mujuruites. The insult was repeated in the same manner at the second Mazowe Farm meeting:

\begin{quote}
Do not take unnecessary risks saying you are brave because you will end up being humiliated and have children laughing at you. You will be humiliated and left naked and dogs will not come near you because you stink even if you have put on perfume… You are not going to heaven because God will not touch your stinking body. And even mosquitoes will not come near you because you stink.”\textsuperscript{160}
\end{quote}

In the same tenor, the First Lady claims to have advised her husband:

\begin{quote}
…if you want to eat a dog, eat a very big dog which has a strong odour so that when people pass through they acknowledge that indeed a dog was eaten.\textsuperscript{161}
\end{quote}

Such was not the turn of phrase the public expected of one described as “a near perfect being” and the “queen of queens”, and is unlikely to have enhanced her political prospects amongst the generality of the populace.\textsuperscript{162}

Despite these lapses, one of the main and clever objectives of the rallies was, nonetheless, achieved. This objective was to give her imprimatur to the spin, promoted relentlessly by the State media, that ZANU PF did not comprise two factions, but, rather, that there was ZANU PF with Mugabe at the centre, and a single faction, led by Mutasa, working against it. This laid the basis for the Mujuruites to be referred to by the State media subsequently as a “putschist cabal”, to be purged along with all supporters from the body of ZANU PF, thus heroically rescuing the party and Mugabe. The narrative triumphed over the notion of two equally divided factions locked in a bitter battle for control. This then allowed “factionalism”, so roundly condemned by Mugabe, and of which none could say they approved, to become synonymous with the Mujuruites.

**Plan B, Step Three – the Control of the Provinces**

The next step in the plot was necessitated by provisions in the Party Constitution pertaining to the manner in which members of the Presidium attain office, referred to above.

To recap, to be eligible for election to the Presidium, a candidate had to be nominated by at least six of the 10 Provinces. The candidate’s name was then put forward for “direct election” at the Congress. In practice, these nominations were normally forwarded by the Provinces about two or three weeks ahead of the Congress.\textsuperscript{163} The danger for the plotters, therefore, would be that

\begin{itemize}
\item [\textsuperscript{159}] Of many possible examples see Foetus Found In Southerton Newsday 30.06.15 and Foetus every Fortnight at Sewer Plant The Sunday Standard 12.07.15.
\item [\textsuperscript{160}] Go now, Grace Orders Mujuru Daily News 18.11.14.
\item [\textsuperscript{161}] Grace: I Told Mugabe ‘Let’s Eat a Very Big Smelly Dog’ Zimeye 08.10.14.
\item [\textsuperscript{162}] Grace’s Blitz: Ten Mad Points Daily News 22.10.14 and Don’t Mess With Grace Mugabe – She Could be the Next President of Zimbabwe The Guardian (UK) 15.07.15.
\item [\textsuperscript{163}] Masvingo Provincial Executive Chairperson, Callisto Gwantesa, came in for heavy criticism for “jumping the gun” and attempting to submit the province’s nominations (Mujuru, Khaya Moyo and Mutasa) in mid-August 2014 – see ZANU-PF Masvingo Accused of Jumping Gun in Presidium Nominations The Chronicle 18.09.14. The votes
Mujuru, Khaya Moyo and Mutasa would be put forward in mid-November by the Provincial Coordinating Committees (PCC) as nominees for the posts of Vice-Presidents and National Chairperson respectively. The PCCs were also required to submit their nominees for the Central Committee, then 130 members.164 Some Provinces reportedly had begun to prepare for this process as early as the second week of October 2014.165 When official notice was given by the Politburo to commence nominations for the Central Committee on 14th November, 2014, there was no mention of nominations to the Presidium. The notice was given by Mujuruite, Webster Shamu, as Secretary for the Commissariat, rather than Mutasa, as Secretary for Administration.166

To gain control of the Provinces and preclude nominations to the Presidium, the plotters deemed necessary the removal of the nine Mujuruite Provincial Chairpersons, elected at the end of 2013. Since the Politburo had directed the “suspension of suspensions” in early September, 2014, it was decided to remove the Provincial Chairpersons through votes of no confidence in terms of section 251 of the then Party Constitution, which provided:

A motion of no confidence shall be by a simple majority of all members of the appropriate organ.

It is a moot point as to what counted as the “appropriate body” for this purpose; that is, whether the vote of no confidence in the chairpersons had to be by the Provincial Co-ordinating Committee or merely the Provincial Executive Committee (PEC) of the PCC. In the event, the usurpers determined upon the smaller, approximately 50 member, PEC. The exact nature and procedures of a motion of no confidence was not stated in the Party Constitution, nor was the effect such a motion would have on the person upon whom it had been passed.167 In practice the affected members were simply regarded as having lost the position they held. They then became ordinary card-carrying members.

It seems that the initial intention was to remove the PEC Chairpersons through the PCCs, after Grace Mugabe had prepared that ground through her rallies, and when these organs of the party were to meet in all Provinces nationwide on the 2nd November, 2014. The scheme was foiled when, after becoming aware of the plan, rowdy and often violent Mujuruite youths, disrupted the meetings, requiring PCC members to take refuge at local police stations.

Before this, the plotters had, however, felt compelled to act prematurely against Temba Mliswa, Chairperson of Mashonaland West. Mliswa had had his head above the parapet for some time and was an easy target for the plotters.168 He had also caused considerable antagonism by the

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164 Sections 35(2)-(3). The number was increased to 194 by way of purported amendments to the Party Constitution made at the Congress. The amendments expanded the Central Committee from a stated 245 members to 300.
166 ZANU PF to Start Central Committee Elections The Herald 20.11.14.
167 This has since been changed as discussed below.
168 At a PEC meeting on 29.09.14, for example, Mliswa accused politburo members Ignatius Chombo, Patrick Zhuwao, Mr Ziyambi Ziyambi and his wife Florence of corruption. Mliswa said Mugabe disliked Zhuwao who was a “disgrace to the First Family”. Zhuwao’s wife Beauty was apparently incensed and threw a bottle of water at Mliswa before slapping him in the face, see Mliswa Fights Zhuwao’s Wife The Herald 30.09.14. Zhuwao is
suspension of Christopher Mutsvangwa from the Provincial Executive Committee and the suspension of the Youth League members after their Conference. There was thus some urgency in removing him. Mutsvangwa subsequently petitioned Mugabe to rein him in.\textsuperscript{169}

A series of denigratory articles about Mliswa began to appear in the Mnangagwa camp controlled press in September, 2014. Mliswa was accused of being part of a group of 12 ZANU PF legislators, whom \textit{The Herald} dubbed as the “dirty dozen”, and also claimed had received funding and leaked the party’s classified information to an American CIA operative.\textsuperscript{170} The same paper then subsequently alleged that Mliswa was hobnobbing with white farmers and businesspersons, and implied that the donations he solicited from them were neither properly accounted for nor channelled towards the purpose for which they were requested.\textsuperscript{171}

Press reports suggest that the first attempt to oust Mliswa by a vote in the PEC in early October, 2014, failed.\textsuperscript{172} Only 11 out of 50 members agreed to the vote, with others citing a lack of transparency in the process and the failure to indicate the reason for the vote.\textsuperscript{173} However, two days later, on the 9\textsuperscript{th} October, 2014, according to a confused report in \textit{The Herald}, “at least 27 out of 48 members attended the meeting where the vote of no-confidence motion was passed, surpassing the 26-member quorum required in the case.”\textsuperscript{174} The vote against Mliswa had to be announced at a local police station after the press conference\textsuperscript{175} convened for the purpose was disrupted by pro-Mliswa youths. Mliswa maintained, with considerable justification, that the PEC meeting had been improperly convened, that due process had not been followed and that many of the signatures subscribing to the vote of no confidence were fraudulent or monetarily induced.\textsuperscript{176} He refused to accept his ouster.\textsuperscript{177} ZANU PF party Spokesperson Rugare Gumbo also claimed that the ouster was null and void on account of the moratorium on suspensions. Subsequently, on the 19\textsuperscript{th} October, 2014, a Provincial Inter-District meeting was held at which a reported 780 of 900 delegates reaffirmed Mliswa as chairperson.\textsuperscript{178}

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\textsuperscript{169} Mliswa on the Brink After No Confidence Vote \textit{New Zimbabwe} 09.10.14.
\textsuperscript{170} 12 MPS in US Funding Scandal \textit{The Herald} 19.09.14.
\textsuperscript{171} Mliswa’s ‘dirty’ Liaisons Exposed \textit{The Herald} 10.10.14.
\textsuperscript{172} Mliswa had been aware of the impending plot to oust him for some time, see “They Want me Out: Mliswa Daily News 02.10.14.
\textsuperscript{173} Mliswa Survives Ouster Plot \textit{Newsday} 08.10.14.
\textsuperscript{174} A majority of members constitutes a quorum (see then section 94 of the Party Constitution). If there were 48 members as the article suggests, 24 and not 26 would constitute a quorum. Furthermore, the article does not state how many were in favour of the vote of no confidence, which must be by a majority of members and not by a majority of members present. \textit{Newsday} (Mliswa Booted Out 10.10.14) reported that there were 28 of 50 members present. Mliswa alleged that only 21 members were present.
\textsuperscript{175} The reports are unclear as to whether it was the meeting itself, or a press conference to announce the results of the meeting, that was disrupted. It may also be possible that the signatures for the vote of no confidence were collated at the police station itself where the announcement was made.
\textsuperscript{176} I am Still in Charge: Mliswa \textit{The Standard} 12.19.14.
\textsuperscript{177} ‘Mliswa still Chair’ \textit{Sunday Mail} 12.101.14.
\textsuperscript{178} See Mash West Trashes anti-Mliswa Drive \textit{Daily News} 19.10.14 and Rot In Mash West Exposed \textit{The Financial Gazette} 23.10.14. The number given in favour of Mliswa in the latter publication is 700.
There were no further votes of no confidence against the provincial chairpersons until the conclusion of Grace Mugabe’s rallies. They then took place in rapid succession, commencing with the ouster of Retired Brigadier General Callisto Gwanetsa in Masvingo on 30th October, 2014. Nearly all were as messy as the Mliswa ouster.

The vote of no confidence in Gwanetsa was moved by 73 ordinary party supporters rather than the 50 member Provincial Executive Council. Gwanetsa refused to accept his ouster and, noting the unprocedural process, convened the PEC two days later where a reported 35 members passed a vote of no confidence in Vice-Chairman Paradza Chakona, who had coordinated the first vote against Gwanetsa. After war veterans’ Provincial Chairperson, Francis Nando, criticised Gwanetsa for causing chaos in the party by refusing to step down, party youths, each supporting the opposing votes, then clashed at a provincial meeting the next day. Mujuruite, Dzikamai Mavhaire, was chased from the venue. The provincial meeting was one of the country-wide provincial meetings held that weekend, on Sunday the 2nd November, where it had been intended to discuss the removal of the Chairpersons in most Provinces. The reconvened Masvingo meeting a few days later required 80 heavily armed anti-riot police details, which arrived with a crowd-dispersing water tanker, to keep the peace.

Harare Provincial Chairperson, Amos Midzi, was the next to face the axe on the 6th November, 2014, for “fanning factionalism”, through a vote of no confidence by a reported 26 members of the PEC, 22 from the main wing, three from the Youth League and one from the Women’s League. Midzi likewise refused to accept his ouster, claiming procedural improprieties, fraudulent signatures and that threats and intimidation had been used to obtain the vote. He named party members, including Omega Hungwe and Dumisisani Chipango, as threatening and intimidating PEC members late at night. Midzi’s attempt to address a press conference two days later was disrupted by violent, angry youths wielding sticks and an assortment of other dangerous weapons.

The next day, the 9th November, 2014, Jason Machaya, the Midlands Provincial Chairperson was removed by the vote of a reported 36 of the 44 PEC members who attended, again

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179 The fact that they took place sequentially suggests co-ordinated and centralised planning.
180 Gwanetsa Ouster Null and Void The Mirror 06.11.14.
181 I am Still Provincial Chairman Gwanetsa The Standard 02.11.14.
182 War Vets Stick to Guns on Gwanetsa The Herald 04.11.14.
183 Aborted ZANU PF Meeting Finally Held Southern Eye 06.11.14.
184 Midzi later committed suicide (on 09.06.15). A family member stated that he had been reduced to utter despair and depression as he had used his position in the party for apparent rent seeking purposes and his removal was then last straw for his already precarious finances: “As you know for long, Cde Midzi was more than a political godfather of Harare, he was a revered person. He used to control most land deals and housing co-operatives in the process pocketing good money, but after being kicked out of the party, that became impossible.” See Gamatox, Weevils Clash at Midzi Funeral Newsday 11.06.15.
185 Vote of No Confidence in Midzi The Herald 07.11.14.
186 Ousted Amos Midzi Defiant, Says Vote of No Confidence is ‘null and void’ Bulawayo24 07.11.14.
188 An earlier attempt to remove Machaya had reportedly been foiled by demonstrating youths – see Plan To Expel Mujuru Allies Resisted Daily News 03.11.14.
189 Another ZANU PF Bigwig Kicked Out The Zimbabwe Mail 10.11.14.
charging the leader with “fanning factionalism”.\textsuperscript{190} The meeting, chaired by Machaya throughout, appears, unusually to have been convened procedurally and the result accepted by Machaya.\textsuperscript{191}

Andrew Langa was removed as PEC Chairperson for Matabeleland South, on the 10\textsuperscript{th} November, 2014. The matter was initially discussed at a PCC meeting before the vote was taken in the PEC. The process did not proceed smoothly. Placards by demonstrators denigrating Langa were torn up by his supporters and a man denouncing Langa as “Dr 10 Percent’s\textsuperscript{192} Puppet” assaulted. Among other allegations Langa was charged at the PEC meeting with “aligning himself with a faction seeking to oust President Robert Mugabe and undermining the Grace Mugabe and bussing youths to disrupt the First Lady’s rally”. The motion of no confidence was reportedly passed by 31 of 50 members.\textsuperscript{193} However, Langa denounced the motion as “illegal, disruptive, irregular, unprocedural, nonsensical and defamatory”, and claimed that only 19 of 50 members\textsuperscript{194} had signed the petition.

The next to face the axe was Manicaland Provincial Chairperson, John Mvundura, on 15\textsuperscript{th} November, 2014. There had already been an attempt to remove him through a vote of no confidence at a PCC meeting two weeks previously, but the meeting was disrupted after violent clashes (which, as noted, had occurred in several provinces as the plot to oust PEC Chairpersons became manifest) between Mujuru and Mnangagwa supporters which required police intervention.\textsuperscript{195} The week previously the Politburo had also, curiously, voted that Mvundura should be given a written reprimand for fanning factionalism. The “petition” approving the vote of no confidence was published in the \textit{Sunday Mail},\textsuperscript{196} and is worth citing here in full as it appears that a customised version thereof was used in the case of all PEC Chairpersons. It also shows the precise nature of the campaign against the Mujurites:

\begin{quote}
“We are here to issue a statement on behalf of the Manicaland Provincial Coordinating Committee following a meeting that was held this morning.

“We, the undersigned provincial main wing executive members, having met in Mutare to deliberate on the goings-on in the provincial party affairs and dissatisfied with the conduct of chairman Ambassador John Shumba Mvundura, his deputy Retired Brigadier-General Elliot Kasu and the secretary for the
\end{quote}

\begin{flushright}
\textit{\textsuperscript{190} Machaya Ousted as Midlands Chair The Chronicle 10.11.14 – notably this report (as does the New Zimbabwe report fn immediately below) contradicts the claim that the vote was unanimous made by The Herald (Another Chairman Bites the Dust The Herald 10.11.14), repeated by the ZBC and various senior pro Mnangagwa members.}
\textsuperscript{191} Machaya Booted Out as Purge on Mujuru Allies Continues New Zimbabwe 09.11.14.
\textsuperscript{192} A reference to Joice Mujuru who had been charged by her detractors as demanding 10% of business deals before allowing them to proceed – an allegation which built upon Grace Mugabe’s statement at her 9th rally in Bindura, Mashonaland Central in this regard.
\textsuperscript{193} Andrew Langa Kicked Out The Chronicle 10.11.14.
\textsuperscript{194} Langa claimed that a further 15 signatures on the petition were not those of members of the PEC – see Andrew Langa Fires Back The Southern Eye 12.11.14.
\textsuperscript{195} Factionalism Leads to Violent Clashes The Zimbabwean 11.11.14.
\textsuperscript{196} And Then There Were Only Four…The Sunday Mail 16.11.14.}
\end{flushright}
commissariat Retired Major James Kaunye – we hereby pass a vote of no confidence in the three by appending our signatures below.”

[the reasons for the vote of no confidence are:]

(1) Pursuing a factional agenda in the leadership of the province by undermining the authority of the First Secretary and President of the party HE Cde Robert Mugabe;

(2) Appearing aloof during First Lady Amai Dr Grace Mugabe’s rally at Sakubva Stadium on October 10, 2014 and his failure to condemn the busing in of rowdy youths who openly tried to disrupt the First Lady’s rally by being rowdy and violent;

(3) Being part of a small group of former freedom fighters led by Jabulani Sibanda which threatened to march to State House and confront the President and First Secretary HE Cde Robert Mugabe. Cde Mvundura mobilised the leadership to attend a meeting organised by Jabulani Sibanda at Mutumba Six Mine where he threatened violence against officials of a Government ministry (Ministry of Media, Information and Broadcasting Services) and attacked the First Lady Amai Dr Grace Mugabe.

Ambassador Mvundura has not disassociated himself from Jabulani Sibanda’s utterances publicly or privately indicating beyond any reasonable doubt that he is part of the divisive politics of factionalism.”

(4) Ambassador Mvundura endorsed rowdy youths who were bused in to denounce senior party leaders at a Provincial Coordinating Committee (meeting) held on November 2, 2014 at Marrymount Teachers College in Mutare.

The youths jeered and heckled senior party members including Cdes Oppah Muchinguri, Mandi Chimene, Chris Mushohwe, myself Supa Mandiwanzira and Cde Kudzi Chipanga and instead of denouncing this anti-revolutionary behaviour, Cde Mvundura was quoted in The Herald on November 3 supporting the rowdy thugs.

(5) Holding kangaroo meetings to discuss party business outside official structures thereby abetting divisions in the party.

(6) Interfering with preparations for the youth congress by intimidating youths to vote in a particular way.

197 The report in New Zimbabwe (Manicaland Zanu PF Chairman Booted Out 15.11.14) seems to quote Provincial Secretary for Information, Supa Mandiwanzira, differently in regard to the same introduction: “While the people of Manicaland have noted with gratitude observations by the politburo of 13 November 2014, the misdeeds of Cde Shumba Mvundura resulting in his reprimand, we as the provincial executive council of Manicaland resolved to pass a vote of no confidence in the provincial chairman Cde Mvundura, his deputy Rtd Brig Kasu and political commissar Rtd Major Kaunye”.
(7) Intimidating party provincial leaders and trying to embarrass Politburo and Central Committee members at each provincial coordinating committee meeting accusing them of one thing or the other.

(8) Relying so much on gossip that every provincial meeting is preceded by hate from him whose only justification is what Ambassador Mvundura refers to as ‘corridor talk’.

(9) Doctoring inter-district resolutions in order to manipulate provincial resolutions for Congress. Inter-district resolutions in Nyanga and Mutasa were manipulated to reflect that the districts had nominated Cde Mutasa as chairman and Cde Joice Mujuru as a candidate for Second Secretary when in fact no such discussions had taken place at the inter-district meeting.

(10) Chairing a PCC meeting on October 4, 2014 which jumped the gun by making nomination for positions at Congress against the Politburo standing instruction to desist from campaigning and such nominations.” [the typographical errors are in the original report].

A reported 25 signatures were appended to this “petition”, one short of the majority required. Mvundura was sceptical of the validity of the decision, which was not immediately communicated to him.

Bulawayo Province’s ouster of Callistus Ndhlovu (and five other members of the PEC) was to some extent a repetition of the events in Masvingo. The day after his expulsion on 17th November 2014, Ndhlovu called his own meeting of what he said was the PEC and “overturned” the ouster. The vote of no confidence, Ndhlovu maintained, was “concocted using signatures of people who were not even consulted on the matter”, obtained outside of the PEC meeting held the day before, and that the names of people who had refused to sign the petition were added in any event:

They decided to call a clandestine meeting at an unknown location where they were driving people in trying to coerce them to sign the so called petition. There are witnesses here who can indicate to you that they were actually taken to that location where they were surprised to hear that there was such a move to pass a vote of no confidence.

As had happened in Masvingo, the second PEC meeting passed votes of no confidence on those behind the earlier vote, including George Mlala who claimed to have taken over as acting Chairperson. Two days later, a pro-Grace Mugabe rally in which Mlala was involved flopped, with ZANU PF cadres showing little enthusiasm for the event, possibly on account of support for

198 Most reports do not mention the number of people approving the vote. The only one located which does, is Manicaland Chairman Booted Out New Zimbabwe 15.11.14.
200 Sometimes spelled without the “h”.
201 Ndloulu-led Executive ‘overturns’ Vote of No Confidence The Chronicle 18.11.14.
202 Party Secretary for Lands and Resettlement, Patson Parirenyatwa; Deputy Secretary for Business Development and Liaison, George Mlala and Deputy Secretary for Science and Technology, Cde Nacisio Makulumbo.
Ndhlovu.

However, after receiving a report from the National Disciplinary Committee on Sunday 23rd November, 2014, which noted fraudulent signatures on both the vote and counter vote of no confidence, the Politburo decided to reverse all the suspensions.204 The Politburo was later to uphold all the votes of no confidence, including, it appears, that of Ndhlovu.205

The Mashonaland East provincial Chairperson, Ray Kaukonde, had been singled out by the First Lady as particularly culpable in fanning factionalism, accusing the business man of bankrolling the Mujuruites. Notwithstanding this cue, a PCC meeting of 1st November, 2014, rather than moving a vote of no confidence against Kaukonde in fact expressed confidence in his leadership.206 An attempt had been made to force Kaukonde from office on the 10th November, 2014, by ZANU PF supporters drawn from the Youth League, war veterans, war collaborators, former political prisoners and ex-detainees.207 The meeting claimed to have passed a vote of no confidence in the entire Provincial Executive Committee. However, the clear unconstitutionality of the process led to a PEC meeting on the 17th November, 2014, where a reported 27 out of 50 members approved the renewed vote of no confidence. Seven other members were ousted with him.208

Luke Mushore, Provincial Chairperson of Mashonaland Central, Mujuru’s home province, was, significantly, the last of the group to be removed, on the 18th November, 2014. The usual grounds of fanning factionalism were supplemented by the accusation of plotting to topple President Mugabe, with which factionalism had now become equated. The vote reportedly passed by 29 out of 48 PEC members. The Provincial wing of the Women’s League met simultaneously and passed a vote of no confidence in its Chairperson, Dorothy Mashonganyika, by 22 to 40.209

Plan B, Step Four - The Assassination Plot.
The last two ousted chairpersons do not appear publicly to have commented upon, or objected to, their ouster. By then the Politburo had expelled top Mujuruite party officials210 and upheld the suspensions of Provincial Chairpersons (other than Ndhlovu) to date. The writing was already on the wall. More importantly, their silence may have been on account of the fact that before turning to the last two Provinces, where Mujuru’s support was likely to be strongest, and the ouster the most difficult, the plotters had upped the ante significantly.

Having slandered the Mujuruites through the public media with increasingly outlandish and unsupported allegations without repercussion, the plotters had gained the confidence to move to

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204 See Life Line for ZANU PF Bulawayo Chair The Zimbabwe Mail 24.11.14. The announcement made at Davies Hall in Bulawayo on the Monday apparently was not well received by some “rowdy” party youths.
205 Politburo Bars no Confidence Vote Officials The Herald 04.04.15.
206 The motion was moved by Retired Brigadier General Ambrose Mutinhiri, and seconded by David Chapfika – see Mash East Stands by Kaukonde Despite Grace, Mugabe Blasts Nehanda Radio 02.11.14. In a cabinet reshuffle on 06.07.15 Mutinhiri was appointed Minister of State for Mashonaland East Provincial Affairs.
208 Political Commissar, Tendai Makunde and his Deputy, George Katsande; Deputy Secretary for Security Washington Musvaire; Deputy Secretary for Finance, Felix Mhona; Secretary for Education, Taurai Pasirai; Secretary for Administration, Peter Murwira; and Boniface Mutize. See Kaukonde Ousted The Herald 18.11.14.
210 Including long standing party spokesman, Rugare Gumbo, a close Mujuruite, discussed further below.
211 The Chairperson of Matabeleland North, was not thought to be Mujuru aligned.
the next level of preposterousness. Just before the purges of the Provincial Chairpersons had begun, an article in the Sunday Mail of 26 October, 2014 alleged that the Mujuruites were in cahoots with American intelligence agents to oust President Mugabe through a vote of no confidence in Parliament. The story did not appear to have had the desired effect or gain much traction – it was perhaps too legally technical. Thus, on 16 November, 2014, the same newspaper, went a step further and published another story about alleged Mujuru links in another plot against Mugabe – but this time, one to assassinate the President. False allegations of plotting to assassinate President Mugabe had been used repeatedly before this to neutralise political opponents, and the recycling of the somewhat tired ploy is likely to have caused sceptical yawns amongst much of the papers non-Mnangagwa aligned readership.

Highly dubious hearsay evidence was advanced to support the claim of the assassination plot – an alleged paramour of Didymus Mutasa supposedly said to someone who repeated to a member of the Politburo that Mutasa had said or “boasted” as the paper put it, that:

“If President Mugabe blocks the ascendancy of VP Mujuru to the Presidency at the ZANU PF Congress, then he will be shot.”

An alleged tape recording of Rugare Gumbo was also advanced of proof of the plot. Gumbo is claimed, in the context of the relentless attacks against Mujuru, to have said:

...if Mugabe continues to work to push Mujuru out we will remove him like what happened to Kabila...

Nicholas Goche, the then Public Service, Labour and Social Services Minister, was drawn into the issue when, three days after the first publication of the “plot” he was reported to have played a key role by seeking to recruit hit men to carry out the deed, travelling to both South Africa and Israel, under the guise of government business, for this purpose. The idea of hit men supposedly came after an earlier failed plot elaborated upon by Mugabe himself:

“This man was to die in September and he refused to die in that September, and still refuses to die. ‘Ah, it now needs sangomas’. They say to (Ray) Kaukonde, ‘look for a sangoma’.”

Jonathan Moyo was later to cynically state on BBC’s Hardtalk programme that the accusation was merely “political banter” – see the transcript in Prof Moyo Takes on BBC’s Sackur The Herald 20.05.15.

US, VP Mujuru plot to oust President The Sunday Mail 26.10.14.

VP Mujuru Linked to President Assassination Plot The Sunday Mail 16.11.14.

Most notably against presidential challengers Ndabaningi Sithole in 1997 and Morgan Tsvangirai in 2002. See also Robert Mugabe’s Imaginary Assassins The Zimbabwe Mail 05.03.15.

Of course, this statement even if true, in the absence of any suggestion as to who would do the shooting, is not incriminatory.

The claimed recording is in chiShona: ‘...kana Mugabe akaramba achipusha Mujuru out tichamubvisa sezvakaitwa Kabila’ – see Rugare Gumbo Speaks Out Nehanda Radio 16.11.14. Since Gumbo made the alleged comment in relation to the attacks on Mujuru, if authentic, it would originate from a different period to the “spy-tapes”. Laurent Kabila was assassinated by one of his own bodyguards in 2001 while President of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.


Once again eschewing the first person singular.
Nigerian sangomas, n’angas or witch doctors were, according to Mugabe, recruited on Mujuru’s behalf and instructed as follows. Two frogs of different colours were to be found and made to fight each other. If the one representing Mugabe died, this would mean, so the sangomas are said to have claimed, that Mujuru would gain the presidency. Mugabe maintained that a second ritual was also conducted, this time involving a semi-nude Mujuru and ten chickens, each of whom had the soul of one of Mujuru’s political enemies entrapped within its body – included were the souls of Grace and Robert Mugabe. The decapitation of the chickens should have solved all Mujuru’s problems.²²⁰

No evidence, apart from the hearsay against Mutasa and the alleged tape recording of Gumbo was put forward to support the claim of the assassination plot. Although police were said to be investigating the matter, no charges ensued. However, this did not deter the The Herald, Chronicle, Sunday Mail and Sunday News as treating the plot as established fact. The State owned press began to refer to the Mujuruites as a “cabal” and then as a “putschist cabal.” Despite the relentless and scurrilous nature of these allegations, both before and after the Congress, they were later cynically brushed aside as inconsequential by Jonathan Moyo, who stated that the allegations were merely normal “political banter” to be expected between rival groups in a pre-election environment.²²¹

Plan B, Step Five – the Control of the Central Committee
On 16th November, 2014 (the same day the assassination story was published) the crucial process in determining the provincial members of the Central Committee began, following a November 14th directive in this regard from then Political Commissar, Webster Shamu, and presumably in accordance with discussion that had taken place at the Politburo meeting the day before. As was the case with the appointment of Grace Mugabe to head the Women’s League, the press and ZANU PF as a party, appeared confused as to whether the Provincial Co-ordinating Committees were selecting nominees to the Central Committee to be elected at the Congress, or whether they were electing the members themselves. The press reports are contradictory in this regard.²²²

A revised process allocated 10 Central Committee seats to each Province, a women’s quota of five per province and two seats each (i.e. four) for the executive of the Youth and Women’s Leagues. The latter is in addition to the ex officio seats occupied by the bodies’ leaders.²²³

²²¹ BBC Hardtalk released 18.05.15.
²²² This appears from the press reports cited below relating to the process. The ZANU PF Party Constitution was no help in this regard. While the unamended Constitution made it clear that the process was merely one of nomination, with the actual election to take place at Congress, the directive had instructed the provinces to proceed on the basis of the intended amendment, which removed reference to election at Congress, did not replace it with anything else and rendered the process by which a person becomes a Central Committee member obscure. The confusion is probably due to the fact that while formally elected at Congress, Congress merely endorses the submitted lists.
²²³ It is unclear how the Central Committee seat for the Secretary for Youth Affairs is filled as, in the past, this position has been filled by appointment by the Party President, with the Youth League merely electing the Deputy. The Secretary for Youth Affairs, as a Politburo member, in terms of the amended Constitution, has to be appointed from the Central Committee – but if he is not part of that body by virtue of prior election it is difficult to see how there can be compliance with this requirement. There is no provision allowing the Party President to appoint a person to the Central Committee specifically to take up the post of Secretary of the Youth League. If such person is one of the 10 appointments to the Central Committee permitted to the Party President, then the Central Committee will be one short of the establishment of 300.
further 94 were to be divided between the Provinces on a pro rata basis, depending on how each Province had performed in the 2013 national general election. The candidates were elected through the Districts in the Provinces, which had each been allocated a quota of seats.

**Midlands**

Mnangagwa’s home province, the Midlands, was the first to commence the process, which began extremely badly for the plotters and continued in a manner which was likely to have made them very disconcerted. If they had believed that the anti-Mujuru campaign and the purge of the PECs had been sufficient to control the Provinces, and ensure that few by then would be prepared to express allegiance for Mujurites, they were to be disappointed. The elections in two Districts, Shurugwi and Gokwe, had immediately to be suspended when it became apparent that Mujuruite Cabinet Ministers, Francis Nhema and Flora Buka were likely to be returned. It was clear that the elections would need to be controlled. Buka and Nhema were thus initially barred from contesting by the PCC on allegations of electoral improprieties in the two Districts, though the decision was later reversed by the Politburo. Buka, subsequently polled 74 votes against Leonard Chikomba’s 169, and Nhema, 61 votes against Emmanuel Fundira’s 105. Mnangagwa was nominated unopposed.

While the election process for Manicaland and Mashonaland Central were under way, the Politburo convened for its penultimate meeting before the Congress on the night of Saturday 22nd November, 2014 and continuing through to the small hours of Sunday. The events at the tense meeting may well have influenced the remainder of the Central Committee selection process.

At the meeting, Mugabe removed any remaining doubt as to which side he was on and made believe he accepted the assassination plot against him. An inappropriately jocular Mugabe snubbed Mutasa by failing to greet him, facetiously told Mujurite, Masvingo Provincial Affairs Minister, Kudakwashe Bhasikiti, that he was “in the wrong basket”, i.e. the wrong faction, and then, seemingly with little sense of the seriousness of the occasion, said to Goche “Ko, ndiwe urikunangirwa huroyi [You are being accused of witchcraft] before mockingly singing a few bars of the song “Ndiwe muroyi ndiwe” [You, you are the witch].

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224 See section 35 of the amended ZANU PF Party Constitution and ZANU PF to Start Central Committee Elections *The Herald* 20.11.14. With the addition of the four members of the Presidium, the heads of the Women and Youth Leagues, and 10 appointments by the Party President, this expanded the Central Committee to 300 members. The 94 pro rata allocations were as follows: Mashonaland Central 15; Mashonaland East 14; Masvingo 13; Mashonaland West 12, Midlands 12; Manicaland 12; Harare 8; Matabeleland North 4; Matabeleland South 3 and Bulawayo 1.

225 The Party Constitution requires that the PCCs shall nominate the candidates in an equitable way that each Administrative District shall have at least one member elected to the Central Committee.

226 See ZANU PF to Start Central Committee Elections *The Herald* 20.11.14 where the number of pro rata seats for each province is also given in the report. The press reports however, vary slightly on the allocations – compare a report of the same date in the *Financial Gazette* Focus Shifts to Central Committee Elections.

227 The suspension was based upon allegations of bribing the electorate *Financial Gazette* Focus Shifts to Central Committee Elections 20.11.14.

228 Buka, Nhema in Central Committee Race *The Chronicle* 25.11.14.


230 Bhasikiti means “basket” in chiShona.

231 See President Confronts Goche Over Coup Plot *The Sunday Mail* 23.11.14.
**Manicaland**
The results of the poll in Manicaland were announced the next day. There matters had proceeded with even less subtlety than in Midlands. The PEC simply did not put the names of those they considered undesirable on the list of eligible candidates, resulting in youths in at least one District\(^{232}\) refusing to vote. Attempts were made to block others, including Didymus Mutasa, from standing. When the polls returned Mujuruites, the results were simply annulled by the PEC. Irene Zindi, Freddy Kanzama, John Chirimambowa, Tendai Samanya and Mike Nyambuya’s elections were simply “struck down” and they were replaced by persons deemed to be more desirable.\(^{233}\) Two PCC members involved in the administration of the polling process, which had resulted in the election of these “undesirables”, were suspended for “pursuing a factional agenda”.\(^{234}\) Didymus Mutasa failed to secure a position garnering 85 votes compared to 163 for his next closest rival Joseph Made.\(^{235}\)

**Mashonaland Central**
The process proceeded in the same vein in Mashonaland Central, Mujuru’s home province, with the new acting head of the Provincial Executive Committee declaring:

> “We sat last week as the provincial executive council and agreed that we should defend our President. We agreed that any member of the party who is accused of plotting to assassinate the President we are not going to accept his or her CV.”\(^{236}\)

The applications as candidates to the Central Committee in Mashonaland Central for Dr Lazarus Dokora (Secondary Education Minister) and Epmarcus Kanhanga (Tourism and Hospitality Industry, Deputy Minister), were thus rejected on this basis along with at least 10 others.\(^{237}\)

The rejections came after youths led by Mashonaland Central Youth League Chairman, Godfrey Tsenangamu, petitioned the Provincial Elections Directorate to reject the CVs of “some senior members in the party” that they were “disturbed to note ... are deciding to rise against our President whom we elected overwhelmingly on 31 July 2013” and that “[s]uch individuals have taken it upon themselves to join hands with western countries and opposition parties in Zimbabwe to effect illegal regime change.” The youths claimed to be “shocked that these same people who have benefitted immensely from President Mugabe’s goodwill are even plotting to kill him.”

The youths reserved special venom for Nicholas Goche, present at the meeting where the petition was presented. The youths accused him of displaying “disrespect of the highest order by plotting to kill the President and that he was a saboteur unfit to occupy such a senior post in the party.” In the face of this threatening behaviour, Goche decided to withdraw his application to join the

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\(^{233}\) ZANU PF Heavyweights Lose (above).


\(^{235}\) The votes for the other candidates were Florence Majachani (169), Mandi Chimene (141) and Patrick Chimansana (177). There were only four seats available in the District. See also ZANU PF Heavyweights Lose *Daily News* 26.11.14.

\(^{236}\) Home District Shuts Door on Mujuru *The Herald* 26.11.14.

\(^{237}\) Edgar Chidavaenzi, MP; Criswell Mutematsaka MP; David Butau; Kenneth Musanhi; Sydney Chidamba; Joseph Mapiki; Christopher Chitindi; Obert Mutasa; Dugmore Chimukoko; and Ratidzai Marumahoko.
Central Committee.\textsuperscript{238} As he attempted to leave the venue, his vehicle was mobbed and it required the intervention of Kasukuwere to calm the youth and allow Goche to depart.\textsuperscript{239}

There are conflicting reports concerning Joice Mujuru’s own failure to stand as a candidate. \textit{The Herald} reported that the Mashonaland Central Provincial Election Directorate had rejected her application. The Daily News reported that she had decided not to apply.\textsuperscript{240}

Despite this gate-keeping over candidates, surprisingly, Christopher Mutsvangwa, who may be said to have started the public campaign against the Mjururites, failed to secure nomination.

\textbf{The Matabeleland Provinces}

The vote in Bulawayo was preceded by a PCC meeting where militant youths barred Tshinga Dube and Angeline Masuku from attendance. Both are prominent and long standing ZANU PF officials. The youth accused them, and Sikhanyiso Ndlovu,\textsuperscript{241} of denigrating Grace Mugabe by suggesting that she had insulted Matabes during the course of her rallies. Gaining only four votes in the first round of voting, against 31 for her main challenger, Masuku withdrew from the contest, and Vice-Presidential aspirant, Phekezela Mphoko, gathered a winning 40 votes in the second round. Other notable casualties were then Secretary for Youth Affairs, Absolom Sikosana, and Sikhanyiso Ndlovu.\textsuperscript{242} Ndlovu lost to Killian Sibanda with whom he had been so heavily embroiled over the provincial chairpersonship.\textsuperscript{243} Tshinga Dube, despite having had to “scamper for safety” from youths the week before, was, however, voted in.\textsuperscript{244}

In Matabeleland North, Politburo members Dr Obert Mpofu, Jonathan Moyo, Cain Mathema, Jacob Mudenda, Thokozile Mathuthu and Cde Sithembiso Nyoni obtained seats unopposed.\textsuperscript{245} However, after the poll, on Sunday 30\textsuperscript{th} November, 2014, the Provincial Executive Committee met and resolved Jacob Mudenda, Sithembiso Nyoni, Fathi Mpofu, Tshatha Mguni and Elias Mavule be removed from the Central Committee list for “fanning factionalism”.\textsuperscript{246} Obert Mpofu was subsequently accused of instigating the motion for their removal\textsuperscript{247} and police intervention was required at the meeting after clashes between youths. The reports are confused as to whether the fracas was motivated by antagonism between those supporting and those protesting against Mpofu, or whether it was on account of the accreditation to Congress of a party cadre who was claimed to have said that Mugabe was responsible for the party’s poor showing in the 2008 elections. Mpofu since 2012,\textsuperscript{248} and Mudenda since 2004,\textsuperscript{249} have both been regarded as

\textsuperscript{238} See \textit{I Quit} – Goche \textit{The Daily News} 24.11.14 and Siege Mood Grips ZANUPF \textit{The Financial Gazette} 27.11.14. 
\textit{The Herald} reported Goche as withdrawing his application voluntarily “to maintain unity in the party” – Goche Accepts Card Carrying Member Status 27.11.14. Goche was admitted to hospital a few days later with hypertension.

\textsuperscript{239} This is according to an account given in Mash Central Says No to VP Mujuru \textit{The Herald} 24.11.14.

\textsuperscript{240} Mash Central Says No to VP Mujuru \textit{The Herald} 24.11.14 and ZANU PF Heavyweights Lose \textit{Daily News} 26.11.14.

\textsuperscript{241} ‘I have no hard feelings,’ says Sikhanyiso Ndlovu \textit{Bulawayo24} 26.11.14.

\textsuperscript{242} Ndlovu and Sikosana later claimed a Central Committee seat by virtue of one of the 10 appointments President Mugabe may make to the body. Sikhosana was not however, to reclaim his place as Secretary for Youth Affairs.

\textsuperscript{243} Mortal Remains p38 et seq.

\textsuperscript{244} Angeline Masuku Loses Central Committee Seat \textit{Radio Dialogue} 24.11.14.

\textsuperscript{245} Khaya Moyo Lives to Die Another Day \textit{Sunday Mail} 30.11.2014.

\textsuperscript{246} ‘Mpofu Didn’t Fire Mudenda, Nyoni’ \textit{The Zimbabwe Mail} 02.12.14 - it should be borne in mind that Mpofu was the proprietor of (now defunct) \textit{The Zimbabwe Mail}.

\textsuperscript{247} Mudenda SK Survive \textit{The Chronicle} 03.12.14.

\textsuperscript{248} Mnangagwa, Mnangagwa United Against Mujuru \textit{Zimbabwe Mail} 09.02.12.
Mnangagwa-aligned. The request to remove the nominees from the list was subsequently rejected by the Politburo.\textsuperscript{250}

In Matabeleland South, the PCC refused to release the results from the Province claiming that they could only be announced by National Party Chairperson, Simon Khaya Moyo, himself a candidate in the Province.\textsuperscript{251} Unlike all other Provinces, the results for this region were then never reported on by the press. However, as had happened in Matabeleland North, it is known that, after acrimonious discussion, the Province decided to petition the Politburo to have Khaya-Moyo removed from the list of proposed Central Committee members citing “irregularities in the nomination process”. An anonymous PCC member was quoted as stating:

\begin{quote}
The cleansing of the party is on-going. Ambassador Simon Khaya Moyo is one of the most serious pretenders. He is one of the architects of factionalism. He also lies that he is the most senior surviving ex-ZAPU member, yet he is not.\textsuperscript{252}
\end{quote}

The petition was likewise rejected by the Politburo.\textsuperscript{253}

**Masvingo**

The Masvingo poll was marked by the candidacies of Kudakwashe Bhasikiti, Masvingo Provincial Affairs Minister, and Energy Minister, Dzikamai Mavhaire. Before the poll, war veterans and PCC members had sought to have both barred from contesting the poll, but the Elections Directorate stated that their CVs had already been accepted by the Politburo and their candidacies could not be withdrawn. Mavhaire was beaten\textsuperscript{254} by a Tsholotsho saga protagonist, Daniel Shumba, by 161 to 49 votes,\textsuperscript{255} and joined numerous other senior party officials who failed to gain nominations, including Tourism and Hospitality Industry Minister, Walter Mzembi,\textsuperscript{256} outpolled by Exavier Magweva by 154 votes to 4.

Bhasikiti, who had been described by Mugabe as being in the “wrong basket”, remarkably narrowly out polled Webster Muzara, believed to be of the Mnangagwa faction, by 73 votes to 69.\textsuperscript{257} However, the PCC thereafter directed the Provincial Executive Council to write to the Politburo to advise that the candidacies of Bhasikiti and one other had been withdrawn on account of “abuse of office, factionalism, setting up of parallel structures and attempting to unconstitutionally oust President Robert Mugabe”. The PEC also claimed to pass votes of no confidence on eight legislators, and to complete the “clean-up”, a Provincial Inter-District meeting appointed a new PEC to replace that previously led by the ousted Callisto Gwanetsa.\textsuperscript{258} The Politburo appears to have ignored all these purported removals.

\textsuperscript{249} See Mortal Remains p27 et seq.
\textsuperscript{250} Mudenda SK Survive The Chronicle 03.12.14.
\textsuperscript{252} Khaya Moyo Lives to Die Another Day Sunday Mail 30.11.14.
\textsuperscript{253} Mudenda SK Survive The Chronicle 03.12.14.
\textsuperscript{254} Bhasikiti’s Woes Mount The Chronicle 28.11.14.
\textsuperscript{255} Elsewhere reported as being 151 to 51 Vice Mujuru Dumped From the ZANUPF Central Committee Nominations Great Indaba 26.11.14.
\textsuperscript{256} Mzembi returned to the Central Committee via one of the ten seats Mugabe may appoint.
\textsuperscript{257} Bhasikiti Defies Odds Walks into Central Committee The Mirror (Masvingo) 28.11.14
\textsuperscript{258} Masvingo Clean-Up Claims Bhasikiti ZBC (online) 30.11.14.
Harare, Mashonaland West and Mashonaland East
In Harare, violent clashes between rival groups resulted in the postponement of elections in Waterfalls and the Deputy Lands Minister, Tendai Savanhu, was subsequently barred from contesting after having been accused of instigating the violence. ZANU PF notables, Joseph Macheka, Stalin Mau Mau and Allan Chiweshe also failed to retain their Central Committee seats. The position was similar in Mashonaland West. Webster Shamu, Sylvester Nguni and Reuben Marumahoko were all barred from the contest by the PCC. Temba Mliswa, whose application had been accepted in Hurungwe District, was rejected as a candidate by the Provincial Elections Directorate. One report claimed that, rather than the Elections Directorate, it was party heavyweight, Ignatius Chombo that personally directed that Temba Mliswa, having already been removed as chairperson, should not contest. The elections were later alleged to have been heavily manipulated by Chombo, and a group of party activists, after the Congress, urged the Presidium to direct a re-run, linking Chombo with the Mujuruites and claiming that “candidates were handpicked as is always the case with Cde Chombo and Cde Webster Shamu.”

Mashonaland East
The poll in Mashonaland East was of particular interest, given the spleen Grace Mugabe had vented on Mujuruites in this Province (“the home of the gamatox”), and ousted Provincial Chairperson, Ray Kaukonde, in particular. Kaukonde did not submit an application for nomination. However, the list of successful nominees included several members who were unlikely to please the Mnangagwa camp - and Grace Mugabe - most notably Sydney Sekeramayi, David Parirenyatwa (both believed to be confidantes of Kaukonde), and Olivia Muchena. When the candidates were put forward for election at the Congress a few days later, President Robert Mugabe directed that the Province resubmit the list of candidates, reportedly at the request of Grace Mugabe. President Mugabe claimed that he had received information that the list submitted to Congress for Mashonaland East was “wrong and that all the people who have been presented to us belong to the Ray Kaukonde executive.” Delegates from Mashonaland East had also apparently complained that the list did not “reflect the will of the people.” President Mugabe reportedly told the delegates from Mashonaland East: “If you are not satisfied with the leadership, it is up to you to go and re-organise yourselves so that you give us the names of the leaders whom you see as fit for appointment”. After the Congress had ended, the rival groups resubmitted two different lists of proposed Central Committee members, one containing a residue of supposed Mujuruites, although both Sekeramayi and Parirenyatwa had been excluded. A re-run of the poll was then ordered to resolve the matter, which returned

260 Presumably a retained nom de guerre.
262 Temba Mliswa’s Application Rejected The Herald 25.11.14.
267 Vice President Posts: Mugabe Develops Cold Feet The Standard 07.11.14.
Sekeramayi and Pariyenyatwa. Joel Biggie Matiza, reportedly a strong Mnangagwa ally, failed to gain a place.

**Plan B, the Safety Net – the Amendment of the ZANU PF Constitution**

The plotters had, from very early on, determined to devise a safety net or fall-back position for themselves in the event of their scheme unravelling or backfiring. No more than a few weeks after the Mujururites triumphed in the polls for the Youth League executive at the beginning of August 2014, proposals had been made to amend the ZANU PF Party Constitution. Emmerson Mnangagwa, as party Secretary for Legal Affairs, was, conveniently, to drive the process, assisted by Jonathan Moyo. As noted above, the key amendment was to provide that the Presidium would be appointed by the Party President, rather than elected by Congress from Provincial nominees.

The position was later first publicly advocated in the *Sunday Mail* article of 12th October, 2014, and claimed as its rationale, that this was to align the Party Constitution with the Unity Accord, and to avoid the emergence of two centres of powers caused by an elected Presidium. When the amendments were presented to Congress, it emerged that a further change was that the Party President was required to choose the Presidium from the Central Committee, as was the requirement when choosing members of the Politburo. Thus, Mujuru and Mutasa, having fallen in the Central Committee polls, were not eligible for election to the Presidium, unless Mugabe allocated them seats as part of the 10 the Party Constitution permits him to appoint to the Central Committee – a most unlikely prospect. The requirement that one of the party Vice-Presidents be a woman, held to be such a pressing imperative in 2004, was quietly elided from the Charter.

Most importantly, and an amendment not commented upon by the press until many months later, was a change in the manner in which the Party President him or herself was to be elected. The new provisions now only required that the candidate be nominated by two, and not six, of the ten provinces. Furthermore, the election was no longer to be by Congress but by party members voting nationally. A new nine-member ZANU PF Electoral Commission was to be appointed by the Party President to conduct all elections to any organ of the party. New provisions were introduced relating to the disciplining of party members. The amendments pertaining to the

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270 Mngangwa 2 Kasukuwere 0 *Daily News* 06.07.15. Elsewhere he is reported as being a Mujuruite – see Sekeramayi Under Siege *The Zimbabwe Mail* 08.12.14.
271 Matiza was then Deputy Minister of Local Government, Public Works a National Housing. Matiza was subsequently made full Minister of State for Mashonaland East Provincial Affairs. During the “restructuring exercise” which took place after the Congress, the entire acting PEC was replaced by a new “acting, acting executive” believed to exclude Mujururites. When fresh PEC elections were held on 05.07.15, Matiza was voted in with 15 131 votes against the 9 289 of his nearest rival. However, he was promptly dropped as Minister in a Cabinet reshuffle the very next day.
272 ZANU PF Moves to Amend Constitution *The Financial Gazette* 11.09.14. The purported amendments are badly drafted, blighted as they are by lacunae, errors and lapses, but which thus fit seamlessly into the body of a document which has long been so afflicted.
273 Section 37 of the unamended Constitution.
274 See section 35(1)(b) of the amended Constitution.
275 See section 35(1)(a) of the amended Constitution.
276 Sections 262 to 269.
election of the Central Committee members appear to have been discussed and agreed at the Politburo meeting of 13th November, 2014. Thereafter, the full range of changes was adopted at the Politburo meeting of 23rd November, 2014.

The amendments were regarded as being merely “proposed” until presented to, and adopted by the Central Committee, as was expected to happen later in that week. Although it is correct that, under the ZANU PF Constitution, the Central Committee has the power to amend the party Charter, this was the only aspect of the Constitution with which there was even a semblance of compliance. The Central Committee (and, a fortiori, the Politburo) does not have the power to initiate amendments, which is intended to be a bottom-up, not top-down process, and one which should take several months to complete. Furthermore, even if this process is followed, the amendments then put before and accepted by the Central Committee are subject to ratification by Congress. And, while the Central Committee is empowered to act on behalf of Congress when Congress is not sitting, in relation to matters which would normally be under the latter body’s purview (such as amending the Party Constitution), it is hardly in the spirit of things to purport to amend the Constitution less than 10 days before Congress is due to convene. The numerous ways in which the process purportedly leading to the amendment of the ZANU PF Constitution violated the Charter have been detailed elsewhere.277 However, with one such amendment being an increase in President Mugabe’s powers, none, it seemed, dared to raise any objections, procedural or otherwise.

3. THE CONGRESS ITSELF.

ZANU PF Congresses, which take place every five years, are sometimes referred to as “elective”, though the adjective is superfluous, since one of the prime purposes of any ordinary ZANU PF Congress is to elect the Central Committee, of which both the Presidium and Politburo are part.

By the time the day of the Congress arrived, the 2nd December, 2014, there was little left for the plotters to do. Everything was in place. Militant youths had warned any persons perceived to be gamatox-aligned, who might somehow have managed to obtain accreditation for the Congress,278 that they would be barred or removed from the Congress.279 Most Mujuruite stayed away, some such as Goche and Mutasa plausibly citing health reasons such as hypertension, caused by the stressful situation in which they found themselves. The PCCs and PECs had been brought under control and had largely returned more or less acceptable Central Committee candidates, notwithstanding that there were more Mujurute survivors than anticipated. Changes to the Constitution were regarded as a fait accompli and Mugabe would appoint a Presidium which could not include Mujuru or Mutasa. Nothing would be determined by the Congress itself, which would simply proceed according to already choreographed steps.

278 Deposed leaders Seek Re-Election The Herald 24.11.14.
279 A threat which was implemented. The Herald published a photograph of a perceived gamatox supporter being physically manhandled and carried from the venue – viewable near the bottom of the page at http://www.herald.co.zw/live-updates-zanu-pf-6th-congress/.
There was thus no possibility of disturbance or dissent from Mujuruites from the floor, despite the fact that most of the steps, orchestrated by Khaya Moyo as (outgoing) party National Chairperson, were not in accordance with the Party Constitution. No attention was paid to temporality in regard to the constitutional amendments: some clauses were treated as being effective the moment they were proposed; some were treated as being effective before adoption by Congress, some after adoption by Congress; one part of a single clause treated as effective before adoption by Congress and another not; some provisions – contrary to the usual rule of legal interpretation - were regarded as having retroactive effect; and some clauses treated as if they were only to be implemented at some unspecified future moment. The key note already had been struck ahead of the nominations to the Central Committee.

The proposed change in manner in which the Central Committee was to be composed was treated as effective immediately it was agreed in the Politburo on 13th November, 2014. The nominations to the body thus proceeded in terms of the proposed amendments. The body was to be expanded to 300 members, and the changed provincial ratios changed from being based on the last national census, to being determined by the results of the immediately preceding election. Precedent is that at the time nominations for the Central Committee are determined by the Provinces, so too are the nominations for the Presidium. The directive to commence the Central Committee nomination process in November 2014, however, did not contain an instruction to forward nominees to the Presidium. President Mugabe was to be treated as already so nominated. The amendment allowing the Party President to choose the other members of the Presidium was treated as already operative, so no nominations in this regard were to be made by the Provinces. No objections were voiced publicly in relation to these procedural irregularities.

The amendment abolishing District Co-ordinating Committees, proposed by the Politburo, accepted by the Central Committee in June 2012, but requiring ratification by the Congress, was not presented at the Congress. None pointed to this lapse. Other amendments were approved by the Central Committee on the second day of Congress, despite the fact that its powers in this regard specifically only apply “when Congress is not sitting”. Thereafter, they were presented and accepted by “acclamation” of Congress, rather than the required two-thirds majority.

The amendments so adopted by acclamation required, in terms of section 35(1)(a), that the Party President be elected by a nationwide vote, conducted by a ZANU PF Electoral Commission. President Mugabe was, however, after the adoption of the amendments, elected as Party President, by virtue of being treated as the sole nominee of all Provinces using the provisions of the Party Constitution before amendment. Section 35(1)(a), it seemed, was to be treated as operative only at a future date. Section 35(1)(b), requiring the Party President to appoint the remainder of the Presidium, the Party Vice-Presidents and National Chairperson of the party, rather than for Congress to elect them from provincial nominees as previously, was treated as effective immediately. The provision requiring this component of the Presidium and the other 26 members of Politburo to be appointed by the President from the members of the Central

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280 Section 35.
281 ZANU PF’s DCC Disbanded The Herald 30.06.12.
283 Section 40.
Committee during the sitting of Congress proved inconvenient to the President and was thus ignored.  

There was, in any event, the awkward fact that the Central Committee had yet to be properly constituted, as Mashonaland East had (unconstitutionally) been told that its nominees were unacceptable and a different list should be submitted. The Province’s quota for the Central Committee had thus not taken up their seats. Those that had, had not been elected under the supervision of the ZANU PF Electoral Commission, a body which was treated as if it were to come into being at a future date. As became apparent after the conclusion of the Congress, the new disciplinary provisions, which had undoubtedly been introduced with the purge of the Mujuruites in mind, were, but only in part, to operate retroactively. Thus the manner and processes by which a party cadre might be found guilty, for example, of “disloyalty or treachery” were not to operate retroactively. These new offences, and the draconian penalties they attracted, were however, to operate retroactively and be applied against those deemed to have engaged in such behaviour ahead of the Congress.

The Post Congress Purges

Government and the Politburo

Mugabe has always ensured that the composition of his cabinet roughly matches that of the Politburo, and Mugabe decided to clean out the former before appointing the latter. It was thus merely a matter of time before the sacking of the Mujuruite Ministers from government, and this was not long in coming. Two days after the end of the Congress, on 9th December, 2014, the dismissal of Mujuru, seven Ministers and one Deputy Minister was announced, not by Mugabe, but by the Chief Secretary to the President and Cabinet, Dr. Misheck Sibanda, who stated that:

“In terms of Section 106 (2) (b) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No. 20) Act 2013, His Excellency the President, Cde R. G. Mugabe has exercised his Executive Powers to relieve Honourable J. T. R Mujuru, MP of her position of Vice President of the Republic of Zimbabwe with immediate effect as it had become evident that her conduct in the discharge of her duties had become inconsistent with her official responsibilities.’’

The section of the Constitution cited, did not, however, give Mugabe the power to remove the Vice-President; it merely proscribes behaviour by the Vice-Presidents and Ministers. The correct section is that which provides that the Vice-Presidents hold office at the pleasure of the President – paragraph 14(2) of Part 4 of the Sixth Schedule.

The fired Ministers were Didymus Mutasa (Presidential Affairs), Webster Shamu (Information Communication Technologies, Postal and Courier Services), Francis Nhema (Youth,

284 When Mnangagwa was questioned on this aspect by journalists he claimed that Mugabe was empowered to do so by virtue of section 37 of the Party Constitution – a provision which does not authorise this or, indeed, have any relevance to the issue – see President Convenes Extraordinary Indaba The Herald 09.12.14.

285 The amendment was met with much cheering when read out by Emmerson Mnangagwa as revealed by recorded ZBC footage of the Congress supplied by the Media Monitoring Project Zimbabwe 20.02.15.

286 Section 266(c).


288 This is a ten year transitional provision of the new Constitution. Thereafter Vice-Presidents will attain office by virtue of being running mates of successful presidential candidates – section 92 of the State Constitution.
Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment), Olivia Muchena (Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development), Dzikamai Mavhaire (Energy and Power Development), Nicholas Goche (Public Service, Labour and Social Welfare), Simbaneuta Mudarikwa (Minister of State for Mashonaland East Province) and Munacho Mutezo (Deputy Minister Energy and Power Development).

Again, it was Sibanda who announced their removal, on the same occasion, in the following manner:

“In terms of Section (108) (1) (a) of the Constitution of Zimbabwe Amendment (No.20) Act 2013, His Excellency the President, Cde R.G. Mugabe, has relieved the following ministers of their duties with immediate effect as it had become apparent that their conduct and performance were below the expected standard.”

Once more, the Constitutional provision cited was incorrect. The section in question merely provides that a Ministerial post becomes vacant if the Minister has been removed by the President. The actual power of removal by the President arises from section 340(1)(f) of the Constitution.

The following day, 10th December, 2014, President Mugabe announced the appointment of the Party Presidium, and what The Herald reported as being a 33 member Politburo, comprising three members of the Presidium (sans the National Chairperson), 22 Heads of Department, five committee members and three deputy Heads of Department. Mugabe exercised his power to add an additional Politburo Department to the 21 set out in the only recently amended document.

On 11th December, 2014, Misheck Sibanda formally announced the appointment of the State Presidents; seven replacement Ministers, and two deputy Ministers. An additional portfolio had been created for Khaya Moyo – Economic Planning and Investment Promotion. So inured

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290 The composition had been changed by the purported Constitutional amendments made at Congress. The Politburo comprises 21 Heads of Departments (“Secretaries”), the four member Presidium, and “5 Committee Members” reduced from the 10 previously. Two new Departments “Business Liaison and Development” and “Environment and Tourism” appeared in the 2014 version of the Constitution, which are not in the printed 2005 version, but seem to have been added before 2014. However, the Party President was also given the power to create additional departments at his discretion and he added one when announcing the new Politburo.
291 The Herald, however, only lists four of the appointments. The names of the Politburo members are given in Annexure B.
292 The Deputies to the Heads of Department do not, however, sit in the Politburo – section 41 of the Party Constitution.
293 President Unveils New Ministers The Herald 12.12.14. The new Ministers were: P. Mupfumira, Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Services; O. Muchinguri, Minister of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development; S. Udenge, Minister of Energy and Power Development, C. Mushohwe, Minister of Youth Development, Indigenisation and Economic Empowerment; S. Mandiwanzira, Minister of Information, Communication Technology and Courier Services; C. Mutsvangwa, Minister of Welfare Services for War Veterans, War Collaborators, Former Political Detainees and Restrictees; C. Chimene: Minister of State for Manicaland Province; B. Matiza: Minister of State for Mashonaland East Province; T. Muzenda, Deputy Minister of Energy and Power Development; M. Mutsvangwa: Deputy Minister of Information, Media and Broadcasting Services.
294 Khaya Moyo was previously “Senior Minister of State in the Office of the President and Cabinet”
295 He previously held the somewhat nebulous portfolio of “Senior Minister of State in the President’s Office”.
had the Zimbabwe press and public become as to the conflation of the interests of party and State, that the fact that those regarded as competent to hold the posts as party Vice-Presidents were automatically deemed to be most appropriate to carry out duties as national Vice-Presidents, had passed without comment – as did the fact that the Ministers had clearly not been dismissed, as claimed in Sibanda’s earlier statement, because their Ministerial conduct and performance were below the expected standard. It was evident that it was their poor conduct (association with Mujuru) as party cadres, and not as Ministers, which were at fault. Furthermore, the replacement Ministers were appointed on the basis of what was perceived as their favourable conduct as party cadres and not skill in good governance as the State Constitution requires.

President Mugabe’s own comments during this changing of the guards are of considerable interest and are worth quoting at length. They appear in the article on the appointments in The Herald which reports that, before the President announced the names of the party appointees, he declared that the position of National Chairman of the party had been “abolished”:

We are reducing that top heaviness, the two vice presidents have no real function except that they are my deputies and I can give them work to do. We feel it’s not necessary that if you have the two vice presidents you have the chairman. They can rotate so we want to do without the chairman.

It is a requirement of the ZANU PF Party Constitution that a National Chairperson is appointed. Furthermore, if the rationale was indeed reduced “top heaviness” notwithstanding the constitutional violation required in so doing, it made far greater sense for the breach to be in a failure to appoint a Vice-President than the National Chairperson, as the Party Constitution charges the latter with many more duties than the former.

Mugabe then announced the appointments to the remainder of the Presidium (and, almost incidentally, the Vice-Presidents of the country) and the body of the Politburo, reportedly stating as follows:

At the top is President Mugabe. There are two vice presidents one of whom would be drawn naturally from ZAPU and one from ZANU; and from ZANU it is Emerson Mnangagwa and we say congratulations to him; and from ZAPU side it is Report (Phelekezela) Mphoko. It is the three who will be known as the presidium now, the rest would be heads of departments.... I will be making more announcements between tomorrow and Friday to fill in the positions of the ministers we have withdrawn from duty. I can now say with regards to the vice presidents they automatically become the vice presidents in Government...These, I would want them sworn in on Friday...

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296 Section 9.
297 Referred to above in the text - VPs Appointed• Mnangagwa, Mphoko Land Posts • 33- Member Politburo Named The Herald 11.12.14.
298 Section 39 of the Party Constitution.
299 Unlike the State Constitution, there must be two party Vice-Presidents.
300 The grammatical and spelling errors are in the original article.
301 VPs Appointed• Mnangagwa, Mphoko Land Posts • 33- Member Politburo Named The Herald ibid.
When later asked about the change to the Party Constitution, which removed the requirement that one Party Vice-President must be a woman, Mugabe replied:

Ah, have we removed it? I do not think we have removed it. We just ignored it for now because of the circumstances when a woman, she grew too ambitious, did not want to bid her time to see the President either retire or die soon after the elections, she wanted to take over even the time, the strategy. The man has just won the election, you want to push him out.  

Mugabe’s distaste for admitting agency, and pronounced illeism referred to at the outset, is starkly apparent in these statements. The duty to appoint the National Chairperson is that of Mugabe, and Mugabe alone.  Yet the unconstitutional decision to “abolish” the post is presented as if that of some unknown collective. Hence it is “we” who decide to reduce top heaviness, it is “we” who feel that if you have two Vice-Presidents that a Chairman is not required, “we” who want to do without the Chairman. Mugabe uses “I” in regard to giving the Vice-Presidents work to do, but immediately switches back to “we” in the next two sentences which concern his unconstitutional failure to appoint the Chairperson.

In announcing the appointments to the Presidium, Mugabe refers to himself in the third person – not “I lead the Presidium”, but “at the top is President Mugabe”; he does not say that he has appointed the Vice-Presidents, but that they have seemingly acquired these posts without any action from him. The passive voice is used to avoid agency – thus “there are two Vice-Presidents who appear to have arrived at the posts because they “would be drawn naturally” from their respective parties. The “drawer” is elided. Then Mugabe states, not that “I and the Vice-Presidents are the Presidium” but “It is the three who will be known as the Presidium”. Mugabe uses “I” to say he will be making announcements as to more appointments, but it is these announcements which somehow fill the positions and not his act of appointing. The appointments are not to replace Ministers he has sacked, as is the case, but Ministers “we have withdrawn from duty”. Mugabe ends by saying of the new national Vice-Presidential appointees “I would want them sworn in by Friday...” as though someone other than himself was to undertake this task. Although, the Party Constitution had been amended to remove the requirement that one Vice-President must be a woman, Mugabe seems unaware of this, so refers to “we” in his appointment of the Vice-Presidents in what he thought was a breach of the Constitution.

On 21st December, 2014, the axing of two more Ministers and five Deputy Ministers was announced, again by Misheck Sibanda citing the same constitutional provision which had wrongly been deployed earlier. Those fired were Flora Buka (Minister of State for Presidential Affairs); Sylvester Nguni (Minister of State in the Vice President’s Office); Paul Chimedza (Deputy Minister of Health and Child Care) Tongai Muzenda, (Deputy Minister of Public Service, Labour and Social Services) Tendai Savanhu (Deputy Minister of Lands and Rural Affairs).
Resettlement) Petronella Kagonye (Deputy Minister of Transport and Infrastructural Development); and Fortune Chasi (Deputy Minister of Justice, Legal And Parliamentary Affairs). All were Members of Parliament. All but two were later suspended from the party. Petronella Kagonye and Fortune Chasi, the latter of whom Grace Mugabe had attacked vigorously from August 2014, survived the purge.

Party Structures
Throughout the following months the purges within the party continued. Newly appointed Political Commissar Saviour Kasukuwere began a “restructuring exercise”, which included the Commissariat itself. The exercise appeared to many as a clear attempt to reconfigure the party from cell level upwards and to cleanse it of suspected Mujuru supporters. Some believed that it was also intended to place Kasukuwere’s own supporters in key positions. Procedurally dubious expulsions and suspensions, which paid no attention to the requirements of section 71 of the party Constitution that the National Disciplinary Committee should “have due regard to the principles of natural justice”, were approved by the Politburo simply on the basis of reports by the Committee.

On the 17th February, 2015, Mutasa and Mliswa were expelled from the party in this manner. Mujuru’s turn came on 1st April, 2015 and that of seven senior party stalwarts, including one Minister, on 21st May 2015. They were Ray Kaukonde, Olivia Muchena, Dzikamai Mavhaire, Claudius Makova, David Butau, Kudakwashe Gope, and Kudakwashe Bhasikiti. The removal of Bhasikiti, then Minister of State for Masvingo Province, resulted in another minor cabinet shuffle. He was replaced by Shuva Mahofa. Monica Mutsvangwa became the Deputy Minister of Information and Broadcasting Services, taking over from Supa Mandiwanzira, who was promoted to Minister of Information Communication Technology, Postal and Courier Services.

In the following week, on 27th May, 2015, the Politburo approved the mass suspensions of 89 members. A second round of mass suspensions, involving 39 officials from the three Provinces which had not been attended to in the first, took place on 5th June, 2015. Notable causalities in this round included Webster Shamu, Sylvester Nguni and Andrew Langa.

308 ZANU PF Fires ‘pro-Mujuru’ Army Chiefs Newsday 15.04.15.
309 Zanu PF Infighting: Tables Turn Against Kasukuwere The Zimbabwe Mail 22.01.15 and Kasukuwere Denies Rift with Mnangagwa Nehanda Radio 27.04.15.
310 The National Disciplinary Committee was improperly constituted in any event, headed as it was by Vice-President Mphoko and not a National Chairperson as the Party Constitution (section 69) requires. Other members are Secretary for Legal Affairs, Patrick Chinamasa; Secretary for the Commissariat, Kasukuwere; Secretary for Women’s Affairs, Dr Grace Mugabe; the Secretary for Youth Affairs, Pupurai Togarepi.
311 ZANU PF Expels Mujuru as Grace Returns New Zimbabwe 01.04.15.
312 13 others were suspended.
313 ZANU PF Expels 7, Suspends 13 The Herald 22.05.15.
314 Christopher Mutsvangwa’s wife.
315 The full list (sans Manicaland) is given in ZANU PF Suspends 89 The Herald 29.05.15 and see Annexure D.
316 The full list (sans Matabeleland North) is given in ZANU PF Suspends 39 More Top Officials The Herald 06.06.15 and see annexure D.
By the end the first week of June 2015 a reported 141 prominent Mujuruites had been removed. Several of the Mnangagwa-aligned, who had fallen foul of the power struggles around the provincial executive elections, had regained office.

4. AN OVERVIEW AND ASSESSMENT OF THE SUCCESS OF THE PLOT.

When considering the success of the plot, it is also necessary to determine its main objective. The plot was largely viewed in the media through the lens of the succession issue. Thus, if the intention was to crush any ambition that Joice Mujuru should succeed to the presidency of ZANU PF, and thus probably the country, after the departure of Robert Mugabe, it was devastatingly effective. Any possibility that Mujuru might, at sometime in the future, lead ZANU PF, had been dealt the coup de grâce.

However, the question then arises as to whether such an inordinately convoluted and elaborate scheme was necessary to achieve this limited objective. As at July, 2014, after Mugabe’s attack on Jonathan Moyo, even the slightest further feint in the direction of Mujuru by Mugabe would have made this grouping comfortable and confident with the constitutional changes which would give Mugabe the power to appoint the Presidium. The claimed assassination plot, or even vote buying and chaos around the Women’s and Youth League Conferences, would have been sufficient to remove Mujuru, Mutasa, Gumbo, Khaya Moyo, Shamu and Goche, or at the very least have given Mugabe the excuse he needed to spring a surprise and not appoint any of them to high office in terms of the changed constitution.

If, however, there was a broader objective, that of purging the party of Mujuruites on account of deep antipathy toward them, outside of the succession issue, the scheme did not succeed comprehensively. From this perspective, what is remarkable is not the number and names of people expelled or suspended from the party, but the number and names of those that survived. Also notable is the extent of the resistance encountered, from Grace Mugabe’s rallies through the votes of no confidence in the provincial chairpersons to the election of the Central Committee. Notwithstanding the strong tide against them, there was Mujuruite resistance to the plot to a degree which may well have surprised and unsettled the Mnangagwa camp.

Although a total of 15 Ministers had been dismissed by the end of 2014, six of these were deputy Ministers and two were “Ministers of State in the President’s Office” - essentially merely sinecures offered by Mugabe. The dismissals of the other seven from cabinet took place immediately after the Congress, as Mugabe sought to align his cabinet with the Politburo. While these dismissals and their subsequent replacements undoubtedly tilted the balance of power in the Politburo in favour of the Mnangagwa camp, it was not a comprehensive purge.

On 14th December, 2014 President Mugabe and his wife proceeded on an extended, but customary, holiday to the Far East. The number of Mujuruites that had survived prior to their departure, surprised many. Thus, at the end of January 2015, the Daily News, quoting “ZANU PF sources” reported that many more dismissals from the cabinet were to be expected and would take place after the Mugabes return from holiday:

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317 ZANU PF Purges Confirm Mujuru’s total control of key structures’ Newsday 09.06.15.
318 We Have Last Laugh: Moyo, Madiro The Herald 10.12.14.
“There is no question that a new and major Cabinet reshuffle is in the offing now that President Mugabe has come back from his holiday. It’s just now a question of when the president will deem this opportune. The reality is that there are a lot of Gamatoxes (Mujuru supporters) that still need to be smoked out of Cabinet, as well as the key security sector and the civil service, if factionalists and putschists are to be defeated once and for all,” said a party official close to Vice President Emmerson Mnangagwa.\textsuperscript{319}

Those said to be in the firing line from the security sector were Police Commissioner-General, Augustine Chihuri, intelligence boss, Happyton Bonyongwe, prisons head, Commissioner-General Parazdai Zimondi, and possibly Air Force Commander, Perence Shiri.

The expected further purge of the cabinet did not take place. It was only on 6th July, 2015, that a second small, but important, cabinet reshuffle took place. The man Mugabe had called a “weevil” the year before, Jonathan Moyo, seemingly on account of his manipulation of the press, and whose dismissal was then deemed imminent, was removed from the post which he was believed to have exploited in this manner, that of Minister of Information and Broadcasting Services. Although Moyo appeared to have played a, if not the, leading role in the removal of Mujuru (and had done so through the media), he was demoted to the ministerial backwater of Higher and Tertiary Education, Science and Technology Development.

Significantly, the Information portfolio was left open, and Prisca Mupfumira assigned (in addition to her duties as Labour, Public Service and Social Services Minister) in an acting capacity only,\textsuperscript{320} and possibly with a view dissolving the Ministry and making it into a department within the President’s Office.\textsuperscript{321} The power the post affords had proved decisive in the plot to oust Mujuru. Mugabe clearly was uncomfortable granting the portfolio to anyone, which he would have done if he were favouring one nascent faction over another, as has been suggested.

Fellow “gang of four” member, as the chief plotters had become known, and by then alleged Mnangagwa opponent, Saviour Kasukuwere, was promoted to the Ministry of Local Government, rendering an already powerful portfolio the more so by virtue of his party position as Political Commissar. He displaced perceived Mnangagwa supporter, Ignatius Chombo to Home Affairs, an obvious demotion.\textsuperscript{322} Chombo certainly would not have been pleased at being removed from the fiefdom he had created so industriously while in the portfolio over the previous 15 years.

Also, of significance for present purposes, was the dismissal of the only recently appointed Joel Biggie Matiza as Minister of State for Mashonaland East. Matiza had dual roles, after having eventually (i.e. after there have been several chairpersons installed in an acting capacity) been appointed party Provincial Chairperson after Kaukonde’s removal. Following the Congress, clashes involving Mujuruite youth in the province had continued. Mugabe replaced Matiza with

\textsuperscript{319} Fresh ZANU PF Purges Loom \textit{The Daily News} 25.01.14.
\textsuperscript{320} The doubling up of her portfolio rather than assignment to the Deputy Minister Monica Mutsvangwa, in the Mnangagwa camp, is significant.
\textsuperscript{321} Ministry of Info to be Abolished say Insiders \textit{The Zimbabwean} 14.07.15.
\textsuperscript{322} Despite press reports to the contrary, Local Government is the more powerful portfolio by some distance – in Zimbabwe the head of police is answerable to the president and not to the Minister of Home Affairs.
Ambrose Mutinhiri, most notable for passing a motion of confidence in favour of Kaukonde to try to rescue the Provincial Chairperson, despite Grace Mugabe’s recent tirade against the latter. Mutinhiri was thus believed to be in the Mujuru camp and had not secured a seat in the Central Committee. Grace Mugabe, was not, as some had expected, given ministerial office and the Women’s Affairs, Gender and Community Development portfolio, went to Nyasha Chikwinya.

What may also have been unexpected in some quarters were not only the re-assignments, but also those who were retained. Lazarus Dokora, who so roundly had been hounded out of a Central Committee seat by anti-Mujuru youth in Mashonland Central Province, had survived the first reshuffle and remained as Minister of Education. Sidney Sekeramayi (Defence) and David Parirenyatwa (Health and Child Welfare), Kaukonde associates, who Grace Mugabe had reportedly tried to bar from the Central Committee, likewise retained their portfolios. The survival of Mujuruites, Walter Mzembi (Tourism and Hospitality Industry), and Simbarashe Mumbengegwé (Foreign Affairs) after the reshuffle was unsurprising, but only because of the prior unexpected appointment of the two to the Central Committee by Mugabe. Using the power he had to appoint ten seats in the body, Mugabe had rescued them and at least two others who appear to have failed to claim positions on account of perceived Mujuruite sympathies – Absolom Sikhosana and Charles Tavengwa. Fortune Chasi, whom Grace Mugabe had singled out for attack, had been removed as a Deputy Minister but survived suspension from the party. He later gained increased status through appointment, at Mnangagwa’s behest to the important Parliamentary Legal Committee.

An even more remarkable tale of survival was that of Khaya Moyo himself, regarded before Congress as a large cog in the Mujuru machinery. Moyo had hoped for promotion to the ZAPU Vice-Presidency. Instead, on account of his Mujuruite sympathies he merely had been demoted to party spokesperson. As noted, Mugabe left his former position, that of party Chairperson, unfilled. However, through the reshuffle, Khaya Moyo was partly compensated, moved from a Minister of State in the President’s Office and given a more substantial portfolio, that of the specially created Ministry of Economic Planning and Investment Promotion.

The purge of the Mujuruites at a governmental level, which was under Mugabe’s control, was thus much less complete than that at party level. The suspensions at party level took place through the National Disciplinary Committee, which after Congress comprised Vice-President

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323 Mutinhiri, was once viewed as a possible contender for the ZAPU wing of the Vice-Presidencies. However, like Msipa, although a former ZAPU member, he is not from Matabeleland.
324 This should pause for thought for those who believed that Grace Mugabe is “running the show” and directing Mugabe on his hiring and firing – see ZANU PF ‘bedroom coup’ Takes Hold The Zimbabwe Independent 27.02.15 and Grace’s Bedroom Coup Holds The Zimbabwe Independent 03.07.15.
325 Innuendo of incompetence had appeared in The Herald – see I’m not re-inventing the wheel: Dokora 28.06.14.
326 ZANU PF Appoints Chasi To Parliament Role Zimeye 04.07.15.
327 The appointment seems rather perverse. It appears to repeat Mugabe’s appointment of Rugare Gumbo to that position, thus requiring the voicing of the party’s position and strong support for Mugabe by one who had been accused of disaffection. In Gumbo’s case he had been imprisoned for two years and tortured on account of charges of rebellion in 1978 by ZANU. Each defence of the president by the party spokesperson could thus be viewed as requirement to constantly express remorse for past actions and a perpetual mea culpa.
328 Prior to the Congress and at the time of the votes of no confidence in the provincial chairpersons, the Committee appears to have comprised: Sydney Sekeramayi, Emmerson Mnangagwa, Sikhanyiso Ndlovu, Oppah Muchinguri,
Mphoko (standing in for the absent National Chairperson, who in terms of the Party Constitution is required to head the Committee) Patrick Chinamasa (as Secretary for Legal Affairs), Saviour Kasukuwere (as Political Commissar), Kembo Mohadi, (as Secretary for Security), Grace Mugabe (as head of the Women’s League), and Pupurayi Togarepi, (as head of the Youth League chairman).

As has been seen, the purge of the Provinces did not proceed smoothly and is notable for the level of support that Mujuruite leaders and party officials commanded, notwithstanding the intense campaign against the group. Grace Mugabe’s rallies, much to her annoyance and subsequent vengeance, suffered frequent disruption by Mujuruite youths. The votes of no confidence in Provincial Chairpersons, intended nationwide on the weekend of 2\textsuperscript{nd} November 2014 failed, requiring each Province to be targeted separately and sequentially. When the no confidence votes were obtained, in almost all Provinces, it required the circumvention of due procedure by strong arm tactics, some reportedly, involving after hours visits by members of the Central Intelligence Organisation\textsuperscript{329} (CIO) and military intelligence to intimidate PEC members into signing the petitions.\textsuperscript{330} Even then, only just over the required 50\% of the PEC members reportedly signed the petitions in most cases. The acceptance of these votes of no confidence by the Politburo, presumably after reports by the National Disciplinary Committee, may have been on account of supportive findings by Khaya Moyo. Moyo may have foresworn allegiance to the Mujuru grouping, indicating his co-operation with the plotters at this early stage through rulings in the National Disciplinary Committee, and thus surviving the later purges.

Similarly, the Mujuruites were still able to stand and gain places in the elections for the Central Committee. Most notably, in Mashonaland East, Mujuruites affiliated to Kaukonde were returned in a second poll, despite a strong intimation by Mugabe at Congress that they should be removed. Some, such as Temba Mliswa, in Mashonaland West, were simply barred after successfully attaining nomination. Mujuruite\textsuperscript{331} support for Mliswa appears again to have been registered in a by-election in his constituency, after his expulsion from Parliament on account of no longer being a member of ZANU PF.\textsuperscript{332} The Mnangagwa camp was fully aware that the by-election would be viewed as a litmus test of Mujuruite support and ran an extremely dirty campaign, pulling out all stops to prevent Mliswa’s election as an independent. The election was marked by the intimidation of Mliswa’s supporters, a block placed on Mliswa’s campaign rallies and the arrest, on several occasions, of Mliswa himself.\textsuperscript{333} Notwithstanding these electoral malpractices, Mliswa still managed a remarkable 4 239 votes against 5 961 for his rival. It may have been the anticipation of bruising and resource intensive fights, such as that in Mliswa’s Hurungwe West constituency, which led ZANU PF to shy away from expelling other Mujuruite

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\item Absolom Sikhosana and Simon Khaya Moyo – see ‘Chiyangwa Cannot be Readmitted into Party’ \textit{The Chronicle} 09.12.14 (the Chronicle article omits Sikhosana, which is presumed an error). \textsuperscript{329}
\item The intelligence services are still referred to by the acronym of a previous incarnation. The intelligence services now run as the Department for State Security in the President’s Office. \textsuperscript{330}
\item This is from anecdotal evidence conveyed by those who have spoken to the individuals concerned. \textsuperscript{331}
\item It is not certain that the support was entirely that of Mujuruites and not members of the opposition MDCs. However, the MDC formations had called for a boycott of the elections, which, judging from the turnout in other by-elections held at the same time, appears to have been heeded.\textsuperscript{332}
\item A Member’s seat in Parliament automatically becomes vacant in terms of section 129(1)(k) of the State Constitution, if the party concerned writes to the Speaker declaring that the Member no longer belongs to the party he or she represented when elected. \textsuperscript{333}
\item Mliswa Arrested for ‘disrupting’ ZANU PF Meeting \textit{Newsday} 13.04.15.
\end{itemize}
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MPs from the party. Thus purges were carried out by way of suspensions rather than expulsion, and Khaya Moyo took pains to emphasize that those suspended remained members of the party and thus could not lose their seats in Parliament on this account.

The plotters’ lack of confidence in their ability to control the Provinces may also be reflected in the constitutional change providing that the Presidium would not be determined by nomination from the Provinces. The changes which also provided that the Party President himself would be determined by a nationwide vote are somewhat curious. They may have been introduced out of extreme caution and a fear that the Provinces might nominate Mujuru, ahead of or even at Congress. The new procedure is that the Party President will be appointed by a nationwide vote after each candidate attains nomination from only two Provinces, and not the six that had been required previously. This again suggests a fall back strategy by the plotters, such that if Mujuru had been nominated by the Provinces, Mnangagwa, at the very least would gain nomination, from two Provinces and it would then be a matter of manipulating the national vote of party cadres. This may not present a hurdle as high as might appear at first glance. The ZANU PF Electoral Commission is a nine-member body appointed by the President. While general elections at a state level are governed by sophisticated and detailed laws and regulations aimed at preventing fraud, the Party Constitution does not contain a single provision in this regard. In the event, these constitutional changes pertaining to presidential appointment were ignored: Congress was simply informed that Mugabe had been accepted as the sole candidate by all Provinces and was declared duly elected in terms of the previous procedure.

It may also appear that the Mnangagwa camp has, when the succession to Mugabe needs to be determined, now set itself the more onerous task, requiring a national poll of members and controlling that outcome, rather than simply controlling the nominations from the Provinces. It is quite probable, however, that when the moment arrives, depending on where the balance of power lies, the Politburo will simply declare that a nationwide poll of members to determine Mugabe’s replacement is impractical, and amend the Party Constitution once more to suit the exigencies of the moment.

Despite the resistance shown by Mujuruites in the provincial polls ahead of Congress, the response of the Mujuruites to the onslaught against them generally favoured the Mnangagwa camp. Many, such as Khaya Moyo, saw the way the tide was turning and foreswore allegiance to Mujuru in the early stages of the plot. Those that did so belatedly, such as Webster Shamu, were purged, despite assiduous and unctuous sycophancy toward Mnangagwa. Few Mujuruites have

334 Zealots opposed to Mujuru called for all of a guestimated more than 100 MPs aligned to her to be removed from Parliament (see Mujuru’s ‘100’ MPs Survive Axe Newsday 27.01.15). The motivation for not doing so, may, however, have been purely economic, both from a national and party perspective, with the coffers of both unable to sustain that number of by-elections costing the electoral body about two million dollars each (see ZEC Seeks $36 Million for By-elections Newsday 22.04.15).

335 ZANU PF Expels 7 Suspends 13 The Herald 22.05.15.

336 And some would point to the fact that Mnangagwa’s managed to do so with ease in national general elections.

337 Bootlicking Fails to Save Shamu Daily News 08.06.15.
considered it worthwhile to challenge their manifestly illegal expulsions or suspensions through the courts – those who have, include Mujuru and Mutasa, Bhasikiti and Butau.338

Others have drawn on past experience, and have not criticised or complained against either the anti-Mujuru tirade or their own ousting. In the manner of show-trial victims who went to the Gulags professing their great love for Stalin and protesting that their idol had been misled, so several Mujuruites, and indeed Mujuru herself initially,339 responded to their expulsions by declaring their loyalty to Mugabe and dismay that he had been misled by the plotters. ZANU PF history had demonstrated that sitting quietly and waiting for the wind to change, often resulted in a return to grace. This had been the case with Rugare Gumbo, Jonathan Moyo, Jacob Mudenda (and all others involved in the Tsholotsho declaration),340 Dzikamai Mavhaire and several more. The previously expelled, such as Jonathan Moyo, specifically called upon the purged to adopt this approach.341 There has been no pervasive attempt to force Mujuruites to the wall by pursuing criminal charges against them (for example, in relation to the supposed assassination plot or corruption charges342) The Mujuruites who chose to turn against the party and become vociferous in their denouncements, such as Mutasa and his nephew Mliswa, have found themselves dispossessed of property in the same way it was acquired – through the exercise of political muscle.343

The result has been little real resistance by Mujuruites after the Congress. Although many more may have remained within the party than the plotters, but not necessarily Mugabe, expected, they have effectively been neutralised. Those seeking to resist from outside of the ZANU PF fold, have failed to gain any real traction or find direction, and while Mutasa (regarded by many as the very paragon of ZANU PF’s bloody excesses) remains within their ranks, they will struggle to find acceptance by those opposed to ZANU PF.

**Mugabe and Agency Again**

The review of the execution of the plot, given above, shows that President Mugabe left very few fingerprints at the scene. This was clearly part of an agreed strategy with the plotters and is in itself evidence of collaboration with them by Mugabe. The intention was to present the attack on the Mujuruites as driven by Grace Mugabe in her capacity as incoming head of the Women’s League, and thus that all responsibility in this regard lay with the League. There was little concern that this was unlikely to be believed.

Mugabe remained silent, when he would have been expected to make some sort of comment, about the proposal that his wife head the Women’s League. Even in his address to the League at the conclusion of their Conference in August 2014, he chose to congratulate the entire executive

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338 In July, 2015 the Courts ruled that those who had sought juridical relief against their expulsions ought first to have sought a review of the decision from the (unconstitutionally established) Central Committee – see End of the Road for Bhasikiti *The Herald* 10.07.15.

339 “I remain loyal to Mugabe,” says Mujuru *Bulawayo24* 09.12.14 where she is quoted as saying "Let it be known that I am loyal to the president and faithful to my party and its leader.”

340 July Moyo and Daniel Shumba would be two of the other notables in this regard.

341 Fresh ZANU PF Purges Loom *Daily News* 25.01.15.

342 Though it must be said that this could equally be on account of the known tenuousness of the former, and the difficulty in finding discrete instances of the latter, which do not also involve those in the Mnangagwa camp.

343 ZANU PF Youths invade Temba Mliswa's Farm *Bulawayo24* 01.05.15 and Chimene Takes Mutasa Farm *The Herald* 04.05.15.
on their appointment, without singling out the head of the executive which would have been considered normal. He did not give any commendation to his wife until her formal appointment at the Congress in December, 2014. This contrasts sharply with events in 1989 leading to the appointment of his first wife Sally as head of the League. At the Women’s League Conference before the Congress of that year, when Julia Zvobgo appeared set to assume the leadership of the wing, Mugabe overtly stepped in and instructed that the preferences of the League were to defer to his wife, who duly led the body until her death in 1992. Enthusiastic and gushing endorsement of the appointment of Mugabe’s second wife to the same position came from every quarter except Mugabe himself. The impression created was that Mugabe was very deliberately trying to show that he was not involved in the matter.

By the 16th October, 2014, Grace Mugabe’s calls for Mujuru’s ouster had not only become overt, but she claimed to have made a direct challenge to her husband:

\[
\text{...I said this faction leader must be dumped by you, if you don’t do it we will dump her ourselves. We will dump her ourselves because she is dividing the party.}\]

Together with a call for Mujuru to resign, the challenge was repeated a few weeks later:

\[
\text{We are saying to the President you made a mistake [in appointing Mujuru] and now correct that mistake.}\]

Grace Mugabe, however, later made it clear that her preference was that Mujuru should resign, to spare the President the task of sacking her:

\[
\text{...sometimes the one who appointed wants you out but does not want to embarrass you. He would just be waiting for you to write and say I have resigned but if you are hard-headed tomorrow you will be ousted like the others...}\]

Grace Mugabe’s comments at rally of the 16th October, 2014, led the Mujuruites to finally complain about the rallies, in all probability framed not as a complaint against President Mugabe’s wife, but rather their divisive nature and the use of the “gamatox” slogan. Significantly, and in line with the ploy that the issue was Women’s League matter, Oppah Muchinguri, as the outgoing leader of the body, was directed to prepare a report on the rallies for the next Politburo meeting of 24th October 2014.

344 Well Done Women’s League: President Mugabe ZBC Online 15.08.14.
345 Events recounted to the author by a journalist in October, 2014. Those present at the Conference do not now recollect whether Sally Mugabe was imposed before or after a vote had been taken in favour of Julia Zvobgo.
347 First Lady Repeats Call for Mujuru’s Resignation The Herald 17.11.14.
348 Grace All But Now Running the Show The Zimbabwe Independent 21.11.4.
350 Muchinguri, unprepared to present her report on the “meet the people rallies” at the Politburo meeting of 23/24th October, 2014, did so the following week.
At the meeting Mugabe brushed aside the intensified furore around his wife’s vilification of Mujuruites, reported as follows.\textsuperscript{351}

*Speaking as he greeted delegates soon after arrival, Mugabe jokingly told outgoing women’s league boss Oppah Muchinguri: “Ndimi makativambira mashokoka imi kumadzimai … apo kaapo (you are the one who started this storm in the women’s league … there you are) the fire is on, manage it”.\textsuperscript{352}*

The attempt at humour was made when Mugabe would have been fully aware that he was within earshot of journalists who were scrutinising every nuance of the tense meeting. Mugabe was then reported to have “warmly greeted” Mujuruites Gumbo, Goche and Shamu. There was not the slightest suggestion that Mugabe would act on his wife’s demand at this Politburo meeting and sack the Mujuru – she was in fact even allowed to chair the meeting briefly.\textsuperscript{353}

Didymus Mutasa also claims to have engaged Mugabe privately on several occasions about Grace Mugabe’s vilification of Mujuru. On each of these occasions Mugabe took refuge in the ploy that it was a matter for the Women’s League and that he “had no hand in it”.\textsuperscript{354} There were numerous statements by senior party figures thereafter, claiming that it was Grace Mugabe who had brought the party’s attention to the perfidy of the Mujuru camp, exposed its nefarious intentions, and delivered the *coup de grâce* to those who would topple her husband from power, for example:

\begin{quote}
“We were enlightened by (First Lady) Grace Mugabe of what was happening in the party in the build-up to the congress and the party had to act. (Mnangagwa)\textsuperscript{355}

Thanks to the revelations made by the First Lady Amai Doctor Grace Mugabe, a whirlwind was unleashed which swept away the conspirators (Mudenda).\textsuperscript{356}
\end{quote}

It was only at the end of October, 2014, that Mugabe, seeing that the vilification of Mujuru had succeeded, and that the Mnangagwa camp was in the ascendancy, was prepared to show his hand and that he might take an active part in events. This was done very tentatively at first, and then a few days later, he gave his first reasonably unequivocal indication that he too was opposed to Mujuru. The first comments, with lesser, but still marked, illeism, came at a luncheon marking the Second Session of the Opening of the 8th Parliament, and were reported as follows:

\begin{quote}
Some are saying Mugabe is old and must go, I have come a long way and I will not go. My time is not yet up. I will end all this nonsense at the congress...We
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{351} The actual statement is variously reported, suggesting the possibility that more than one statement was made in this regard. For example, one paper reports him as saying “Ndimi makatanga chimoto chenyu ichi munogona here kuchipedza?” (You are the ones who started this fire, will you now be able to extinguish it?) – Mujuru Kept Guessing *The Zimbabwe Mail* 25.10.14; another as “Ndimi makatanga moto uyu. Muchagona here kuudzimura” (you are the ones who started this fire, will you be able to contain it) Politburo Ignores Grace’s Demands *Daily News* 25.10.14. *The Standard* reported that Mugabe was angry rather than jovial when making the comment Mugabe Disregards Grace’s Ultimatum 26.10.14.

\textsuperscript{352} Manage Grace-Mujuru Storm: Mugabe *New Zimbabwe* 24.10.14.

\textsuperscript{353} Mugabe Disregards Grace’s Ultimatum *The Standard* 26.10.14.

\textsuperscript{354} Interview with Mutasa transcribed in: On a Mission to ‘Cleanse’ ZANU PF *Mail & Guardian Online* 03.02.15 and ‘I confronted Mugabe over Grace’s Attacks on Mujuru’ *The Zimbabwe Independent* 05.06.15.

\textsuperscript{355} Mnangagwa Promises More Expulsions *Newsday* 01.06.15.

\textsuperscript{356} Mnangagwa Hangs in Hoist On Presidency as Grace Is Confirmed [*Congress Update Live*] *Zimeye* 06.12.14.
have some that have doctorates, they want Mugabe to go ... they went to USA to get billions and what rotten thinking is that? All these years you have never learnt that these people will never be your friends.\footnote{I’m in Charge Says Mugabe Daily News 29.10.14. The report in the paper, which later adopted a very overtly pro Mujuru stance, sought to interpret Mugabe’s comments as balanced and a criticism of all those vying for position as at Congress and latched onto the fact that his reference to people with doctorates included his wife. Given that this was linked with an accusation of soliciting money from western powers, the notion that his wife was included was untenable.}

The second occasion was ahead of the Politburo meeting of 30\textsuperscript{th} October, 2014, where events outside the venue were as important as those within. Muchinguri presented her delayed report on Grace Mugabe’s rallies, which studiously avoided mentioning the First Lady’s attacks on Mujuru. This did not go down well with the latter’s supporters who thus decided to vociferously put their case to Mugabe, resulting in a slanging match between the two camps.

Outside the venue of the Politburo meeting, thousands of party youths and war veterans had converged waving neatly printed placards denouncing Mujuru (“Dr 10%”).\footnote{Pictures: War vets demonstrate against VP Mujuru, Sibanda Newsday 30.10.14.} After arriving in the building, Mugabe later emerged to address the crowd in the company of Mutasa. Shouts of “down with gamatox” prevented Mutasa from speaking or introducing Mugabe. After implausibly feigning ignorance of the gamatox slogan, Mugabe directed his wrath towards Jabulani Sibanda (who had threatened a march on State House), Temba Mliswa and Kaukonde stating that the latter two had overstepped their authority.\footnote{Mujuru on the Ropes The Herald 31.10.14.} He attended to the issue of Joice Mujuru in a far more temperate manner, and a “chuckling Mugabe, who appeared to be enjoying the moment and abuse of his deputy” said:

\begin{quote}
The party has its way of doing things. You cannot tell your wife to leave on the very day when you break up. You consult other people and those you don’t like you will not vote for them come congress.\footnote{Mugabe Takes Side Daily News 31.10.14.} The statement made several things reasonably clear. The first was that Mugabe approved Mujuru’s removal, the second was that Mujuru would, in all likelihood, be removed, and the third that Mugabe would not do, or appear to have done, the removing. Mugabe also took the time to tell the throng that there was nothing amiss in his wife being appointed to head the Women’s League\footnote{Mugabe Takes Sides fn immediately above.} and that he had played no part in the appointment.\footnote{Mujuru on the Ropes The Herald 31.10.14.}

At the Politburo meeting itself, despite the obvious turmoil now engulfing the party, Mugabe merely determined that a committee should be established to investigate factionalism in the party. The move was obviously merely one to buy time ahead of Congress and could not have been taken seriously by anyone present. Mugabe did, however, ominously accuse Gumbo of “twice”\footnote{The first, a reference to what was held as a rebellion against his leadership before independence and for which he was imprisoned.} trying to change the Party President, a portent of what was to come.\footnote{Gumbo’s Loyalty Questioned The Sunday News 09.11.14.}
Despite the open acrimony between the warring camps and Mugabe’s virtual declaration of partisanship, Mugabe genially greeted Gumbo at the start of next Politburo meeting on 13th, November 2014, addressing him by his clan name. However, at the meeting the Mujuruites demanded that the alleged assassination plot be openly discussed. A reportedly livid Mugabe began by attacking Mutasa, calling Mutasa a “political prostitute” who wanted him assassinated, before turning on Rugare Gumbo, confronting him with the alleged tape recording in which he supposedly said that Mugabe would be removed the “Kabila way.” None came to the defence of Gumbo or Mutasa. Apart from Mugabe’s attack on the two, however, he took no further action. It was left to Edson Chakanyuka, the Deputy Youth League Chairperson, to move a motion that Gumbo should be suspended. The motion was passed by the Politburo and Gumbo was suspended from the party, together with several provincial chairpersons and Jabulani Sibanda, whose suspensions were under discussion at the meeting.

There were two further Politburo meetings, where Mugabe’s partisanship became increasingly apparent, before the Congress began on 2nd December, 2014. Mujuru and Goche did not attend the last, and Mugabe expressed surprise at Mutasa’s presence. At the Congress, despite the fact that party youths had threatened any Mujuruites that might have the temerity to attend, Mugabe, noting the absence of senior party Mujuruite members, cynically commented that:

> [t]hose who are not here have bid us good bye. We did not chase them but they chose to go their own ways.

and

> You see, they are not here today. We wanted them to come so that they would meet you...We did not stop them, but they just sneaked without informing us, like thieves.

Thus, so it was to appear. Mugabe did not dismiss Mujuru and Mutasa. The conditions were simply such that they could not be appointed to the Presidium. They had absented themselves from the Congress. They had failed to secure Central Committee positions. This was the fault of none but themselves. They had lost the support of party members, and they had lost that support on account of their own foolish actions. Nonetheless, Mugabe still shied away from revealing any agency. In violation of the Constitutional requirement to do so, Mugabe did not then appoint a new Presidium at the Congress, making the announcement as to who had secured positions several days after the event had ended, in a manner which elided agency as discussed above.

Mugabe was thus not overtly present at the scene. Then, most unusually in Zimbabwe’s political milieu, on 15th January, 2015, an article appeared in The Herald, thus suggesting that it had

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365 Details of the Politburo Meeting that Purged Mujuru Allies, Gumbo and Sibanda http://teamzimbabwe.org/details-of-the-politburo-meeting-that-purged-mujuru-allies-gumbo-and-sibanda/
366 He was expelled completely from the party by resolution of the Central Committee at Congress.
367 Mujuru, Goche Skip Politburo Newsday 27.11.14. Mugabe’s surprise at Mutasa’s presence may, however, been on account of a belief that he was out of the country.
369 Vice President Posts: Mugabe Develops Cold Feet The Zimbabwe Independent 07.12.14. Mujuru, Mutasa and Goche all cited health concerns for their failure to attend.
371 Untold Story of ‘Clean Dozen’ The Herald 15.01.15.
been placed there by the plotters themselves, in which 12 individuals were reported as being responsible for the plot, or rather “defend[ing] the President and First Secretary whom the [Mujuru] cabal sought to depose.” The group was dubbed “the clean dozen”, presumably thought to be a witty antonym to the equally clever moniker the “dirty dozen” applied to Mliswa and other members of Parliament that The Herald had reported as accepting cash from an American intelligence agent. The group comprised Cde Saviour Kasukuwere (the convener), Professor Jonathan Moyo (co-convener), Cdes Emmerson Mnangagwa, Edna Madzongwe, Prisca Mupfumira, Oppah Muchinguri, Monica Mutsvangwa, Makhosini Hlongwane, Ignatius Chombo, Josiah Hungwe, Philip Chiyangwa and Patrick Zhuwao.372

For this group to accept responsibility for the events ahead of the Congress seems almost unprecedented in the opaque world of ZANU PF politics. It may have been intended to send a signal to President Mugabe as to who ought to have been rewarded when the cabinet was reconstructed in December 2014, and who should be rewarded in what was expected to be the further changes in government after the Mugabe’s arrival from the Far East. The article was published at precisely the time of Mugabe’s expected return.373 The article might also have been motivated by conceit given what was seen as the outstanding success of the plot and the clever way in which it was implemented. Conceit may also have motivated Mugabe, despite himself, to break cover and seek to associate himself the plot. Thus during the interview to mark the occasion of his 91st birthday with ZTV Mugabe stated:

“When she (Grace) went out and started talking, I said Oh! – she has spoken way too early – because we had expected that we will reveal all her (Mujuru) shenanigans when the right time comes.”374

There was only one occasion when Mugabe openly intervened in a manner which advanced the plot, before its final stages in the weeks before Congress, and this was in his denunciation of Mashayamombe who had suggested that Grace Mugabe find a political home outside Harare, outlined above.

That Grace Mugabe directed her husband’s hand as these events unfolded is particularly implausible, and, with Grace Mugabe anxiously trying to create the impression that she wields considerable political power, the notion relies to some extent on her own comments. Although many people the First Lady had said should be removed from party and government were in fact dismissed, it was apparent that she was acting on instruction rather than her own initiative.375 The statement of Mugabe just cited is merely one more of several indications of this already noted.

Many of those against whom she harboured deep animosity, and who she had specifically indicated ought to be axed, remained in government, and remained there at President Mugabe’s pleasure. Some Mujuruites were even appointed into ministerial positions after the Congress.

372 Untold Story of ‘Clean Dozen’ ibid..
373 Mugabe’s return was in fact delayed - Where Are You Mr. President? Daily News 20.01.15.
374 Grace Jumped the Gun Newsday 02.03.15.
375 Grace Mugabe, perhaps “protesting too much”, however claimed that she was not under instruction from anyone. “People say I am being influenced by Muchinguri, Kasukuwere and Mnangagwa. I have got brains. I don’t even have a day where I have approached the President to tell me what to what to say at rallies” - Grace Mugabe Likely to Triumph Succession Race as She Gives Husband Bold Ultimatum Bulawayo24 21.11.14.
Her demand that Mujuru be fired was ignored and, apart from expressing a preference that Mujuru should resign to spare President Mugabe the task of the sacking, showed a lack of understanding of her husband’s way of doing things. The speculation in the press that ministerial heads would roll at the First Lady’s command when the Mugabes returned from their annual holiday in the Far East did not materialise. The First Lady also did not secure (has not yet secured) a ministerial post, which she is believed to covet.\(^{376}\)

The claims by the press, both before and at the Congress, and at the time of writing, that Grace Mugabe is “running the show” hang by extremely thin threads. One is that at the Congress the First Lady handed Mugabe a note suggesting that he end his address, causing Mugabe to say:

\[\text{It’s my wife who has written this note. She says I am now talking too much. That’s how I am treated even at home, and so I must listen.}^{377}\]

Although there may be many a true word in such statements said in jest by hen-pecked husbands, the extrapolation of the sentiment into the political realm seems grounded in a need to sell copy rather than political analysis. Similarly, Grace Mugabe’s ardent insistence that the public advert to the fact that she meets regularly with the Vice-Presidents and that they take notes when she talks,\(^{378}\) smacks of a childishly transparent and desperate plea to be taken seriously, rather than an indication that she is in control. If she had the political power claimed, it would not need the stating.

5. CONCLUSIONS AND AFTERMATH

Mugabe is viewed as a clever Machiavellian schemer by admirers and detractors alike, to the extent that even skilful manoeuvring is read into policy debacles. For example, in April, 2015, Finance Minister Patrick Chinamasa, desperate to have something positive to present to the Bretton Woods institutions in the hope of loans to rescue Zimbabwe’s plummeting economy, announced that the annual 13\(^{th}\) cheque bonus for civil servants was to be suspended.\(^{379}\) At the very moment Chinamasa was sitting across the table negotiating with officials from the financial institutions, on 18\(^{th}\) April, 2015, Mugabe announced that bonuses for civil servants were to be retained. The policy reversal caused profound embarrassment to Chinamasa and probably brought his talks to a premature and unsuccessful close. Mugabe’s pronouncement suggested either that his Ministers acted without consultation with himself or cabinet or, at the least, deep policy discord within the government. Yet this debacle, a stereotype of an irascible, impatient and intolerant geriatric, who insists on having his way regardless of impracticality, was viewed by some commentators as a political masterstroke – Mugabe had cunningly portrayed himself to civil servants as their saviour, against the evil and wayward machinations of his Finance

\(^{376}\) Grace Abandons Cabinet Post ‘bid’ \textit{New Zimbabwe} 12.04.15. The reasoning that she could not be given a post by President Mugabe as she was not a Member of Parliament fell away when she was not advanced as a candidate in any of the many by-elections (even the safe seats) which occurred after the Congress and when Jonathan Moyo attained a seat in Parliament, thus rendering one of the five non-constituency ministerial positions vacant.


\(^{378}\) Grace Takeover Sparks Outrage \textit{Newsday} 03.07.15 and Grace Mugabe: A Threat to Democracy \textit{The Zimbabwean} 07.07.15.

Minister. \footnote{Scrap-reinstall Bonuses is a Good-cop-bad-cop Mugabe Trick \textit{Bulawayo24} 21.04.15.}

The fact that the same effect could have been achieved without the massive fallout was not considered.

Mugabe is thus often given benefit when none is due. In normal circumstances, the Mujuru plot would have been thought to admit only of two possibilities. One was that Grace Mugabe and the plotters were in charge of the party and Mugabe had thus lost control. The other was that Mugabe had hidden his involvement in the plot in order to ensure that even Mujuruites retained loyalty to him, believing that Mugabe had merely been mislead. This ploy ought, nonetheless, to have created the impression that Mugabe, in a craven fashion, had used Grace Mugabe do the dirty work that he did not have the temerity to do himself. Yet, because of the cult which has developed around Mugabe, many political observers were reluctant to see anything other than astute scheming by Mugabe as behind the ouster of the Mujuruites.

However, this review of the purging of Mujuruites from ZANU PF suggests that Mugabe was neither puppet nor puppeteer. The plot was most certainly not a coup by Grace Mugabe, positioning herself to take over from the President, as suggested fairly frequently as the plot took place. The indications are Mugabe himself believed that Joice Mujuru had become dangerously powerful, and was convinced by the plotters, with his wife as emissary, that immediate action needed to be taken against her ahead of the Congress, thus replicating similar action taken against Mnangagwa, for the same reason, in 2004. The probability is that, rather than being involved in the minutiae of a scheme to remove Mujuru, that he merely approved it in broad-brush stokes. Recall that Mugabe even appeared unaware of the nature of all of the alterations to the Party Constitution, and a change which was bound to be controversial, the removal of the requirement that one Vice-President should be a woman. Mugabe, however, approved, a plot whereby Mujuru’s reputation and integrity would be destroyed to such an extent that her reappointment at the December 2014 Congress would be impossible. Mutasa, Goche and possibly Gumbo and Khaya Moyo (depending on how they responded) were to receive the same treatment. Recall that Mugabe even appeared unaware of the nature of all of the alterations to the Party Constitution, and a change which was bound to be controversial, the removal of the requirement that one Vice-President should be a woman. Mugabe, however, approved, a plot whereby Mujuru’s reputation and integrity would be destroyed to such an extent that her reappointment at the December 2014 Congress would be impossible. Mutasa, Goche and possibly Gumbo and Khaya Moyo (depending on how they responded) were to receive the same treatment. It is quite possible that Mugabe neither intended nor anticipated the extensive eradication of the Mujuruites that ensued. The wide ranging purge may well have been the agenda of the plotters alone, and the intentional result of starting a fire (which Mugabe said must be managed) which gained a life of its own, as party cadres opposed to Mujuru took the opportunity to settle deep seated and chronic antipathy to her supporters, and others used the witch hunt (in time honoured fashion) to settle local rivalries. The aftermath of the plot repeated a predictable pattern. The plotters were far more successful than was wise. The result was that Mnangagwa had now acquired too much power, and the impression had been created that the plotters rather than Mugabe controlled the party.\footnote{I’m Still in Charge, Says President \textit{The Herald} 27.02.15} As a consequence, for the first time in the framework of the plot, Mugabe was compelled to take active steps, rather than passively allow others to do so.

Mugabe thus proceeded to take measures to show that he continued in ultimate control of the party and to attenuate the power of the plotters generally, and Mnangagwa, in particular. Oppah Muchinguri was given no reward for relinquishing her post as head of the Women’s League and assisting in the execution of the plot. She was not appointed as Vice-President, or National Chairperson, and Mugabe left the post vacant rather than risk increasing Mnangagwa’s power by
appointing one of the new Vice-President’s supporters to the post. The second cabinet reshuffle after Congress saw Mujuru’s supporters to the post. Saviour Kasukuwere’s displacement of Ignatius Chombo as Minister of Local Government when he also held the position of Party Commissar could be viewed as reducing and counter-balancing Mnangagwa’s power by increasing that of Kasukuwere, who by then had begun to be viewed as a rival to Mnangagwa.382

Significantly, Mugabe appeared to regard Jonathan Moyo as also wielding excessive power. He was removed as Minister of Information, and it is worth noting, in accordance with the theme of this paper, was dismissed in typical style. Once again Mugabe claimed that Moyo lost his post, not on account of Mugabe sacking him, but by virtue of constitutional imperative. Thus Mugabe (wrongly) claimed that since Moyo had been appointed as a non-constituency Minister, he automatically ceased to be a Minister once he became a Member of Parliament for Tsholotsho after by-elections in June 2015.383 Moyo had been removed as Minister of Information before, on 19th January, 2005, due to his involvement in the Tsholotsho saga. Unlike others involved in the saga, Moyo was not removed immediately, and he was ostensibly not fired by Mugabe. Mugabe waited until he could cite party rules, and then Moyo was deemed “automatically” expelled from the party on account of standing, against party policy, as an independent candidate for Tsholotsho in the general election of 2005.384 Having been expelled from the party Moyo could not remain as a Minister. He was informed of his dismissal by way of a fax sent to his hotel room.

The “clean dozen” were united by the common objective of removing Joice Mujuru as a contender for the presidency. Having succeeded in this endeavour, the way was cleared for any other pretenders to the presidency, and not just Mnangagwa. Thus, the moment Mujuru was effectively removed as potential successor to President Mugabe, reports appeared of rivalry within the “clean dozen” with groups coalescing around Grace Mugabe and the “gang of four and it’s Generation 40, the “young turks” on the one hand and the Mnangagwa camp on the other.385 The reports of enmity between the groups must however, be approached with caution. For example, press reports asserted that Mnangagwa had become disaffected with Jonathan Moyo after he emphatically refuted the idea, in a BBC Hardtalk broadcast,386 that Mnangagwa’s appointment as Vice-President meant that he was most likely to succeed Mugabe. However, it ought to be quite obvious by now, that appearing as the heir apparent to Mugabe is extremely hazardous. Mnangagwa is in all probability very grateful to anyone who suggests he does not occupy such a position.

The plot has certainly changed the players in ZANU PF’s internal dynamics, if not the play, given that the press is once again awash with reports of new factions within the party. The claim by ZANU PF functionaries that ZANU PF has emerged stronger from the dramatic events of the 2014 Congress appears counter intuitive. A significant chunk of the party has been ripped from

382 It was also probably intended to increase his powers to repair party structures in the Provinces after the ravages of the purge.
384 The same ploy that was used to block Mnangagwa from the Vice-Presidency was used against Moyo. The party decided that the seat should be reserved for a female candidate.
385 See, as one of many examples, Kasukuwere, Moyo Face Heavy Artillery Daily News 21.06.15.
386 The broadcast referred to earlier, released on 18.05.15.
the ZANU PF body politic. However, the effect of this severance should not be over emphasised. Many of the purged will find their way back into the fold. Those with Mujuruite sympathies who survived the purge will find a new home for their allegiances. But more importantly, for so long as the contest between Mujuru and Mnangagwa persisted, a sword of Damocles hung over the party. While two apparently equally powerful factions co-existed in the party, there was the risk of a deadly confrontation which could have destroyed the party, should both have scrambled to fill a power vacuum left by Mugabe’s sudden demise. That danger appears to have been averted, and the party strengthened accordingly. The question of succession to Mugabe has not been unambiguously answered, though it is difficult, presently, to see anyone other than Mnangagwa having the power base to effectively compete for the presidency.

Mugabe has, however, stated that the Vice-Presidents are not automatic successors and that ordinary party members will select his successor when the time comes. The assertion is either one of supreme naivety or deep cynicism – does he intend that such selection will thus follow the recent examples set by party members in the 2014 appointments of the leadership of the Provinces? The Youth League? The Women’s League? The Central Committee? Or, indeed, the 2014 appointment of the Presidium and Party President himself?

The events of 2014, detailed here, repeat all the features of the events of 2004, and even earlier ZANU PF congresses, with “popular” choice and constitutional procedure giving way to stage-managed and coerced elections. Contempt for constitutionalism and questionable leadership qualities appear as the hallmark of ZANU PF’s body politic. With Robert Mugabe heading both that party and the government, the contagion afflicting ZANU PF, has inevitably likewise afflicted national politics and governance.

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387 Robert Mugabe: Don't Try to Choose My Successor Zimbabwe's President, 91, Warns Zanu-PF Members The Independent (UK) 29.06.15.
ANNEXURE A

Timeline

10.09.13  Cabinet for the new Government after the 2013 elections is appointed.
26.10.13  ZANU PF starts elections for the Executives of the Provincial Co-ordinating Committees, the Provincial Executive Councils (PECs), which continue through November, 2014.
15.11.13  Minister of Information, Jonathan Moyo dismisses the Board of the Zimbabwe Broadcasting Corporation.
19.11.13  *The Herald* newspaper urges Mugabe to act on electoral improprieties around the PEC polls, which resulted in the Mujuru faction obtaining the chairpersonship in nine of ten provinces.
23.01.14  The “salarygate” scandal begins.
01.06.14  In early June or the end of May, 2014 the Mujuru camp presents a dossier to President Mugabe outlining what they believe to be Jonathan Moyo’s abuse of the media in a campaign against them.
05.06.14  Jonathan Moyo attacked by Mugabe in Politburo for use of media against Mujuru’s supporters
07.06.14  Mugabe publically attacks Jonathan Moyo, referring to him as a “weevil”.
09.06.14  Jonathan Moyo meets with Mugabe.
02.07.14  Grace Mugabe is reported as having registered for a Doctorate at the University of Zimbabwe.
09.07.14  Politburo sets new criteria for election to the Central Committee, and to the executive of the Women’s and Youth Leagues.
25.07.14  At a gathering to commemorate Grace Mugabe’s 49th birthday, held at the First Lady’s Mazoe farm, Grace Mugabe is asked to head ZAN PF’s Women’s League.
07.08.14  Grace Mugabe, again at a gathering in Mazoe, says that she is a “bouncer for hire”. The *Zimbabwe Independent* says Grace Mugabe is part of a plot to depose Mujuru.
07.08.14  The Youth League Conference begins.
08.08.14  Mugabe attacks Didymus Mutasa for shambolic logistics around the Youth League Conference.
14.08.14  Women’s League Conference begins.
15.08.14  Grace Mugabe is nominated at the Women’s League Conference to lead the wing.

15.08.14  Mugabe convenes a meeting at State House attended by senior ZANU PF officials to consider complaints rising from manipulation of the elections of the Youth League Executive. Mugabe hints that he has information about a plot by Mujuru supporters.

16.08.14  In an interview published in *The Herald*, Christopher Mutsvangwa rails against Didymus Mutasa, claims that Joice Mujuru is trying to oust President Mugabe and say that the story that Mujuru shot down a helicopter during the “liberation” war is fabricated.

28.08.14  *The Financial Gazette* newspaper reports that there are moves afoot to amend the ZANU PF Party Constitution.

03.09.14  Mugabe recommends reinstatement of suspended youth leaders but upholds the results of the elections of the Youth League and Women’s League Conferences, despite a call by *The Herald* for him to act. The Politburo says there is to be a moratorium on suspensions of party members ahead of Congress.

09.09.14  The “Grace Mania” campaign expressing support for the First Lady takes hold.

12.09.14  Grace Mugabe is capped by her husband with a PhD from the University of Zimbabwe.

31.09.14  Youths accost Mugabe on his return from a visit to China about suspensions of members by Mujuru supporters.

01.10.14  Zimpapers’ Chief Executive Officer and Financial Director are axed.

02.10.14  Grace Mugabe holds her first “Meet the People” rally in Chinhoyi, Mashonaland West.

06.10.14  Second “Meet the People” rally in Gweru, Midlands.

08.10.14  Third “Meet the People” rally in Harare Metropolitan Province.

09.10.14  Fourth “Meet the People” rally in Masvingo, Masvingo Province.

09.10.14  The first vote of no confidence in a Provincial Chairperson, Temba Mliswa, Mashonaland West.

11.10.14  Fifth “Meet the People” rally in Mutare, Manicaland Province. Muchinguri says Grace Mugabe is designed as a weapon against Mujuru.

12.10.14  The *Sunday Mail* newspaper publishes an article calling for amendment of the ZANU PF Party Constitution, to align it with the Unity Accord and give President Mugabe the power to appoint other members of the Presidium.

13.10.14  Sixth “Meet the People” rally in Gwanda, Matabeleland South.
14.10.14 Seventh “Meet the People” rally in Lupane, Matabeleland North
15.10.14 Eighth “Meet the People” rally in Bulawayo, Metropolitan Province
16.10.14 Ninth “Meet the People” rally in Bindura Mashonaland Central.
17.10.14 10th “Meet the People” rally in Marondera Mashonaland East
24.10.14 At a meeting at her Mazoe farm, Grace Mugabe calls for Mujuru’s immediate resignation.
24.10.14 At a Politburo meeting President Mugabe tells outgoing Women’s League head, Oppah Muchinguri, “You have started a fire now manage it”
27.10.14 Then war veteran leader, Jabulani Sibanda, accuses Grace Mugabe of staging a “bedroom coup.”
28.10.14 Mugabe attacks “those with doctorates” he claims are trying to topple him.
30.10.14 A second vote of no confidence “passed” against Masvingo provincial chairperson, Callisto Gwanetsa.
31.10.14 Outside the venue of a Politburo meeting, Mugabe addresses a crowd of youths and war veterans demonstrating against Joice Mujuru and chanting anti-gamatox slogans and says that a “wife must be given time to pack”.
02.11.14 Muchinguri presents an anodyne report on the “meet the people” rallies to the Politburo, resulting in anger in the Mujuru camp.
02.11.14 An unsuccessful attempt is made to depose all provincial chairpersons at country wide PCC meetings held over the weekend.
06.11.14 A third vote of no confidence “passed” against Harare Provincial Chairperson Amos Midzi.
09.11.14 A fourth vote of no confidence “passed” against Midlands Provincial Chairperson Jason Machaya.
10.11.14 War veterans and youth attempt to oust Mashonaland East Provincial Chairperson, Ray Kaukonde through their own vote of no confidence
10.11.14 A fifth vote of no confidence “passed” against Matabeleland South Provincial Chairperson, Andrew Langa.
13.11.14 Rugare Gumbo, Jabulani Sibanda and others suspended from the party at a Politburo meeting. Amendments to the ZANU PF party Constitution to be discussed and Rules and Guidelines for the Central Committee elections set in terms of the proposed amendments. The Political Commissar, Webster Shamu, is directed to write to the Provinces telling them to proceed to determine their nominees to the Central Committee. No nominations to the Presidium are to be made, as has happened prior to all previous Congresses.
14.11.14 Provinces ordered to start Central Committee nomination process in accordance with the Politburo determination.

15.11.14 A sixth vote of no confidence “passed” against Manicaland Provincial Chairperson, John Mvundura.

16.11.14 A seventh vote of no confidence “passed” against Bulawayo Provincial Chairperson, Callistus Ndhlovu (later reversed by the Politburo).

16.11.14 Central Committee nominations begin, but suspended in two Provinces.

16.11.14 The Sunday Mail publishes an article alleging a plot to assassinate President Mugabe, allegedly instigated by Didymus Mutasa and Rugare Gumbo.

17.11.14 Grace Mugabe repeats her demand that Mujuru resign immediately.

17.11.14 An eighth vote of no confidence “passed” against Mashonaland East Provincial Chairperson, Ray Kaukonde, this time by the PEC.


20.11.14 The process to nominate more Central Committee members continues.

22.11.14 A Politburo meeting adopts amendments to the ZANU PF Party Constitution which are to be sent to the Central Committee “for ratification”. Mugabe takes clearly sides at the meeting criticising Mujuruites Nicholas Goche, Kudakwashe Bhasikiti and does not greet Didymus Mutasa.

26.11.14 The last Politburo meeting before Congress. Goche and Mujuru do not attend on the grounds of “health”.


03.12.15 The Central Committee approves the amendments to the ZANU PF Party Constitution.

09.12.14 The dismissal from government of Mujuru, seven Ministers and one Deputy Minister is announced.

10.12.14 Mugabe announces the appointment of the new ZANU PF Presidium, Politburo and State Vice-Presidents

11.12.14 The appointment of the new State Vice-presidents, seven replacement Ministers and two deputy Ministers is announced.

14.12.14 Mugabe, accompanied by his family, begins his annual leave in Singapore.

21.12.14 The axing from government of two more Ministers and five deputy Ministers announced.
22.01.15 The Mugabes return a week late from their holiday in the Far East.

17.02.15 Mutasa and Mliswa expelled from the party by decision of the Politburo.

01.04.15 Mujuru expelled from the party by decision of the Politburo.

21.05.15 Ray Kaukonde, Olivia Muchena, Dzikamai Mavhaire, Claudius Makova, David Butau, Kudakwashe Gope, and Kudakwashe Bhasikiti expelled from the party by decision of the Politburo.

27.05.15 The Politburo determines suspensions of 89 members from six provinces. Manicaland is omitted from the announcements.

05.06.15 The Politburo determines suspensions of 39 members from the remaining four provinces. Matabeleland North is omitted from the announcements.

06.07.15 A further cabinet reshuffle takes place in which Jonathan Moyo is removed as Minister of Information.

15.07.15 Cut off date for facts included in this document.

ANNEXURE B

The 2014 Politburo

Administration, Ignatius Chombo
Finance, Obert Mpofu
Commissariat, Saviour Kasukuwere
External Relations, Simbarashe Mumbengegwi
National Security, Kembo Mohadi
War Veterans, Detainees, Restrictees and their Welfare, Sydney Sekeramayi
Transport and Social Welfare, Oppah Muchinguri
Information and Publicity, Simon Khaya Moyo
Legal Affairs, Patrick Chinamasa
Implementation and Economic Empowerment Policy, Mike Bimha
Production and Labour, Josaya Hungwe
Health, Child Welfare and the Elderly, Cleveria Chizema
Economic Affairs, Christopher Mushohwe
Women’s Affairs, Grace Mugabe
Youth Affairs, Pupurai Togarepi
Education, Joram Gumbo
Gender and Culture, Thokozile Mathuthu
Welfare for the Disabled and Disadvantaged Persons, Joshua Malinga
Land Reform and Resettlement, Cain Mathem

As given in *The Herald* – see the main document.
ANNEXURE C

The 2014 Central Committee

**Bulawayo Province:** T. Dube, Kanjoma, Malinga, Malaba, Moyo, Sikhosana, Tshuma, Sibanda, Chiponda, Mphoko, Noedza, Ncube, Edube, Mangove.

**Harare:** Marara, Ganya, Gijima, Bonde, Timire, Mbeva, Hungwe, Mutero, Chakanyuka, Hamandishe, Taruona, Bhunu, Mhlanga, Nyaruata, Grace Mugabe, Chizema, Mavenga, Hurumbudo, Chidawu, Thambeni, Masava, Tome, Madziva, Mbizo, Mahara

**Manicaland:** Chituma, Mutsvangwa, Chaunga, Malianga, Chikumi, Sacco, Mlambo, Chitima, Chinotimba, Mutomba, Gondo, Nzuma, Machiwana, Muchinguri, Mawire, Maradzamunda, Chinamasa, Majachani, Made, Manditeve, Kadzima, Nyanhongo, Chitepo, Samvu, Dumbura, Mukumi, Gwarandimba, Madio, Mushowe.

**Mashonaland East:** Kapfunde, Kachebu, Gotoro, Manguwo, Mangude, Kachepa, Kanjeve, Navaya, Musa, Kachoto, Karima, Mushure, Bhima, Kanyebwe, Kaguma, Matinhira, Murirwagoto, Zhanda, Mujahwe, Zhangazha, Matsangura, Mubaiwa, Sekeremayi, Muranga, Parirenyatwa, Zemura, Nyakudanga, Kadiki, Chinake, Jakopo, Taguma.

**Mashonaland Central:** Karigoka, Titipanyanga, Mbambi, Mazikanyi, Chisasa, Chamutswakina, Mombeshora, Paradza, Musona, Magaradzikwa, Chiropa, Makazika, Mavangira, Chitewe, Gushu, Chiwara, Gatsi, Chidengwende, Zinyembwa, Kambidzi, Mahungira, Machena, Mucheli, Saviour Kasukuwere;

**Mashonaland West:** Siyajamba, Mombeshora, Makume, Chiyangwa, Madzongwe, Mufumira, Chaderopa, Ngomalala, Muvi, Gava, Madara, Rodvi, Chanetsa, Gumbo, Chombo, Zhuwao, Chidongoma, Muchenge, Chidhakwa, Bietebit, Mutsnanga, Madvidi, Zinyambi, Wenjere, Chengeta, Haritotis.

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389 There should be five committee members appointed by President Mugabe. The names of only the four given in The Herald report are known.

390 In the annexures which follow the names are given more or less as reported, some with first names, some with only initials and some with only surnames. Where appropriate these have been edited for uniformity and first names left in or added where the person is particularly prominent and needs to be distinguished clearly.

391 The accuracy of this list is uncertain and is as far as can be gleaned from the film footage of the Congress and the announced results of the Mashonaland East re-elections.
Masvingo: Meve, Shumba, Magwema, Muzara, Moyo, Shumba, Chimeka, Mawere, Gavaza, Malulueke, Shumba, Huni, Manyindangadna, Matipa, Matorofo, Bahuni, Hungwe, Mangwana, Makaza, Maluleke, Mahiya, Chivinga, Sithole, Matuke, Chikwama, Mandebvu.


Matabeleland North: Nyoni, Dube, Mpofo, Fanuel, Nkomo, O. Mpofo, Mbambo, Jonathan Moyo, Sibanda, Moyo, Mathema, Tshuma, Mguni, Moyo, Ndebele, Ndlovu, Ndebele, Muzamba, Mudenda, Mpofo.


Youth League: Marovahoko, Ncube, Masuku, Takarusikirwa, Dombondzungu, Ngwenya, Zinyoro, Taruwona, Dhliwayo, Chipanga, Mathuthu, Tongai Kasukuwere, Hamandishe, Malinga, Matonhodza, Nyanguwara, Mpofo, Kazizi, Simbanegari, Ndlovu.

Womens League: Mutumbwa, Ncube, Mhlanga, Chipato, Chitura, Chatibura, Sandi, Nhari, Mahoka, Chimona, Malinga, Mahomva, Mathuthu, Mutsangwa, Mohadi, Musarurwa, Sibanda, Vareta, Sibanda.


ANNEXURE D

Party Suspensions and expulsions

Expelled


Suspended

Bulawayo: Callistus Ndlovu, Christopher Dube, Elifasi Mashabe, Charles Chiponda, Nicholas Mhlanga, Canaan Ncube, Bertha Moyo, Methusela Ndlovu, Quiet Moyo, Bheki Dube, Calvin Musuta and Noma Mokoena.
Harare: Albertina Bwititi, Varaidzo Mupunga, Eva Chaneta, Clyde Mutero, Susan Chuma, Torongo Torongo, Tongai Nheta, Angeline Matambanadzo, Prince Shinya, Brian Hwenjere, Andrew Tiriboyi, Munyaradzi Mugomeza, Olivia Mususa and Tendai Diwa, Tendai Savanhlu, Christopher Chigumba, Munyaradzi Banda, Noah Mangondo and Amos Midzi.

Manicaland: Munacho Mutezo.


Mashonaland West: Webster Shamu, Sylvester Nguni Kindness Paradza, Joshua Chakona, Adrian Musiwi, Stephen Karenga, Constance Shamu, Jackson Chizanga, Dominic Muza, Mernard Waneke and Talent Muduvuri.


Matabeleland North: None or unknown.


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392 The Herald reports giving the names of those suspended omit Manicaland. Mutezo was reported as suspended as part of the first group of 13 suspended.
393 Suspensions from Matabeleland North should have been announced with those of the other remaining three provinces in June 2015. They were not, unless there were no suspensions from this Province.