

connected around 90 percent of his presidential monthly salary of \$12,000 (Shs45m) to charitable causes, lived modestly on his wife's small

ments, and real penalties — would strike at corruption before it begins. But reform of institutions, however necessary, is

with uncompromising determination. The starting point is a comprehensive Asset Recovery Law, empowering the State to confiscate assets where

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The art of understanding and managing betrayal

When the ruling National Resistance Movement (NRM) took power in January 1986, it became one of the first guerrilla movements in Africa since independence to overthrow a sitting government by fighting it from within its territory.

The success of NRM was mainly down to one thing. Good intelligence and insider information about the sitting Uganda Peoples Congress (UPC) government.

Intelligence information more than anything else, is the core of governance and every aspect of life. It informs one on how to deal with who or what they are contending with. It makes it easy if you have as much accurate information about all aspects of whoever you are contending with. Mainly their strength, weakness, likes, dislikes, and how they respond in various settings and situations. You may use such information to fool them and lure them into an ambush by, say, over stating your own weakness so they expose themselves.

The most important link to such information is human assets, more than anything else. Even if you have good technology like cameras and listening devices, there is always a need for a human being to man and supplement them. Human beings are versatile, too. They move and change quickly. It makes life easy if there is someone in or near the system to provide the information. A gate keeper is vital to leak information about movements and interactions between people.

Plainly speaking, such persons must be traitors or double-crossers to a cause. As the title of Gordon Corera's book, *The Art of Betrayal: The Secret History of MI6, Intelligence and Espionage* suggests.

There are many ways of recruiting. Either by using money, promise of a bright future in case sub-

terfuge succeeds or get a vulnerable person and threaten them with blackmail. For instance, if a man of high public moral standing is found with a prostitute or a child outside wedlock, you ask them to work for you if not, you leak their secret.

The Apollo Milton Obote government was not in any way a weak military force. It had many traitors within the ranks and, as such, was easy to infiltrate. The Obote government did not have a lot of time to organise and populate all sections of government with loyal people. The bush war began almost immediately they swore in.

The civil service it inherited was full of people from the 'hostile' Buganda region. Many of these people, judging from the turbulent history of 1966 when the Kabaka's palace was stormed, and Ssekabaka Edward Muteesa II was exiled, had an axe to grind with UPC and Obote.

The NRM got a lot of information and even assistance. Many injured combatants were treated in government hospitals, including the Mulago National Referral Hospital. Forged passports were easy to acquire. It was easy to get information about troop strength and movement by having contacts.

By the time the Obote government fell in July 1985, it had enemies right at the core. Vice President Paulo Muwanga was part of the coup plot, and he became executive prime minister in the Gen Tito Okello Lutwa military junta that followed. Muwanga was later arrested and jailed. NRM has managed to dominate Ugandan politics for the last 40 years because of understanding and managing betrayal.

Most opposing political and military forces have been infiltrated by what people call 'moles'. Many of them end up in the NRM. That is what caused a

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Nicholas Sengoba
Plainly speaking



rift between Vincent Otti and Joseph Kony of the rebel Lord's Resistance Army (LRA).

The subsequent purge on suspicion that Otti was now working with the NRM government weakened the group.

Former Parliament Speaker Anita Among, just like many before her, was a member of the then leading Opposition Forum for Democratic Change (FDC), when it was led by the now incarcerated Dr Kizza Besigye.

Many senior members, including Alex Onzima, Betty Kamywa, Bernard Atiku, Beatrice Anywar, Thomas Tayebwa and Joyce Nabossa Ssebugwawo left the party to join NRM. (There was Dan Omara Atubo, Dick Nyayi, Eric Sakwa and Jimmy

Akena of UPC.) Every departure weakened FDC.

Of all of them, Among is the one who openly brags about her role in weakening the Opposition. She is also the one who has climbed very high in the NRM hierarchy. Now Among, who one would consider an asset to NRM, could end up like Paulo Muwanga, who let down Obote.

In intelligence circles, there is no honour among traitors. They are always viewed as traitors even if they reform. Anyone with the DNA or history of betraying a cause is looked at with suspicion. Most people who benefit from their services as assets usually wait for an opportune moment to jettison them.

The government does not populate the military, the police civil service, institutions of learning, all offices of national significance and lucrative parts of the economy because of tribalism. It is an insurance policy against betrayal.

For even a business community or agricultural sector dominated by hostile groups can fund enemies like the Baganda of Luweero funded and fed the NRA guerrillas in a country with a government.

When birds of the same feather are flocking together, they mark their territory to ensure their survival. It is made clear to them that it is 'their thing' to protect or perish.

The people who cry about NRM not paying them or treating them badly after they helped bring down Obote and UPC dug their own graves. They stuck out, wrapped with the burden of betrayal like sore thumbs, and they were easily struck down.

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