



ANDREW ON WEDNESDAY

Résumé

This has been another eventful week.

Jerome Frendo

Losing one of yours is always very difficult to fathom and more so at such a tender age. Jerome, this kind, sympathetic and generous young man was reading a BA (Hons.) in Social Wellbeing Studies with the Faculty for Social Wellbeing.

Jerome was an exemplary student and as a Faculty and University we tried our utmost to support him in his specific needs as he was undergoing treatment. His dream, well one of them, was that of reading a BA that would help him open so many avenues in his life. Unfortunately, life circumstances meant he was not to achieve this target. I am reassured that as a Faculty and University we did our very best to adapt and modify procedures to look at the individual needs of the student. I hope that the support and mentoring we provided at least served to ensure Jerome enjoyed his studies. He will be missed.

Susan Mulvaney

Another big loss. Susan was not only a great broadcaster but her humanity was second to none. She was sensitive to social issues and was a passionate mum, wife and grandmother who upheld strong values. My concern is that we are running short of such broadcasters. We are hardly replenishing the people we are losing in this sector. The state of our media anchors, presenters and journalists needs restocking.

Adrian Delia

The Leader of the Opposition has to come clean and provide

us with an unblemished declaration of his finances. Whether they are unfounded and unsubstantiated allegations or not, transparency is of the essence and he owes it to the People.

Teaching course

I come from the teaching profession. Teaching has always been a passion and probably one of the most satisfying phases in my career. The challenge of teaching students' day-in-day-out comes with so much responsibility. It is undoubtedly a tremendously tough but nevertheless a fulfilling profession. The methodical degrading and belittling of this profession we saw unravelling these last years is wicked.

Budget

A good one. Some very interesting measures seem to be in place especially those attempting to address poverty and social exclusion. There is also an effort to try to ensure the trickling of wealth to those who sit at the bottom of the heap.

Traffic

Everyone seems to spend the first half an hour of their work day speaking about how traffic has ruined their schedule and how frustrated and upset they are. I am hearing of people who are taking one and a half hours to go to work, some even more. This seems to have become the nemesis of this Government. I really don't know what the solution is to this bedlam, pandemonium, unruliness and anarchy but these piece-meal solutions of having smaller roundabouts and

riveting a couple of nice orange plastic bollards is side-splitting. Solutions need to be found, that is why we have politicians and experts. I cannot imagine how much this mayhem is costing our coffers.

Freshers'

Freshers' Week is now over and this is what I shared with my students when I met them; 'If you want to know if you were successful, 3, 4 years down the line, there is a yardstick I invite you to embrace because your success is not ONLY measured by how high your grades were, or how neat your writing is, how insightful your dissertation was, how snazzy your placement reports look but - how you allowed this experience to change you, to transform you.

One might ask, but in practical terms, what do I mean?

- First measure: Simple, you are able to listen more than you talk... keep tabs on the inputs and the outputs... the more inputs you are gauging the smarter you are;
- Second measure: Even simpler, you are able to run an argument without feeling this inept fear of annoyance, irritation or resentment - if you are proficient in engaging with someone's argument, even if you might not agree, and still feel serene, composed and unruffled, then you are good.
- Third measure: Hardly possible you might think, but yes even simpler, Uni would be a success story, if people start telling you, 'how you've

“

Everyone seems to spend the first half an hour of their work day speaking about how traffic has ruined their schedule and how frustrated and upset they are.

”

changed' - because inconsistency - is a virtue. Holding on to what you think today at all costs is not necessarily good. On the other hand retaining composure in what you believe in is paradise, perfection, sunshine...

Ghandi xi Nghid

Dr Andrew Azzopardi
Dean Faculty for
Social Wellbeing,
University of Malta &
Broadcaster - Ghandi xi Nghid
www.andrewazzopardi.org

11 October 1976

China's 'Gang of Four' arrested

The new chairman of China's Communist Party, Hua Guofeng, has ordered the arrest of four leading radicals in Peking.

It is a sign that China is changing political direction following the death last month of Chairman Mao Zedong.

The so-called Gang of Four is led by Chairman Mao's widow Jian Qing, and includes Wang Hongwen, Yao Wenyuan, and Zhang Chunqiao.

They were active proponents of the Cultural Revolution instigated ten years ago by Chairman Mao.

This was a political and ideological campaign aimed at reviving revolutionary fervour and resulted in enormous social, economic and political upheaval.

Ideological cleansing began with attacks by young Red Guards on so-called "intellectuals" to remove "bourgeois" influences. It is believed millions were forced into manual labour, and tens of thousands were executed.

Mr Zhang rose up the ranks during the first year of the Cultural Revolution in Shanghai and was until recently chief political commissar of the armed forces.

Mr Wang had less power but was regarded a wonderboy - he rose to number three in the party in 1973 while still only in his late thirties, relatively young by Chinese standards.

Mr Yao, also a member of the Politburo

standing committee, is regarded as dedicated, if not fanatical, in his belief in Maoist ideals of social development.

'Forged will'

Jian Qing, formerly an actress, became Chairman Mao's third wife in 1939. She is regarded as a radical and active proponent of Maoist principles but in the years before his death, had led an independent life from her husband.

News of the arrests have not been confirmed by China's officials but it is believed the four were attempting a coup in the wake of the death of Chairman Mao on 9 September.

Some reports say Jian Qing was in the process of forging Chairman Mao's will placing her as Mao's successor, when she and her associates were surrounded by Hua Guofeng's personal bodyguards and placed under house arrest.

They are being questioned about their campaign against former prime minister Zhou Enlai, who died in January.

Commentators say the arrests might lead to a liberalisation of foreign, cultural and

economic policy - the Times newspaper editorial calls this latest move "the most potent sign of a new political direction" following 27 years of Maoist dogma.

The Gang of Four were kept under house arrest and, following a propaganda campaign against them, were expelled from the Communist Party in July 1977.

By the end of 1978 reformist Deng Xiaoping had effectively wrested power from Hua Guofeng - although he did not assume the title of premier of China and chair of the CCP until 1982.

On 20 November 1980 all members of the Gang of Four were put on trial charged with attempting to overthrow the government and establish a hardline Communist dictatorship.

They were sentenced to death, later commuted to long-term imprisonment. After a period of political indoctrination Jian Qing was released in 1991 and died soon after - some reports say she committed suicide.

Wang Hongwen died in 1992, Zhang Chunqiao died in April 2005 and Yao Wenyuan died in December 2005.