



# ANDREW ON WEDNESDAY

## Delia, pudding and party

Delia turned up to the recording at the PBS Creativity Hub for my programme on Radju Malta, *Ghandi xi Nghid*, on Friday afternoon (perfectly on time, phew!) wearing a shirt (rather than a suit) and hardly waiting for the chauffer-driven car to stop and get someone to open his door, before jumping out.

**W**e chatted for a bit before starting the interview. Not that it is of importance but the nonchalance, casual manner and relaxed way of approaching the interview, with no notes or grand entourage was a good place to start from. I sense that he was genuinely interested in the conversation we were having. We spoke current affairs, politics, football and a myriad of other topics.

As we talked before we started the interview it was clear that he feels he was almost 'called' on to take this responsibility. Not that I get taken up by these divine-like call-outs but before starting the recording I informally asked him why he had taken on the burden of such a role. He looked at me piercingly and told me that he was having a good life going for himself. Nevertheless, he felt that he wanted to bail out the Country and the Nationalist Party. It was a sense of obligation that he felt.

I'm not easily impressed. I will only value people once I've eaten the pudding, so there you go Delia, I wait!

However, what I believe for sure is that Delia ticks a number of pertinent boxes; a good communicator (even if he tends to beat around the bush when on a podium), enthusiastic, keen and excited, hardly Machiavellian and interested in engaging with people.

He comes across as blameless and does not shy from his beliefs. A good lawyer and one I wouldn't fancy litigating with. He is articulate and does not take defensive positions. He has a strong sense of family and collegiality. His face oozes happiness when he speaks of his wife and kids and I think he might get the occasional 'second

thought' when he realises that so much time is being taken away from them now that he is the Leader of the Opposition. I believe he will keep saying this to himself especially when the push comes to shove. I think that he is only now starting to get a feel of what lies ahead.

Then there are the shady bits. The fact that he has not paid his taxes a year or two down the line will haunt him. He can never claim the moral high ground after this incidence. A couple of dappled characters that circle around him I would do without (Delia, *dawk jghal-luk!*). He also seems to lack the political acumen at times, the finesse that comes with political shrewdness. The willness is so important because tradition in politics is an important ingredient and he has none of that. He also needs to be able to stimulate the grassroots and excite them not only with a change in tone of voice and by shouting his top-off and pounding on his heart whilst the *Innu* is being played.

He needs to enthuse people not by clenching of fists and pumping up his jugular but by transmitting a passion for the values he subscribes to. He needs to stimulate the crowd with the aura of intelligence and goodness and not the ear-splitting orations.

He needs to be sincere with people, close, but at the same time distant enough to make the right choices and decisions.

He needs to be ruthless when faced with people who want to undermine what the Party stands for but at the same time gentle in the way he approaches the citizens on the street.

Delia needs to be truthful to himself.

He needs to create the alliances

“

**Delia, has to find a way how to keep Simon Busuttil at arm's length. This man needs to understand that his time is up. If 'I' was Busuttil 'I' would focus on realigning my political career where 'I' am best at - the EU.**

”

that are so important in a political Party. Delia, has to find a way how to keep Simon Busuttil at arm's length. This man needs to understand that his time is up. He had his chance and did well on a couple of matters. But he was relevant till the day the election result came out. If 'I' was Busuttil 'I' would focus on realigning my political career where 'I' am best at - the EU. Delia will be respected as a good leader the moment he manages to bring in line the renegades. In fact, at one point during the interview he told me that if he were to be in Busuttil's place he would have resigned and done it the Gonzi way.

The financial situation of the Party is nothing to shout about.

The predecessors of this outgoing crop of people who ran the Nationalist Party managed to create a mess and not account for it. People were wearing boots too big for their tiny feet. The financial situation of the Nationalist Party is pitiful and this need stability. Delia said that the situation was the same even though there was an attempt at sorting out the matter by the Busuttil clan. The Nationalist Party was and still is in the red big time.

On another note. I consider Chris Said to be one of the most candid and honest politicians the Nationalist Party has, but he needs to understand that this is no longer about him. Delia reiterated that there are ways and means on how to go about proposing a motion and I tend to agree. Once you decide that you are part of the squad you need to be ready to take the whip.

I find Delia was still befuddled on how to interpret the Daphne Caruana Galizia situation. On one hand he states that he is sorry that the situation had ended the way it had but yet feels pained on what she had written. He felt that there was no reason why he was treated in this way accept for an attempt at character assassination.

It is a long and winding road for Delia.

Then again, no one is bigger than the Party, whether it's Fenech Adami or Gonzi, Busuttil or Delia.

The followers of the Party know this.

I believe this is a new beginning for the Nationalist Party.

The survey results are there for the taking but I believe the Delia factor can draw back the crowds. He has the potential to bring the flicker that will see this Party take back its stature.

Ghandi xi Nghid

Dr Andrew Azzopardi  
Dean Faculty for  
Social Wellbeing,  
University of Malta &  
Broadcaster - Ghandi xi Nghid  
[www.andrewazzopardi.org](http://www.andrewazzopardi.org)

8 November 2000

## ~~Bush and Gore fight to the finish~~

The result of the American presidential election is still hanging in the balance hours after the last polls officially closed. Votes are still being counted in the key state of Florida where it seems there are

~~only a few hundred votes separating the two would-be presidents.~~

~~Early exit polls claimed Republican George W. Bush had taken the Sunshine State - but the claim was later retracted.~~

~~The Democrat White House hopeful, Al Gore, had apparently been on the verge of admitting defeat.~~

~~He had already phoned Mr Bush to offer his congratulations when he was told the Florida result was still too close to call.~~

~~Mr Gore telephoned Governor Bush a second time to withdraw his concession.~~

~~He said: "Circumstances have changed since I first called you."~~

~~"We have now learned we are down by only about 600 votes out of millions cast and that means an automatic recount."~~

~~The election campaign has been one of the closest for years.~~

~~National polls gave Governor Bush a slender lead as voters went to the polls but~~

~~one survey gave Al Gore a two-point advantage suggesting he could still win the race.~~

~~A high turnout of blacks and union members appears to have helped Mr Gore in the large industrial states.~~

~~Jeb Bush, Mr Bush's brother and governor of Florida, had promised to deliver the state for his brother.~~

~~The Texas governor appeared to hold a slender advantage in a string of swing states, including Missouri, Iowa, Wisconsin, Arkansas and Nevada.~~

~~If he wins in Florida, he will probably have enough electoral college votes to become president.~~

~~It is possible Mr Bush could win the electoral college but lose the popular vote. This has not happened since 1888 when Benjamin Harrison became President even though Grover Cleveland had amassed more votes.~~

~~Mr Bush closed his White House campaign by vowing to be a "uniter not a divider" if elected president and Mr Gore promised to "fight for you".~~

~~If Mr Bush were to win, he would be the first son of a former president to win the White House since John Quincy Adams was elected in 1824.~~

~~For Mr Gore, the son of a senator, victory would represent fulfilment of a childhood ambition and the culmination of 24 years as a congressman, senator and vice president.~~

~~He ended his campaign with a whistle-stop tour of five states, ending in Florida. He was joined in Miami by celebrity supporters including actors Robert de Niro, Glenn Close, Ben Affleck and Stevie Wonder.~~

~~Texas Governor George Bush was eventually declared President-elect on 13 December 2000 after a protracted legal battle.~~