



ANDREW ON WEDNESDAY

In brief

This is a melange of themes that grabbed my attention these last days.

Towers and some pretty streets

We have been hearing about the need to sort out the chaos that has been accumulating in Paceville for the best part of these last 15 years now. A year or so ago we were close to a major disaster with potentially serious consequences as youngsters spilled out of a club with surprisingly very few ending up seriously injured. Even that did not seem to embolden a proper reaction.

I must say that I feel disappointed that all our leisure is being centralised in Paceville, not only contributing to traffic and congestion for one but in the process all the activities that used to happen in the village are dying a natural death, (remember the Tejatrini, the Piazza and its role in socialisation, the youth centres, the playing fields). However, I also believe that Paceville in this day and age has become a necessity for our local leisure industry and likewise tourism and so merits all our attention.

However, it seems that there is a perception that the 'Establishment' is twisting arms so that their pot of gold keeps getting its bonanza. I'm not sure this is the case and it may well be a perception, as I believe that Deborah Schembri is one of those politicians who I am convinced has her heart and mind in the right place - but maybe the way the whole process developed may have tarnished what might have been a good idea in the long run - that of having a plan!

Paceville's other Master Plan

Now whilst we are discussing plans, what we seem to forget is that the real Master Plan, or should I say masterstroke in Paceville happened when Fr Hilary and the Augustine Friars developed the notion of the Millennium Chapel.

That was indeed good news and left so many positives. This model of an oasis of serenity and peacefulness in a bustling freaked-out zone is leaving such a good vibe. When services are provided against the grain, that really means things are on the right track.

The 'Establishment'

It is really sad if we had to be conditioned and controlled by the infamous 'Establishment'. I want to believe that our country



'Judge' not Toni Abela

I am pretty sure that Dr Abela will do a great job as a judge now that his appointment is official. His knowledge and competencies are indeed recognisable. I must say that I was pretty saddened by the way his hearing developed in Brussels and how it got messed up because of other people's boobos. Notwithstanding, the thinking that prevails in this country, and this always been so, it is distressing that high ranking positions are gifted to people who need to be acknowledged for past political service. Whilst I don't think this is always the case the acuity out there is that if you subscribe to the government of the day you will most certainly get your coupon. In my opinion Dr Abela's appointment is still way too close to when he was still closely involved in partisan politics. For his sake and that of the Courts I believe that Dr Abela should have done the right thing to remain a bit at the margins before taking on such a position that should 'be seen to be' fair (and not only be so).

has all the systems and institutions in place to stand up for its integrity and veracity.

The truth is that the way our political class unveils its initiatives and leads shows that the spectre of an establishment looms like a vulture ready to scavenge on carcasses. The media has an imperative role in ensuring the equilibrium and calibration of our societies and protection of this fourth estate is fundamental to guarantee democracy.

Graduands

We had some idiots who were reportedly jumping on benches in lecture rooms that duly collapsed during this silly moment.

Well that is indeed wrong but also nowhere near representative of the great month that No-

vember and December are for the University of Malta. Over 3,000 students graduated from over 14 faculties and the innumerable Institutes and centres.

This is indeed a great period to celebrate even if I get my occasional tick and almost made to jump out of my skin when former students come slamming on my office door. Society is richer with these new graduands and nothing should distract us from this success.

PN's proposals

The Nationalist Party has once again laid out a number of initiatives focused this time round on small business which we know are at the heart of our economic prowess. This is indeed an exemplary way of how a political party can claim its relevance and I am not surprised

that Claudio Grech was behind this initiative and has led the pack on this one - a creditable politician of added value for the PN where he remains one of my favourite politicians; unruffled, equable and level-headed.

MUT and Students

I can't but not comment on the most recent situation of bullying and aggression in a secondary school and how it was dealt with by the MUT biased in favour of the teacher before we even had all the pieces of the puzzle. The MUT's core business is most certainly focused on teachers, but I think its dialectic is way to 'us and them'.

Deportation

Whilst I can understand that deporting people is a legal thing to do when there are no serious safety concerns however I find this 'rounding up of people' (reminds me of cattle) as nothing less than troubling and upsetting. These are people who have spent years in Malta, developed relationships, were employed, possibly had children and are now sent back to their country because their papers were not in order and CNN is telling us that is all nice and dandy 'back home'. I think there are other ways of regularising these positions, and if there aren't we are duty bound to take the lead and develop them. Legal is fine, humanity and compassion are noble.

The Pope

I'm not much of a Church goer I must admit, but every time the Pope is reported in the media I do take cognisance of the very interesting and at times provocative stances he shares. I believe that this Pope came a little too late and had he been around a couple of decades ago we would be talking of a different Universal Church altogether.

Traffic

Time for heads to roll and for political and administrative responsibilities to be shouldered. The situation can't get any more dramatic, chaotic, muddled, frenzied, anarchic (do I need to go on?).

In my opinion this situation ticks all the boxes to qualify for a national disaster. When an ambulance with its siren and lights at full blast is stuck in traffic - I don't think it can get any worse.

Ghandi xi Nghid
19-2041 by RADJU MALTA mal-02041 xi quodam

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

Letter

University's role

University's role should be to teach or entice the students to think critically. So students who attend university and do not learn to think

critically, reason, argue logically, try to see all the viewpoints, consider all the opinions, are non-judgemental and then arrive to a

conclusion logically have not really graduated from university.

I was shocked that the Rector did not mention it when he outlined

the role of the university.

■ Joe Portelli
Nadur