



ANDREW ON WEDNESDAY

'Aw Joey he!'

We have had enough of these 'Aw Joey he' politics in Malta!

The recent events we have witnessed these last months have confirmed that our democracy is being rocked to its foundations. When our political parties are in a state of puzzlement and when their senior members booboo you start getting cracks not only in the party institutions but a sense of diffidence in the system starts crawling in.

Not that our trust ratings in the political class and in the political parties was anything to shout about, but the way the situation is developing, people like me, who have always defended politicians as being in the main servants with good intentions, are starting to run out of arguments. It is so difficult to defend the inexcusable.

Mind you, it didn't just happen now that we have politicians talk rubbish, who endeavour to insult our intelligence with Facebook statuses that aren't decorous let alone distinguished, MPs who let down their leaders with their outlook, past behaviours and decision making and parliamentary rhetoric that degenerate in 'hamallaġni'. This is not what citizens vote for. Some of them forget that politics is not a spectacle but a serious matter.

These people need to understand that they are there to serve, to do a job, a difficult one at times true but one that they decided on taking on. They talk us into voting them in and that is fine. We trust them, subsequently they mess up and all we are left with is junk.

For example, if we had to take Dr Joe Cassar's ignominy we soon realize that this is about creating a tight spot with people who have been renowned that they hang around political parties for their own selfish and self-centered reasons. Let's call a spade a spade. Getting someone to set up an alarm system and you don't know how to reach the installer sounds like a lame excuse to me. He even purchased a second hand car and was told to give the money as a donation to the party which is equally ridiculous.

Allegedly, to add to this he foolishly refused to log in as requested per ministerial code of ethics. He also seems to have kept the information on his past involvement with this infamous



family concealed from his leader and all this when Dr Simon Busuttill and the Nationalist Party were busy firing one arrow after another in the direction of government because, rightly so, the dealing and trading with these despicable characters was uncalled for. This is such a letdown if you ask me. What a pity when one of the 'good ones' will see his political career fading into obscurity.

Every politician needs to be robust and stay away from these people who will use and snub 'you' if they do not serve their purpose. Cassar should have stayed away from these shady characters, these vultures that will keep coming back for the leftover of the carcass.

The sad thing is that the government seems to replicate the same mistakes and another politician I highly esteem, Dr Michael Falzon, is on the spot and most likely will see his political career plunge downhill. These malevolent, vicious and malicious 'constituents' feel that the country owes them and that they cannot do a deal without putting others in the bag. How embarrassing and sad and this was all being panned out whilst Dr Busuttill was busy defending the integrity of Dr Cassar, during my radio show *Ghandi xi Nghid* - and I was busy nodding in approval.

I will not subscribe to the argument that the cost of the property under scrutiny at Old Mint Street might have been more than that of the cost of the car in question or the alarm system

installation. Monetary value does not come into my computation at this point. Wrong is iniquitous. Beyond the price, Members of Parliament keep making a sad spectacle out of themselves.

Wakey! Wakey! Politics is a serious business. This is not a game. We cannot be playing with people's life as if nothing else matters. People's existence and wellbeing depend on decisions taken in the room with the green ostentatious chairs. There are people who are struggling, citizens who are in pain, individuals who are on the verge of collapsing if the right judgments are not taken. That is how serious it gets.

People can get ill, suffer pain or maybe die if politicians keep getting distracted and losing focus on their core business, namely that of making our communities better and safer places to live in. Politics is about creating serene communities. We haven't voted people in so that we can witness these shenanigans.

In other words I am sure that most of us realize that we are in a state of crisis and if our political class cannot see this, if our leaders are oblivious to these circumstances, if the spin doctors are so capable of taking us around in circles than it's all the fault of us citizens to get banged on the head and in return we 'thank' them.

If we want politics to serve the people and politicians to set the right tone of behaviour we need to engage with direct action.

First, we need to strengthen our

institutions - we either believe that our establishment serves a purpose or else we can decide to dismantle it here and now.

Public appointments need to be discussed in Parliament and only a very limited number of positions require government trust at all cost.

We need to have a credible system when it comes to the ministerial declaration of assets.

We need to do away with the criminal libel so that newsrooms can work serenely and serve an important role in ensuring checks and balances are in place.

We need our leaders to stop pointing fingers and instead focus on getting their own house in order.

We need to have a better informed electorate that can make the best possible choices when faced with the ballot.

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We need to stop giving the political class so much importance in everything that happens; they are experts on embryo freezing one day and an authority on the burqa the next. For goodness sake listen to professionals, the grassroots and the experts before being asked to press the button.

Politicians seem to forget that they are answerable to the electorate. They are there to produce the goods and not to be asinine - there's no place for inflated egos.

We need to find a system where people have easy access to politicians and this will only

come about if we have a civil service that functions, that is efficient, that has the necessary safeguards and resources to ensure that we do not have to run to a politician to get our cataracts sorted or our knee patched up.

Political parties and some politicians need to stop going to bed with the business community, speculators and developers. They need to distance themselves from the crooked characters that hit the ministry corridors. We all know who these people are.

Enough is enough. There is no more space for the 'Aw Joey he' politics in this country, where people seem to get all queasy and excitable as soon as they see 'their' MP and vice-versa.

'Familiarity breeds contempt' is a signpost that every politician should walk through every time they enter Parliament.

Note:
This article was submitted before
Dr Cassar resigned from MP

Photo: James Galea

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