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Opinion – Sou Ciência: Education that Brazil needs does not include bibles, nor does it disassemble

A short time ago we mentioned in an article that, faced with the dismissals at Inep (National Institute of Educational Studies and Research Anísio Teixeira) and Capes, we were witnessing the Boiada da Educação, with the dismantling of the important evaluation structures of the Ministry of Education (MEC) . Little did we know that the dismantling is in fact much deeper and, apparently, involves a benefit scheme for pastors and municipalities aligned with the current minister.

A lot of information has been released since March 18 through important journalistic work committed to the search for data. A month earlier, the news came to the public that civil servants from the Department's Legal Consultancy had surrendered their positions claiming to defend the "supremacy of the public interest over the private".

In view of recent facts, would it be a coincidence to think that the Union's lawyers would be disagreeing with the acts or requests of the current managers of the MEC and that's why they presented the exonerations? Probably not.

?Since the beginning of the Bolsonaro government, the MEC has undergone many transformations that are certainly leading to a significant disruption of the body and Brazilian education. Olavist, military, opportunists and now the pastors have passed through the ministry.

Meanwhile, both Basic and Higher Education have been under attack, by the increase in learning deficiencies, by the scrapping of public universities, even with their important actions to combat covid-19. A process accompanied by the growth of the EAD modality (Distance Education) and the evasion of young people in search of jobs and the fight against hunger in their families.

It is not by chance that this government has dedicated itself to creating mechanisms that increasingly impede the autonomy of federal universities, directly maintained by the MEC. The attacks range from the non-appointment of elected deans at 19 of the 68 institutions, to the pressure and harassment of members of academic communities. A clear intervention at different levels, with the purpose of weakening the last strongholds of civilizational resistance.

It is not just about budgetary reduction, with cuts in scholarships and resources from universities, but also the strong destructive interference in the organizational fabric of structures and work methods, established over decades of research.

With Brazilian science, which is based on public universities for its production and development, it was no different. In addition to resisting all cuts and presenting responses to the pandemic, it also had to deal with disinformation and denialism.

Attacks on male and female researchers have become common, as has the facilitation of sending funds to deans who support current policy. Now, the denunciations of the last few days show that the same is happening with pastors.

The complaints involving the Ministry of Education inaugurate (or lay bare) a new cog in this government's project: the attack on secular education and the State, in addition to ideological interference and budget cuts.

It is no longer a matter of systematically undermining the structures of education, especially aimed at the quality of teaching, but of interfering definitively and forcefully in the concept of Education for which so many fought and which is present in the Federal Constitution.

Education as a duty of the State, a right of the citizen and that must be autonomous from parties. A quality and secular education that, in no context, mixes education and religion.

?More than a momentary necessity, stopping this herd in the area of ??education is a duty and a central issue for the country. The solutions for the reconstruction of Brazil will come from education, science and democracy. There is no other way.

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