

Bolsonaro ridiculed



More than a scandal, Carlos Dacotelli's departure before taking up his post as Brazilian Education Minister, appointed by President Jair Bolsonaro, is an absolute ridicule that once again shows the regrettable weakness of Brazil's cabinet.

Since the beginning of his term on January 1, 2019, the former army captain and fervent nostalgist for the dictatorship and the torturers, has lost 13 members of his staff, several of them in conditions typical of cheap comedy theater.

Dacotelli was chosen to replace Abraham Weintraub, whose departure came after he said at a cabinet meeting that the 11 members of the Federal Supreme Court, the highest body of justice, are "vagrants" who should be in prison.

Their "punishment" was to leave their portfolios and travel to New York to take up a position at the World Bank. Weintraub, in turn, had taken over the post from the Colombian-Brazilian nationalised citizen Ricardo Velez Rodriguez, fired 100 days into the government after he said that drug trafficker Pablo Escobar was an example to follow.

Dacotelli's case is perhaps more pathetic. After his appointment was announced, he published a service record where he said he had a doctorate from the National University of Rosario; a post-doctorate from the University of Wuppertal, Germany; and that he was a member of the Getúlio Vargas Foundation.

To his regret, the three institutions denied those statements that exposed him as a liar and made a fool of Bolsonaro who should have accepted the resignation before handing over the key to the ministry.

The Brazilian president has many weaknesses, which are well known -- but he also has the curious ability to surround himself with clumsy, malicious, corrupt or controversial collaborators.

The questionable handling of the COVID-19 pandemic made him lose two health ministers, Nelson Teich and Luiz Henrique Mandetta. Also leaving were, among others, Osmar Terra, from the portfolio of Citizenship; Gustavo Canuto, from Regional Development; as well as Floriano Peixoto and Gustavo Bebiano, both from the general secretariat of the presidency.

A blow that can still give him a big headaches was the dismissal of the head of Justice, Sergio Moro, a man without scruples and used to twist the law, now turned into a powerful enemy of the Brazilian president.

Seen in this light, Bolsonaro is well served by the popular saying: "You will be judged by the company you keep."

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