

Brazilian Student Denounces Education Attacks in Viral Speech



Brasilia, November 4 (RHC)-- A Brazilian student's speech protesting public cuts in education to a senate committee in the state of Parana has gone viral on social media, shedding light on the student movement that is occupying over 100 schools across the state and country.

Ana Julia Ribeiro, one of countless students in Brazil taking part in the occupation in protest of government plans to freeze education spending and drastically reform education, spoke to the Commission for Human Rights in the state senate.

"My first question is who are schools for? Who do they belong to? I believe that all of us here already know the answer."

The fact that the coup government of Michel Temer called the students "indoctrinated" by leftist ideas was an "insult" to all of them, she said. Insisting on the legitimacy of the movement, she said: "(We) are dedicated and looking for motivation every day... we are not playing, we know what we are fighting for," she added, stressing that the only thing the students stood for was "education."

She denied the student movement identified with any political party, saying the movement only cared “about the next generations, about society, about the future of the country.” And the student activist denounced a push to standardize education in schools, saying that these schools would be schools without critical thinking, racist schools, homophobic schools.

“A standardized school is like telling us students, youth, and society that you want to build an army of people trained not to think ... an army that listens and follows orders. Well, we are not that. We have a history, and within that history we have fought against such things.”

“We have been occupying the school for a week,” she concluded, “and it has brought us more understanding of politics and citizenry than we will learn in years in the classroom.”

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