

Letter from the director

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A new Fecode strike is forthcoming. If Colombia were a serious country, the union would probably be demanding a greater training for teachers to properly fulfill their function. It would be demanding a stronger collaboration from homes as regards education of children and youth concerning values. It would be eager to extend the school day for young people to have fewer opportunities to go to the street in Bronx to be seduced by all the vices. It would ask the Ministerio de Educación Nacional the extension of modern means of education and technology to rural schools and colleges as a resource for a more efficient education and not as a simple replacement of the personal effort in education. It would express its dissatisfaction with the mediocrity of national education in subjects such as mathematics, history of Colombia, geography and civics.

On the contrary, the union will blackmail the Ministerio de Educación, as it did last year, not to declare an indefinite strike. They will request that the teachers' salaries -only theirs- exceed the inflation rate, although the salary treatment they are given is far above the average of the ordinary Colombian workers and they will certainly take advantage as they usually do after every labor strike, making it a privileged union.

The Ministerio de Educación Nacional has no way to defend itself and to defend the rights of learners against the impositions of teachers in the country. It has always been so and especially now when jam is the only weapon of the central administration for teachers to resume classes, parliament to vote every whim of the government and newspapers to publish but what the owner of the jam likes.

One assumes in sound logic and reason "that the most educated Colombia" would expect a change of mentality in the teachers' union but if this is not achieved, the budgetary efforts and propaganda extolling public policies in education are absolutely vain. Because there is not (and it is not foreseen in the future) the possibility of a critical mass among educators seeking high quality in education, while they are rather in search of more advantages and claims whose only ambition is to turn teaching into a privileged union. It should have as its goal, at least at medium-term, a conversion of its role in a real mission for the good of more integral, better trained Colombians, who can succeed in the classroom and beyond, with ethical civic, democratic values, in a word, humans. Because, first, Colombia needs first to have people with full human values, so that knowledge will make them persons useful for the development of society and internationally outstanding.

But none of these issues is talked seriously about or in ministerial or governmental circles, much less within the union of so-called educators. Today children and young people, even university

students, are hardly thinking beings, but automatons at the service of technological devices that do not allow them to reflect, criticize, analyze or have some personal opinion. And there is no one to convince them to think seriously and deeply, to synthesize knowledge, to judiciously analyze critical situations in our country and international moves so complex from every point of view.

Blah blah blah, of the Ministerio de Educación Nacional is not for a profound renewal of education in Colombia. And the “most educated Colombia” lacks the philosophical foundations of a transformative education that will achieve real and meaningful goals.