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## ***Bolsonarism, violence and mental health in Brazil***



**Sources:** Rebellion / Socialism and Democracy [Image: Bolsonaristas in Santa Catarina making the Nazi salute after Bolsonaro's electoral defeat. Credits: RRSS, taken from Socialism and Democracy]

*In this article the author argues that Bolsonaro strengthened the idea that conflicts can be resolved by means of extreme violence, which in turn generated a toxic environment that deteriorated the mental health of the Brazilian population and extreme violence in the streets.*

In recent days Brazilian society has received with enormous Consternation news about the various massacres and attacks occurred in schools in the country. In the last one, a 25-

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year-old man attacked with an axe children who were in a garden Children's in the city of Blumenau. Four of them died and others Five were injured by the insane action of this individual who As far as is known he had no clear motive for committing these Murders. It was not a premeditated attack on an ethnic group, religious or political determined. There is also no reference to the attacker has previously been *bullied* in that school or who is a former official dismissed for a cause Unfair.

The Frequently asked question that specialists and laymen ask in this A moment of perplexity is that tortuous mechanisms are incubated in the mind of a person who drives her to murder innocent children in a kindergarten or what are the effects of propaganda that I would pursue such an action. If you were looking for some kind of Advertising With this "monstrous" violence, the executor has not Succeeded. The Brazilian press decided almost unanimously not giving more cover to the murderer and the possible motives he had to carry out these barbaric crimes.

The The decision of the majority of the media is based on assuming the most recent recommendations from renowned specialists in communication, for whom to disseminate and give visibility to the authors From these massacres, to their tactics and their ideological bases, it can serve as a stimulus for further attacks. A policy Media Controller should restrict information about the attacks perpetrated, so as to deny them notoriety or celebrity to its authors, thereby preventing others from Potential murderers or psychopaths feel stimulated by the so-called demonstration effect or contagion - to imitate such crimes and, In this way, get publicity in the future.

Unfortunately The latest murders add to a series of bestial acts that They have been happening in various states of the country. In the last Several attacks have already been reported with wounded and victims fatal, in a spiral that worries the authorities, Citizen Security and mental health specialists. In fact, Brazil It seems to experience a second pandemic among its inhabitants. The Emotional impact that these three years of confinement, family losses, job insecurity and Fear, have caused an exponential increase in stress and psychic suffering on the part of the population.

According to information from Datasus, the number of depressive episodes already predicted growth in the last decade, but these cases grew rapidly from the pandemic, with an increase in medical licenses due to anxiety and depressive disorders, as well as the alarming increase in the suicide rate among the population, especially among the youngest and the oldest[1].

The Causes of this tragedy and the tide of crimes and aggressions that It has been ravaging the country, they are certainly complex and diverse, which would require an effectively transdisciplinary approach. No However, without ignoring the multidimensional nature of the phenomenon, We think that an explanatory axis to try to understand these Terrible events is linked to the wave of Violence and hatred that spread since the previous government of extreme right, which not only freed the carrying and use of weapons of fire, as he also dedicated himself to creating a climate of confrontation, prejudice and intolerance among Brazilians.

Also You can go further back in the analysis and look for the roots of this exaggerated violence in components of the socio-political structure and cultural that was historically built in the country since the Colonial era. Here you could find the bases that They allow us to interpret the emergence of a hatred in a larval state, which He had the opportunity to demonstrate in the light of day with the triumph electoral of the project of the extreme right.



Credits: Nando Motta 2020

Recognizing This scenario, we can affirm that Bolsonarism deepened Indisputably the emergence of hatred and intolerance between a A significant fraction of the Brazilian population, stimulating At the same time, the acquisition of weapons of all kinds for defence personal, under the false slogan that "an armed people will never be enslaved." For the same reason, since the previous government took office, The inhabitants of this country had all the facilities to Obtain firearms. This worrying situation is what is trying to dismantle the current administration with many difficulties and facing the pressures of associations of CACs (Collectors, *Shooters and Hunters*), as well as the strong *lobby* exercised by the arms industry itself that owns many representatives and supporters in the National Congress.

In Rigor, Bolsonarism managed to introduce hatred into the families, among friends and neighbors, perverted all agencies and institutions through which he passed, disseminated prejudice and sectarianism within society, liberated the most Disastrous and reactionary among citizens, he opened the sewers of the The most abject imaginary of the Brazilian people. He made contempt for education and hatred of science its banner for four years, transformed public policies into business balconies for military, Pentecostal pastors, militiamen and various groups Criminal. He strengthened the idea that conflicts can be solve with bullets, blows or machetes.

In Amid this toxic and polluting environment, the mental health of Brazilians began to deteriorate rapidly, now leading to this constant and shocking series of episodes of violence and deaths for no apparent reason.

One recent study commissioned by *Global Health Service Monitor* and executed by the company Ipsos, found that the concern of Brazilians with mental health almost tripled in the latter 4 years. In 2018, only 18 percent of Residents said that topics such as depression and anxiety were a source of concern. Last year that figure was practically It reached 50 percent of the people interviewed. Partly this increase can be attributed to the effects of Covid-19 on population, although a significant percentage of participants in The study attributed their feeling of distress and depression to the weather. of hatred, polarization and political violence experienced during the period of government of the former captain (2019-2022).

Indeed, the body and soul of Brazil are compromised by this unleashed hatred that seized people and spread with unusual capillarity to all corners of the country, affecting interpersonal relationships even in the most remote and peaceful places of the territory. For this reason, it is urgent to collectively formulate mental health policies and programs

for the entire population that apply consistent treatment and disseminate permanent information campaigns that allow to build, in the shortest possible time, an environment of healthy and pluralistic coexistence that avoids citizens having to face again the daily scenes of the insane horror that have been experienced in recent weeks.

#### **Author's Note**

[1] The number of deaths due to this reason has doubled in the last decade, according to studies carried out by the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO). According to PAHO, suicide among young people and adolescents between 15 and 29 years of age is the second leading cause of death in this age group, surpassing even deaths caused by traffic accidents.

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