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Winners and losers

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A study by the famous Massachusetts Institute of Technology, also known as MIT, reports that the interactions among Americans from different social spheres are occurring less and less.

Researchers collected cell-phone data from more than one million people in several cities in the United States to see mobility, and found that lower income people do not visit the neighborhoods of higher income people and vice versa. They conclude that this represents a dropoff in interaction levels between different social strata of up to 30% from pre-COVID-19 rates.

The scientists who carried out the study are concerned by the result and the implications of this decline for social harmony. Not seeing each other can result in the loss of mutual empathy.

But if empathy is the issue, as many as a quarter of those surveyed in Canada believe that being poor, living outdoors or having psychiatric problems are reasons that warrant allowing euthanasia for people who request it.

Euthanasia, in a nutshell, is assisted suicide; people who, for some reason, such as a terminal illness or other, have decided to die, and want to do so with medical assistance. The practice is legal in several countries. One in four respondents believes that if a person is unable to cover medical expenses, euthanasia should be authorized if requested.

It might seem that the survey is about a hypothetical world. It is not. That country's laws on euthanasia are so ambiguous that they allow euthanasia to be requested for a considerable number of reasons. "Based on the definition of Canada's laws, virtually anyone with a chronic medical condition, such as disabled people, can be authorized for euthanasia," explains Alex Schadenberg, executive director of the Euthanasia Prevention Coalition.

In 2021, 10, 000 Canadians died by euthanasia. This year, it will be legal for the mentally ill to request death by euthanasia in that country.

Les Leandry, 65, according to the Daily Mail, has asked to die by euthanasia. He does not want to die but he cannot bear the thought of living poor. One doctor has already given his approval, but he needs the approval of another, according to the law.

Leandry, who is wheelchair-bound and suffers from diabetes, says she will see one doctor after another until he finds one willing to sign his request. Due to changes in his social security, Les now lives at the poverty line and is in danger of losing his home and being forced to live on the street.

There is precedent. In 2019, Sean Tagert requested euthanasia and it was granted because he could not afford the medical care he needed, according to AP. Euthanasia is now the sixth leading cause of death in the country.

According to the annual U.S. News and World Report, Canada has the third highest standard of living in the world and the 15th highest global happiness index reported by the United Nations. We have already mentioned that up to a quarter of those surveyed approve of euthanasia due to poverty, according to Reserach co. a figure that reaches 41% approval among those under 34 years of age.

However, Canada is not alone in this. According to Evolution News, U.S. law allows the same laxity. In fact, it reveals, in many cases, the doctors who authorize the procedure have not treated the patient, and have only met him or her briefly to determine his or her eligibility for assisted death. The publication notes that euthanasia can even be requested by an exchange through a digital application, such as a chat room.

In societies where the concept of "winners" and "losers" prevail, it is difficult to survive as a loser. If we add the systematic isolation of the social strata with the consequent erosion of social empathy, as reflected in the MIT study, we have the ingredients of "happy" societies whose alienation leads them to consider euthanasia as a way out of the structural problems of their society. Only the "winners" deserve to live.

In the first decades of the 20th century, Max Henríquez Ureña, a Dominican intellectual living in Cuba, described in the Cuban society at the time, "the admiration of certain social groups for the practical man, a sort of fetish whose example was wielded to oppose that of those who cared more for their own culture than for material success in life. In Cuba, (...) there was no shortage of those who made an excessive praise of the practical man, whose archetype could be found in the self-made-men, creators of companies and builders of wealth in the United States."

In the very beginning of the bourgeois neocolonial republic, the sense of success for the Cuban bourgeoisie and its social henchmen was, in the ideological plane, subordinated to the idea of the U.S. colonizer, according to which the individuals are qualified in two sides: the "winners" and the "losers."

For the "winners," there are plenty of examples; the "losers" did not deserve any respect or rights, except for the right to be shorn. In other words, we were all Cubans, but some Cubans were winners and others, the majority, were losers.

Let's remember history, and let's keep our eyes on our geographical environment, even that of our "happy" neighbors, so that they don't pull the wool over our eyes, now that some are digging up the idea of the "successful Cuban" as a novelty.

Let us not get carried away with the idea that it is a matter of some people prospering and the rest waiting for that prosperity to reach them. Lest the "prosperous" suddenly want the rest of us to find the solution in requesting social euthanasia.

A Revolution was made here to put an end to that.

(Translated by ESTI)

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