

BRAZIL'S PRESIDENT MICHEL TEMER SAYS ROUSSEFF WAS IMPEACHED FOR REFUSING HIS ECONOMIC AGENDA

Inacio Vieira. Sep. 23 2016, 8:52 a.m.

BRAZILIAN PRESIDENT MICHEL TEMER let an open secret become explicitly clear during a speech to business and foreign policy leaders yesterday in New York. The country's elected and now-removed President, Dilma Rousseff, was impeached because of her position on economic policy, rather than any alleged wrongdoing on her part, her installed successor admitted. Temer's stunning, and seemingly unscripted, acknowledgement will surely bolster the view of impeachment opponents that Dilma's removal was a "parliamentary coup d'etat."

In his remarks, Temer clearly stated what impeachment opponents have long maintained: that he and his party began to agitate for Rousseff's impeachment when she refused to implement the pro-business economic plan of Temer's party. That economic plan which Rousseff refused to implement called for widespread cuts to social programs and privatization, an agenda radically different from the one approved by Brazilians through the ballot box in 2014, when Dilma's Workers' Party won its fourth straight presidential election. The comments were delivered on Wednesday to an audience at the New York headquarters of the Americas Society/Council of the Americas (AS/COA).

When impeachment proceedings began, Temer was serving as Rousseff's Vice president and his party, the Brazilian Democratic Movement Party (PMDB), were once close partners with Rousseff's Workers' Party (PT). However, they officially broke their alliance in late March, supporting her impeachment and aligning with a right-wing coalition supported by business leaders and conservative ideologues. It is that center-right coalition that now controls the government in post-impeachment Brazil.

The program "Bridge to the Future" – proposed by Temer's party – prescribes cuts to health and education spending, reduced welfare benefits, a raised retirement age, new private sector partnerships and decreased market regulations. These ideas were the ones Temer advocated in his speech yesterday at AS/COA, which emphasized his government's push for privatization and foreign investment. The newly installed President listed the multiple benefits and guarantees that his government intends to offer foreign investors. Those benefits including guaranteeing the profit margins of the business leaders who watched him speak while consuming their meals.

The AS/COA groups which Temer addressed is composed of members of multinational corporations and the U.S. foreign policy establishment focused on Latin America. Both were founded by the American industrialist David Rockefeller and have as its President Emeritus John Negroponte: the former Reagan and Bush administration ambassador and neoconservative hawk influential in the CIA's dirty war in Honduras and the 2003 invasion of Iraq who is now a prominent supporter of Hillary Clinton. On its website, the Council of the Americas describes itself as an "international business organization whose members share a common commitment to economic and social development, open markets, the rule of law, and democracy throughout the Western Hemisphere."

Temer's sales pitch was chock full of standard neoliberal euphemisms and buzzwords, including the "universalization of the Brazilian market," "reestablishing trust," "extraordinary political stability," public-private partnerships, and the implementation of "fundamental reforms" in areas like labor law, social security and public spending. "I come here to invite you to take part in the country's new phase of growth," he proclaimed.

Temer's comments are yet more confirmation that Rousseff's impeachment did not occur due to alleged budget tricks, as the Brazilian media and the country's now-ruling faction regularly claims. Nor was it for the traditional Brazilian family, nor for God, or against corruption, as congresspeople claimed during their "yes" votes. It was conducted on behalf of the interests of business owners and to the detriment of workers. It was for an agenda of impunity, profit, and power that would never be ratified democratically by the Brazilian voting population at the ballot box, and was thus imposed on them under the guise of upholding the law. Anyone still doubting that should simply listen to what the prime beneficiary of impeachment, Michel Temer, just said to his most important constituency.

<https://theintercept.com/2016/09/23/brazils-president-michel-temer-says-rousseff-was-impeached-for-refusing-his-economic-agenda/>

The video: Michel Temer on Dilma's Impeachment

"And many months ago, while I was still vice president, we released a document named 'A Bridge to the Future' because we knew it would be impossible for the government to continue on that course. We suggested that the government should adopt the theses presented in that document called 'A Bridge to the Future.' But, as that did not work out, the plan wasn't adopted and a process was established which culminated with me being installed as president of the republic."