

POLITICAL BUREAU

Number 4

October 23, 1973

Present: Britton, Hansen, Jenness, Jones, Lovell, Morrison,
Stone

Visitors: Dobbs, Evans, Finkel, Lund, Scott, Seigle, Shaw,
Waters

Chair: Stone

Agenda: 1. Watergate

1. WATERGATE

Seigle reported on coverage in our press and general propa-
ganda tasks.

Discussion

Meeting adjourned.

10/28/73

OCT 29 1973

To the FB

Dear Comrades;

After listening to the tape of your discussion Tuesday on Watergate and reading the article by Caroline Lund in the Nov. 2 Militant which summarized the apparent consensus of your discussion, I want to say that I think you have taken an unnecessarily negative stand on the impeachment question.

I think all of us agree that whether or not we advocate or support impeachment is not a principled question. I agree that "the issue is much greater than whether Nixon should be impeached." But it doesn't follow that therefore we should not call for impeachment too. What is there to stop us from calling for impeachment and explaining the much greater issue (actually issues) at the same time? Our first response was to file suit. The issue is much greater than our suit, but we didn't see any contradiction there -- and quite correctly. Similarly there would be no contradiction between calling for impeachment and for a labor party and a workers' government, provided that we present the questions correctly. In fact, our propaganda for a labor party and workers' government can be strengthened and enriched by calling for impeachment, and will reach a larger audience.

If we had a member in Congress, what would he or she be doing and saying? In my opinion, the line in the paper would be inadequate and would look evasive. He or she should be an advocate of impeachment, an active one, actively opposing and attacking the anti-impeachment forces in both capitalist parties. Would this mean assuming responsibility for whoever might get chosen president after Nixon's impeachment? Of course not. Our member would vote against that one too, if the chance is given, and could call soon enough for his impeachment too. In the course of fighting for impeachment our member would get a chance to say everything that is in the Militant article, and more, and ~~it~~ would be heard by more people not only because he or she is a member of Congress but also because he or she is actively for impeachment. It is in this spirit that our press should handle the impeachment question; it gives us an opportunity to reach more people than ever before with a line that will help to lead them from their present level of political consciousness toward a more revolutionary one. We miss part of the opportunity by seeming negative to impeachment.

Nixon was at the height of his power early this year and well on his way to ~~shifting~~ shifting the axis of the government toward a more authoritarian (anti-democratic, centralized) arrangement than it has ever had in peacetime. His scheme has suffered a very severe check, for reasons I won't go into here. His cabinet was decimated, his chief aides disgraced, and his own regime has become the most disliked of any in this century (even worse than Herbert Hoover's). His impeachment, although it will not solve most problems or even remove the ~~serious~~ danger of an ultraright coup, will seriously weaken the forces of the ultra right. That is how it is seen by many millions of people, including those whom we want to win to our party. Having an ambiguous or negative position on impeachment creates unnecessary barriers between us and them at a time when they should be most receptive to our ideas.

I therefore hope you will consider this matter further.

Comradely,

George Breitman