

Letters from Australia, the US and New Zealand defending Philippine historian Dr. Joseph Scalice

By our reporters
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The World Socialist Web Site is publishing more messages of support for Dr. Joseph Scalice, who has come under attack from the Philippine Stalinists for his powerful August 26 lecture, “First as Tragedy, Second as Farce: Marcos, Duterte and the Communist Parties of the Philippines.” The lecture examined the support given by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), and the various organizations that follow its political line, to authoritarian Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte in 2016.

Acutely sensitive to the criticism of the CPP, its founder Jose Maria Sison, without a shred of evidence, has denounced Dr. Scalice as a paid CIA agent and an informer for Duterte. Dr. Scalice, through the establishment of the historical record about the betrayals of the CPP, has done a service to the working class in the Philippines and internationally.

We encourage our readers to come to the defence of Scalice, including by sending statements of support to the WSWs opposing the slanderous attack on him by the Communist Party of the Philippines and sharing his lecture broadly.

Phoebe, university student in Melbourne, Australia:

Dr. Scalice’s lecture was eye opening in the exposure of the Stalinist-Maoist opportunism of the CPP throughout their history. Sison’s attacks against Scalice only further expose the lengths Stalinists will go to in falsifying their reactionary history and continual betrayal of the Filipino working class, as Sison can offer no defence of the CPP’s political role. I commend Dr. Scalice for bravely delivering this lecture in the face of these attacks and for his strong defence of historical truth. These threats must be taken seriously

and I stand in support of Dr. Scalice and his historically significant work.

Aditya, a student from Pakistan, in Australia:

The sheer volume and depth of the evidence Joseph uses to prove his point about the deceptiveness of the CPP is incredible. The slander he is receiving from them is not just shameful, it is possibly threatening. We praise Joseph Scalice for his work as a historian, and for his well-documented honesty in the face of the fascist Duterte and the lying CPP. This evidence of the betrayal of ordinary people by pseudo-left groups like the CPP is instrumental to preventing future betrayals by educating people, and we must not allow historians like Joseph Scalice to be bullied and threatened for it.

Antoinette, student in Melbourne:

Joseph Scalice has presented a very well set-out and researched analysis of the history of the communist parties of the Philippines and their repeated support for dictatorial and authoritarian leaders such as the current Rodrigo Duterte. The evidence he presents clearly and calmly demonstrates this, despite claims from the leader of the CPP that attempt to deny it, and reveals it to be a consequences of their Stalinist ideology of the necessity of an economic revolution of the bourgeoisie before any socialist revolution can occur.

Joseph Scalice has shown a great deal of courage by openly sharing his findings and thus defending historical truth, and his academic freedom needs to be defended. This is especially true when his work exposes glaring falsehoods whose persistence have such tangible and disastrous effects on the rights and wellbeing of the people of the Philippines.

Mohammad H, an IT worker in Sydney:

As a person interested in the labour movement, I

watched Joseph Scalice's recent lecture on the history of the Communist Parties in the Philippines and was impressed by his work ethic and historical discoveries. Scalice's painstaking effort combing through records has produced findings I expect will be deemed pivotal to understanding the Filipino labour history by the academic community in years to come.

The desperate attacks and accusations against Scalice, particularly the accusation of being CIA affiliated, are clear attempts to silence Scalice by those embarrassed by his revelations. Scalice's own work shows that the attacks made by the CPP leadership carry the threat of political violence. I urge people to come to the defence of Scalice against these accusations and to appreciate his academic work by watching and sharing his lecture.

Chris R, transport worker in New Zealand:

Stalinism was and is the gravedigger of the Russian Revolution of 1917. It murdered revolutionaries, destroyed the Bolshevik Party and assassinated Leon Trotsky in a failed attempt to silence the Fourth International he created. Sison, of the wretched Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), a Stalinist-Maoist outfit, slanders and threatens historian Joseph Scalice because he cannot answer in principled debate and discussion the historical analysis of Stalinism in this country, and the disgusting crimes it has committed in the service of capitalism.

The fact of the matter is that the betrayals of the CPP and previous outfits against the Philippine working class are in line with the anti-working class politics and class character of Stalinist organisations: support for the fascist President Duterte and his war-on-drugs death squads, false slanders of Trotskyists as CIA agents, support for a non-existent "progressive bourgeoisie"... this goes all the way back to the dispute in Russia over the Stalinist bureaucracy's adoption of the "two-stage" theory of revolution, when they opposed Trotsky's theory of permanent revolution as the bureaucracy defended its privileges against those who actually made the revolution in the first place.

Bob, a WSWS reader in California:

I would like to add my support to historian Joseph Scalice's lecture exposing the treacherous record of the Philippine CPP, its founder Jose Maria Sison, and their violence-ridden, history-distorting Stalinist program of support for the reactionary national bourgeoisie, and

the Duterte fascist regime.

I strongly condemn Sison's slanderous and mendacious attack on Scalice branding him as a CIA agent. This accusation and threat is an attempt to deflect attention away from the crimes of the CPP. It is scapegoating an historian for having the principles and courage to warn and tell the truth to the whole world about the dangerous anti-democratic and anti-working class role of the Stalinists. It is Stalinism, not Trotskyism, which has a long history of being the main prop for, and agency of imperialism.

Hector Cordon, US:

I would like to begin my comments by thanking Joseph Scalice for his courageous exposure of the crimes against the working class carried out by the Philippine Communist Party under Jose Sison.

In listening to Joseph's lecture, it struck me that a historical shift was being consciously documented. Harold Isaacs meticulously traced the betrayals of the Chinese Communist Party in his powerful book *The Tragedy of the Chinese Revolution* of 1938. The defeat of this revolution contributed to the strengthening of Stalin and Stalinism.

The critical difference today is that Scalice's lecture and work is educating workers, youth and the oppressed in this history, before the working class enters into major revolutionary battles. By revealing the lies propagated by Sison & Co., their history of betrayals, their class orientation to the bourgeoisie and, thus, deepening their crisis, this will prepare a new generation of fighters seeking how to topple capitalism, and arm them with an understanding of Stalinism's role: as "the gravedigger of the revolution."

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