Edited transcript of Joseph Scalice's lecture on CPP

First as Tragedy, Second as Farce: Marcos, Duterte and the Communist Parties of the Philippines

Joseph Scalice
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On August 26, Dr. Joseph Scalice delivered the lecture below at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore on the support given by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP), and the various organizations that follow its political line, for Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte in 2016. Scalice examined the historical and political origins of this policy of the party by exploring the historical parallels with the actions taken by the CPP and a rival party, the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), in the late 1960s and early 1970s, as then President Ferdinand Marcos took steps toward the imposition of military dictatorship.

Joseph Scalice is a postdoctoral researcher at Nanyang Technological University with a Ph.D in South and Southeast Asian Studies from UC Berkeley. He specializes in the history of modern revolutionary movements in the Philippines, focusing on the manner in which they both influenced and were shaped by regional and global political shifts. His doctoral dissertation, Crisis of Revolutionary Leadership: Martial Law and the Communist Parties of the Philippines, 1957–1974*, dealt with the political rivalry between two Stalinist parties, the PKP and the CPP, and their role in Ferdinand Marcos' imposition of martial law in 1972.*

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. Dr. Scalice has through the establishment of the historical record about the betrayals of the Stalinist CPP has done a service to the working class in the Philippines and internationally.

The WSWS calls on its readers to send statements *in support of Dr. Scalice and to oppose the slanders of Sison and the CPP.*

What follows is an edited transcript of the lecture. The video can be viewed here, and the slides are available for download.

I would like to thank Nanyang Technological University for facilitating this postdoctoral lecture series and for furthering our scholarship. Both the faculty and staff of NTU have been immensely supportive to me and to my work here.

I have been a scholar of the Communist Parties of the Philippines for the past ten years. Over the course of my research my scholarship sharpened its focus on a particular time period, building off of a remarkably rich and comparatively unused set of primary sources. When I first launched this project, I thought, like a number of scholars before me, that I would write a history of the CPP, from its founding to the present and that I would base my work largely on interview accounts. In the process, I discovered that I was treading a path that had already been trodden by prior scholars. I found, however, what became the heart of my work, when I dug into the contemporary written record, which was voluminous, and which opened up horizons that were previously unknown.

In the process, I discovered that I could not begin with the founding of the CPP, but had to go earlier, examining in detail why it split from the PKP, and the role played by its earliest members prior to the split. At the same time, I discovered that I could not possibly continue my writing up to the present. There was far too much ground to cover. Thus, in the end, my scholarship became about how there were two Communist Parties, who were antithetical to each other, and how both had a role to play in the imposition of martial law in 1972.

The written record is diverse: it is leaflets, it is fliers, pamphlets, manifestos and newsletters. Many of these are one-sheet ephemera, which were produced by various organizations in the broad milieu known as the National Democratic movement. I digitized nearly 10,000 pages from various archives, attempted, through painstaking work, to reconstruct what day each document was written, and then to situate it into a broader narrative, which I reconstructed on the basis of reading the contemporary newspaper record. I read through every issue of eight different daily papers over the course of six to seven years, as well as the newsweeklies. This is why my research took so long to complete.

I am gratified to see that there is such overwhelming interest in the topic that I am presenting today: *First as Tragedy, Second as Farce, Marcos, Duterte and the Communist Parties of the Philippines.* An element, however, of the interest in this lecture stems from a controversy that erupted over the past week, as the founder of the Communist Party of the Philippines, Jose Maria Sison, known as Joma Sison, began directly attacking me over social media.

In the week from August 18 to August 25, he posted doctored images of me, with a clown nose and clown hair, an "I luv Trotsky" pin, and a book about distorting history. He also wrote that I was "a pathologically rabid anti-communist and a CIA psywar agent posing as an academic Trotskyite." This, I would like to point out, is libelous. He has no evidence with which to claim that I am a "CIA psywar agent."

He went on to state that the "Trotskyites abroad—like Joseph Scalice—and in the Philippines—have made futile attempts to blame the legal democratic forces, as well as the revolutionary forces, for the rise to power and current criminal rule of the traitorous tyrannical, genocidal, plundering and swindling Duterte regime."

The CPP dedicated a special issue of their flagship publication, *Ang Bayan*, which has been in existence since 1969, to attacking me. In an extended interview, Sison again referred to me as a "paid agent of the CIA"— repeating the same baseless slander.

He stated, "I have been aware of the rabid anti-communist and anti-Stalinist writings of Scalice for quite some time, long before now. I have ignored him, because American comrades and friends have told me that he

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was already well exposed as a Trotskyite and as a paid agent of the CIA, paid to focus on the Communist Party of the Philippines and my writings, and make a career out of attacking and misrepresenting me."

He went on—and I certainly have no intention to go into all of this—but I'll read one more quotation. "Scalice is both a liar and an incorrigible anti-communist agent of imperialism and reaction. Indeed, he is practically a wild informer for the benefit of the Duterte death squads."

Sison has provided no evidence to substantiate any of his vicious allegations against me. He has made no serious attempt to engage with my scholarship. It is apparent that he believes that he can dismiss my work by simply labeling me with a stock vocabulary of slanderous ad hominems.

Now, I would like to point out that his bullying, in the pages of the special issue of *Ang Bayan*, carries with it a very real threat. The party has long been associated with the assassination of its political opponents, and the name "Trotskyite," in the mouth of a Stalinist, is a threat of physical liquidation. The record of history on this point is very clear, both in the Philippines and around the world.

I will not, however, be bullied by Sison, nor will I be baited into engaging with him on his vulgar political level. I intend to go ahead with my historical lecture.

In the face of his attack, I have received an outpouring of support from academics and journalists alike, who have issued public statements in support of me, and I wish to express my gratitude to those who have come to my defense. What is more the *World Socialist Web Site* published a statement in defense of academic freedom, historical truth and my scholarship, and I am grateful for this defense as well.

Prior to this controversy erupting, I wrote a public statement responding to the Duterte administration's violent targeting of a number of activists associated with the National Democratic movement, the broad range of organizations that follow the political line of the Communist Party of the Philippines. Over several weeks, at least two leading figures of the National Democratic movement had been brutally murdered. I would like to read the statement that I published on August 14.

"Those who are acquainted with my scholarship will also know that my historical work is trenchantly critical of the role played by the leadership of the Communist Party of the Philippines and of the various organizations affiliated with its political line.

"I would thus like to be explicitly clear on this point: I unreservedly defend the party and those associated with it from the attacks carried out against them by the state and by paramilitary and vigilante groups.

"The murder of Randall Echanis was an attack on the working masses of the Philippines and marked a dramatic step toward police-state rule.

"The defense against the danger of dictatorship requires the unity of the working class for its own independent interests.

"My opposition to the CPP and its allied groupings is based on the fact that they have consistently opposed the political independence of the working class and have forever sought to subordinate its interests to the formation of an alliance with a section of the ruling elite. It was this perspective, the program of Stalinism, that led the leadership of the party to embrace Duterte, facilitating his rise to power and downplaying the danger of dictatorship.

"My opposition to the leadership of the party and its political program is thus a defense of the interests of the working class. For the same fundamental reason that I oppose the party—defense of the working class—I publicly declare my defense of those associated with the party from attacks by the state and its paramilitary forces."

Now neither Sison nor anyone else associated with the CPP has acknowledged this declaration, although a good many academics and the broad public have responded to it very warmly. Sison claims I am an informant for the death squads.

Make no mistake, the death squads of Duterte are a very real threat. The war on drugs, on a national level, commenced as Duterte took office.

The victims of the death squads are overwhelmingly poor. They come from shantytowns, they are tricycle drivers, fishball vendors, petty criminals uncharged of a crime, and they are murdered every night. There are murders carried out by police without warrant, and, even more, there are murders carried out by paramilitary organizations and vigilante groups.

The most recent count that I have been able to locate of the official government count of those who have been killed by the police as part of the war on drugs was 6,000. We know, however, from regular accounts in the press that there are several times more who are killed by paramilitary organizations and vigilante groups than are killed by the police. The numbers are very difficult to accurately assess at present. We can estimate the total number of victims by using the official numbers of the Philippine police and applying to this number the ratio that we know exists between the victims of the paramilitary death squads and those of the police. Such a calculation would suggest that somewhere around 30,000 victims seems to be a relatively safe rough estimate.

This I believe can bear the label "genocide," a genocide against the poor in the name of the war on drugs. Doubtless you will have seen in the press internationally, that Duterte's war on drugs is overwhelmingly popular with the Philippine population. I think when future historians and sociologists probe more deeply into these events they will arrive at a far more complicated narrative. The same surveys that finds around 80 percent support for the war on drugs, return another figure that is very rarely cited: 8 out of 10 Filipinos fear that they will be killed in the drug war.

Now if you were being surveyed and you admitted that you were fearful for your life, do you think you would simultaneously claim that you were opposed to the war on drugs? I think making a public statement of any sort in opposition to the war on drugs might be seen as something of a death sentence. I don't believe that the war on drugs is immensely popular.

Among the claims that Sison made in his public attack on me was that it is "an outright lie" that the CPP supported the Duterte regime. Sison wrote "only a Trotskyite can interpret peace negotiations between two warring parties as support for Duterte, and betrayal of the people." To be clear, that is not my argument. I'm not attacking the peace negotiations, or claiming that this was the way in which the party supported Duterte. As I will demonstrate their support was much more obvious and thorough-going than that.

I would like to single out this sentence in Sison's statement: "It is an outright lie that the CPP supported the Duterte regime in its extrajudicial killings of poor people, for two years." I want you to bear this formulation in mind as I review the historical evidence.

What I had intended to do in this talk was to focus, above all, on a set of instructive historical parallels to an earlier period, the period from 1969 to 1972, and the rise to power of Ferdinand Marcos. Given that Sison has explicitly claimed that it is a lie that the CPP supported the Duterte regime, I feel that it is first necessary to review in some detail the contemporary record.

Many in my audience will doubtless recall that the National Democratic movement and the CPP were quite enthusiastic about Duterte when he took office. This enthusiastic support is now constantly denied. We are told that it never happened. A commenter on my Facebook page the other day made a remark that I found particularly accurate. He said, "It feels as if we're being gaslighted." I think there is some truth to the characterization.

Before I begin my review of the evidence, I would like to make one more point: I do not know, nor do I particularly care, who is or is not a member of the Party. This is not information I am privy to, and if it were, I would not disclose it. Beyond the public faces of the Party, this is not information that I possess.

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We do know, however, that there is a broad mass movement in the Philippines, which is organized into a number of groups, the majority of which share a common political perspective and orientation. I am not alleging that these organizations are secretly controlled by the Communist Party. I am not red-tagging them. I am claiming, rather, that they share with the party a common political line. I will examine the nature of that political line in considerable detail, but, in the final analysis, it consists of a quest to locate the progressive section of the national bourgeoisie and ally with it.

The National Democratic movement has not only always had this orientation, which it shares with the CPP, but somehow it has always allied with the same forces as those identified as progressive by the party.

Who is Rodrigo Duterte? Duterte was a member of the youth wing of the Communist Party of the Philippines in the 1960s. He was, in the 1980s, a leading member of BAYAN, part of the National Democratic movement. We know this because Joma Sison himself said so. Duterte rose to power in the southern city of Davao, where he rapidly achieved prominence as a particularly vicious political figure: the head of death squads. As a result of his reputation, then President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo brought him onto her anti-crime commission. Duterte addressed the anti-crime summit in 2002, stating that "summary executions of criminals remains the most effective way to curb kidnapping and illicit drugs."

I intend to single out just a few statements by Duterte, which I have selected out of a desire to make clear that there was no miraculous transformation of Duterte into a fascistic figure in 2016. His track record was already crystal clear.

The UN special rapporteur investigating the death squads in Davao under Duterte declared, "No one involved in the vigilante murders covers his face." In other words, these acts had official sanction. Everyone knew this. Hundreds of dead bodies, over the course of a decade under Duterte's mayoral rule, provided the grim evidence.

The response of the National Democratic movement was not opposition. Luz Ilagan, a congresswoman with Gabriela, part of the National Democratic movement, in a statement published in the *Manila Times* in 2009 appraised the mayoral role of Duterte thus: "The Mayor deserves our support. Those from outside the city cannot appreciate what the Mayor has done to maintain the order that we enjoy. Duterte's brand of leadership has kept us safe and secure."

There is some truth to this statement. Over the course of Duterte's rule as mayor, the victims of the vigilante murders were not drawn from the National Democratic movement. They were not activists. In fact, even the CPP and NPA were not targeted. The targets were the poor, very much the same targets that now suffer under his presidency.

Let us fast forward to 2015. Duterte has now been brought onto the national stage. He has been made into what is known in the Philippines as someone "presidentiable." In January 2015, Duterte staged a press conference, in front of a hammer and sickle flag that was hoisted for him by the CPP-NPA, and announced that if he were elected, he would abolish Congress, privatize government assets, including social security, and form a coalition government with the CPP. He promised that Joma Sison would be made head of the newly privatized social welfare bureau. Sison, the founder of the Communist Party, responded on Facebook, "Mayor Duterte should become president."

Remember that it's an outright lie that the CPP supported Duterte.

May 25, 2015: During a radio interview, Duterte was confronted with a *Human Rights Watch* report that over 1,000 people were killed during the late 1990s by death squads in this city. He responded by proudly affirming that he was the head of death squads, and then he made a statement that became famous: "If I become president that number will become 100,000. I will feed the dead bodies to the fish of Manila Bay."

I have to say that a great deal of the press and a number of political figures who should have treated this as an admission to mass murder, an outrageous political declaration, and an explicit warning, responded by claiming that Duterte was joking. If the estimate of 30,000 victims that I proposed earlier in this lecture is anywhere near accurate, Duterte is attempting to keep his promise.

In July 2015, there was a wake staged for one of the leaders of the armed wing of the CPP, the New People's Army, a man named Leoncio Pitao, known as Ka Parago. The wake was staged in Davao. There were no attempts to hide the event, there were no concerns over security. The CPP bused in an immense crowd to honor this "revolutionary leader." The stage carried the banners of the party, "Long live the United Front! Long live the Communist Party of the Philippines!" In the center of the stage are the images of the hammer and sickle and of the armalite. Doubtless they sang the Internationale, and then the party brought Rodrigo Duterte forward as their guest speaker. The head of death squads, who had publicly proclaimed a month earlier that he would oversee the murder 100,000 people, was given the stage by the Communist Party to honor one of their leaders.

Recall: *It is an outright lie that the CPP supported Duterte*.

The party put up graffiti in Davao promoting the armed struggle and commemorating Pitao. Side-by-side with the face of Pitao they placed the image of Rodrigo Duterte.

When it came to the 2016 election, in his usual volatile fashion, Duterte did something rather unusual as the official window for declaring your candidacy for president was closing. He backed out and announced that he was not running for president. A rather unimportant man, Martin Diño, was chosen as the candidate of Duterte's party.

Looking for a presidential candidate which whom to ally, the National Democratic movement latched onto Grace Poe, whom they had endorsed for Senate in 2013. The Makabayan Coalition's senatorial candidate Neri Colmenares ran on her slate.

Then with a dramatic flair, Duterte announced that he had decided that he was rejoining the race. Diño stepped down and Duterte began to campaign for president. This presented the National Democratic movement with a challenge, for formal ties with Poe had already been made. They were obligated to campaign with and for her.

In Mindanao and throughout the southern Philippines, however, Anakbayan, Anakpawis, and their affiliated organizations, did not campaign for Poe, they campaigned for Duterte. Campaign trucks throughout the region bore posters for Anakpawis, Neri Colmenares and Rodrigo Duterte.

Central to this were the figures associated with the National Democratic movement from Davao, in particular Anakpawis representative Ayik Casilao. Images of him, taken from his own Facebook page, show Anakpawis campaigning throughout the region using the raised fist salute that is the trademark of Duterte.

The National Democratic movement's candidates from Mindanao, Casilao and Carlos Zarate of Bayan Muna, signed a public declaration in May of "full support to presumptive president elect Rodrigo Duterte."

Some representatives of Bayan Muna in Manila were taken aback at the speed with which the National Democratic movement was moving to endorse Duterte after having campaigned for Poe. Sison took to Facebook in May to publicly criticize them. He wrote: "You don't just attack capitalists … We can work with nationalist capitalists even as we talk to and persuade compradors … Our honeymoon is just beginning. We're talking to him. He's offered us positions."

Sison delivered a particularly vile speech on June 10, 2016, in an address to assembled youth leaders drawn from a wide range of organizations. He claimed, "While Mayor of Davao City, Duterte has recognized and appreciated the role of women in public life, has created facilities for women and children in need, and has demonstrated his abhorrence of violence to women." This is a staggering lie.

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Duterte is notorious for making rape "jokes;" jokes along the line of, having visited men who carried out rape, accosting them for not letting him go first. He wolf-whistles female reporters during his press conferences. When the CPP finally had a falling out with Duterte, he made a speech in which he called upon the military to attack female members of the CPP by shooting them in the vagina.

This is not a man who has "demonstrated his abhorrence of violence against women."

I would add that Sison does not have a great deal of credibility when he speaks about the defense of women's rights. The party maintained a policy over the course of decades of disciplining female cadre if they engaged in pre-marital sex. This was an attempt on the part of the leadership to avoid alienating some of their allies in the Catholic Church. Women were routinely excluded from political leadership within the party.

Sison went on in his June 10 address to youth leaders:

"What is in sight is a kind of Coalition government, between the Party and the Duterte administration, that involves the participation of the Communist Party amidst other patriotic and progressive forces. It is a government of national unity, peace and development. … The question therefore arises whether the national democratic revolution can be completed in the absence of a people's war. …"

Now he didn't answer this question, but he did propose what precisely would happen to the New People's Army in the event of a coalition government with Duterte.

"Revolutionary armed units can become guards of the environment and the industries under conditions of peace and development. Integration of armed forces is permissible."

A great many of the cadre of the New People's Army who have taken up arms, believing that they are fighting for a better world, are young people. These young people have become convinced that there is no other solution to the extraordinary poverty in the country. Many of them have sacrificed their lives.

Sison was declaring that the armed wing of the party, including the idealistic and self-sacrificing youth who have joined ranks, would be transformed into security guards in industry. Bear in mind that Sison is proposing this transition take place under national democracy, not socialism. These are private capitalist firms to which the NPA would be made security guards. He further argued that the cadre of the NPA could be integrated into the Armed Forces of the Philippines, a force that has been responsible for the suppression, brutal torture, and murder of the cadre of the party over the course of decades.

No time elapsed under the newly-elected Duterte administration before the character of his presidency became obvious. Agence France Presse wrote on June 12, "Armed police are detaining crying children, bewildered drunks and shirtless men throughout the Philippine capital, in a night-time blitz that is offering an authoritarian taste of life under incoming President Rodrigo Duterte. Parents of children, found on the street, at night, alone, were jailed." Within the first week of the new administration a body count was amassing. The corpses of the victims were strewn in the streets alongside bloody cardboard placards, and images of the carnage were appearing on the front pages of the Philippine press.

The National Democratic movement didn't simply endorse Duterte. They endorsed the war on drugs. Einstein Recedes, secretary general of Anakbayan wrote on June 26: "We believe that Duterte's war on dangerous drugs and crime is a boon to the poor."

Renate Reyes, secretary general of Bayan, wrote on July 4: "To put it plainly, he is an ally." While he admitted that Bayan had "differences" with Duterte, he argued that "to be immediately confrontational every time the President said something disagreeable during the past month would have weakened the alliance." He appealed to his readers, "We should at least give him a chance."

That was the concern of the National Democratic movement. If they warned the public that Duterte was engaged in a campaign of fascistic mass murder, it would weaken their alliance with the president.

Bayan produced, for the inauguration of Duterte, a statement: "The People's One Hundred Day Agenda," which declared "The Filipino people are elated over Duterte's nationalist and pro-people policy pronouncements."

After Duterte's inauguration speech, they were welcomed into Malacañang presidential palace where they presented the statement to him and posed for photographs raising fists together with the president.

Sison began ending his statements by declaring "Long Live President Duterte!"

Recall again: *It is an outright lie that the CPP supported Duterte*.

Duterte delivered his State of the Nation Address. It was a rambling, vulgar speech, of a type with which we are unfortunately all too familiar now. Part of his speech was directly addressed to the military and police. "I have to slaughter these idiots who are destroying my country," he declared. "I told the military if you see any [criminal], shoot them, even if they surrender with a white flag, that is for war not criminals. Shoot them, show no mercy to them." Anakbayan declared that Duterte's State of the Nation address was a "breath of fresh air."

On June 26, 2016, *Ang Bayan* the flagship publication of the Communist Party of the Philippines, wrote, "The people will completely support the steps that Duterte will take to remove and punish the drug syndicates." Two weeks later, on July 7, *Ang Bayan* declared, "The CPP welcomes Duterte's call for cooperation with the revolutionary forces against widespread drug trafficking." Luis Jalandoni declared in *Ang Bayan* in August, "The relationship between the revolutionary movement and Duterte is excellent."

Duterte delivered a speech to the Armed Forces of the Philippines on July 1 in which he issued an appeal to the New People's Army of the CPP. "Use your kangaroo courts to kill them [alleged drug pushers] to speed up the solution to our problem." The CPP responded the next day with a statement entitled "Response to President Duterte's call for anti-drug cooperation" which declared: "The party welcomes President Duterte's call for cooperation with the revolutionary forces against widespread drug trafficking." The CPP stated that they "share President Duterte's reprehension of the illegal drug trade."

A month had now transpired and the body count was in the hundreds. Police were shooting anyone who resisted arrest, with explicit presidential sanction. The CPP followed suit. Their statement continued, "The NPA is willing to give battle with any who resist arrest with armed violence."

Sison was interviewed on CNN the next day and he announced to an international audience that the party would be violently cracking down on alleged drug dealers. Asked how suspects would be accorded due process in the courts of the NPA, he stated that the "people's prosecutor" would present prima facia evidence in the form of witness testimony before "revolutionary justice" was carried out.

The party has a long and bloody history of "revolutionary justice" and "people's courts." In the 1980s, the party launched a series of internal purges targetting its own ranks, as they hunted out what they claimed were deep penetration military agents. On the basis of "witness" testimonies, extracted under torture, the CPP murdered nearly 1,000 of its own cadre.

Recall again Sison's claim: "It is an outright lie that the CPP supported the Duterte regime." I hope that it is by now clear to you what is, in fact, an outright lie. *It is an outright lie that the CPP did not support Duterte.*

This support and retraction of support, in which the lies are used to justify support and subsequently to cover it up—these constitute a pattern that forms a critical element of the party's historic behavior. This is a point that I wish to establish clearly. The entire history of the party has been falsified by its leadership. If you only take away one thing from of

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this talk it should be a passionate appeal for historical truth.

I would like to point out one more instance of how the party and the National Democratic organizations support Duterte. It is particularly galling to me.

In the name of the Kabataang Makabayan (KM), the Nationalist Youth, which was the youth wing of the Communist Party in the days leading up to martial law, the National Democratic movement and the CPP awarded the "Gawad Supremo Award" to Rodrigo Duterte in honor of his nationalism.

The Gawad Supremo Award, highest award of the Kabataang Makabayan, was awarded to two people and two people only—Rodrigo Duterte and Jose Maria Sison. The young people who joined Kabataang Makabayan were in many ways the best layers of an entire generation. They were self-sacrificing, they labored ceaselessly. As I worked through the history of the period leading up to the Marcos' dictatorship, I came away with a profound admiration for these young people and their commitment and their dedication. At the same time, I developed a profound opposition to what their leadership did with this dedication.

The awarding of the Gawad Supremo to Rodrigo Duterte seems to me like one final betrayal. The sacrifices of those who fought against dictatorship fifty years ago and all of their suffering was turned into a tawdry merit badge to be pinned on the chest of a fascistic thug in order to facilitate a political alliance.

I want to turn to the stuff of history. What was the Kabataang Makabayan? What are the historical roots of the party's alliance with Duterte? Are there instructive parallels that can aid in our understanding of the present?

My account begins with Joma Sison himself. The events with which we are concerned do not start with an individual, and the history involved long predates Sison. The roots of our story begin with the founding of the Partido Komunista ng Pilipinas (PKP), an earlier Stalinist party. I will explain precisely what I mean by Stalinism in a moment. The PKP was founded in the 1930s, it established a large peasant wing, it oversaw a peasant rebellion, known as the Huk Rebellion, that fought against the Japanese occupation and subsequently against the newly independent state, and largely went underground in the 1950s. I cannot cover this history here.

I want to focus in my lecture today on the history of the split in the PKP that led to the founding of the CPP and how, I argue, both parties facilitated the imposition of martial law. In the rebirth of the PKP out of its dormancy in the 1950s, in the split, in the founding of a new party, no individual played a more central role than Jose Maria Sison.

Sison's background is particularly instructive. He came from one of the wealthiest families in the country. His great grandfather Don Leandro Serrano controlled the largest estate in northern Luzon during the last quarter of the 19th century. Sison himself recounted that his great grandfather owned 80 percent of his home town and large chunks of four other municipalities. With the profits from the estate he built "the largest mansion in the province. With 25 rooms it was said to have a total floor space of 5,000 square metres excluding a dining hall that could seat hundreds, a chapel and a four-level storehouse that was the biggest in the province." The description is taken from Sison's own memoirs which were written on basis of interviews with him.

Don Gorgonio Sison, Joma Sison's grandfather, married one of Don Leandro's daughters. He was the last *gobernadorcillo* of Cabugao under the Spanish colonial regime. He became the municipal president of the town during the brief lived Philippine Republic and managed to retain his position under the Americans, becoming Cabugao's mayor.

By 1921, the Sison family estate included vast tobacco holdings worked by an army of tenant farmers. Sison's family embodied feudal privilege with peasant clients and sprawling landholdings adjoined and divided up by intermarriage. He was at the center of a vast nexus of familial connections. Two of his uncles were congressmen, one was the archbishop of Nueva Segovia, and his great uncle was the governor. One of his other uncles was the president of the University of the Philippines, another uncle was the head of Commission on Elections (COMELEC). The front pews in Sunday mass were reserved for his family. Peasant tenants came each day to house to deliver land rent and to ask for seeds, to do menial tasks around the house and to plead for special consideration. All of this shaped Sison's psychology.

His mother, in a charming interview with *Graphic Weekly* in 1970, said that her son, whom she called Cheng, "used to order the maids around, more than any of my other children. Maids had to wait on him constantly. He never did things for himself. Even in the bathroom he would call the servants to hand him his towel, his clothes."

This world of privilege, however, was disappearing. Don Leandro's estate had been based on rice, tobacco, indigo and maguey. These commodities fared poorly in the 20th century. While sugar became a monocrop commodity of immense global significance, indigo and maguey were replaced with synthetic dyes and synthetic fabric. The center of rice production largely shifted to the province of Nueva Ecija. Tobacco came to dominate the family holdings and it could not sustain their former wealth.

Looking to shore up the family holdings, Sison's father, Salustiano, wrote a letter to his uncle Vicente Mallari in 1949 asking him to convey to the Secretary of Interior that he was interested in becoming "a secret agent" for the government. This letter is housed in the University of Hawaii in the collection of Sison's brother, Ramon Sison. He wrote:

"I have learned from reliable sources that Secretary Sotero Baluyut is employing secret agents for the Department of Interior in pursuance of the present campaign against dissidents in Central Luzon and other parts of the Philippines." This was in reference to the Huk Rebellion. Sison's father was looking to shore up the family holdings by become a secret agent to suppress the Huk Rebellion.

The family's declining financial means meant that Sison's horizons were somewhat circumscribed. He was still a child of privilege but he and his siblings pursued a less feudal and more urban existence with decidedly more limited means. They were, in a word, petty bourgeois.

Sison's siblings became a doctor, a dentist and a technocrat in the Marcos administration and Sison himself aspired to "become a lawyer, go to Harvard and become a political leader." He pursued his undergraduate and graduate education at the University of the Philippines where his uncle, Vicente Sinco, was president of the university. Sinco secured funding for his nephew from the International Cooperation Agency (ICA), the predecessor of USAID.

It was during the course of his graduate career that Sison began to develop a political perspective, which was shaped above all by the ideas of Claro M. Recto.

Recto shaped the ideas of an entire social layer in the late 1950s and early 1960s with his speeches calling for "nationalist capitalism." He was addressing a fundamental problem that confronted the Philippine economy, as it did the economies of countries of belated capitalist development around the world. The Philippine economy was dominated by international finance capital, above all American business interests, and it was shaped according to their interests. Recto articulated, rather eloquently, the interests of Filipino capitalists.

A speech which Recto delivered to the Cavite Jaycees on February 24, 1957 is representative. He called for "the industrialization of the country by Filipino capitalists, and not simply the prevention of industrialization by foreign capitalists; exploitation of our natural resources by Filipino capital; development and strengthening of Filipino capitalism, not foreign capitalism; increase of the national income, but not allowing it to go mostly for the benefit of non-Filipinos."

This was Recto's fundamental concern—the development of Filipino

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capitalism. Measures were taken along these lines through the Filipino First policy of the Garcia administration. The privileges of American capital in the Philippines had been legally enshrined by Washington into the laws of its former colony. As a result, the targets of Filipino First were overwhelmingly the Chinese business community. They were scapegoated and their assets were stripped from them.

In the end none of the issues that Recto sought to address in the development of Filipino capitalism were resolved. The young people who were drawn to the perspective of Recto began to recognize that if Recto's vision was to be achieved it required the impetus of a mass movement behind it. It was not sufficient for it to remain the program of capitalists, it had to become a program adopted by the broad mass of the population.

In 1965, shortly after the founding of Kabataang Makabayan (KM) and shortly before Sison instructed KM to support Ferdinand Marcos, Sison delivered a speech in front of the US embassy in which, according to the *Manila Bulletin*, he told his audience: "We are siding with Filipino capitalists." This was his fundamental perspective.

He elaborated this perspective very clearly in a speech entitled "The Nationalist as Political Activist," which he delivered in 1966. He told his audience that Philippine society was divided into three wings.

"In terms of class tendencies, material interests and ideology, the left wing would be occupied by the working class and the peasantry. The middle wing embraces three strata of the so-called middle class and these three strata can themselves be described as left, middle, and right within the middle wing, the left middle wing is occupied by the intelligentsia, and self-reliant small property owners whom we may call the petty bourgeoisie; the middle middle, the nationalist entrepreneurs, whom we may call the national or middle bourgeoisie; and the right middle, the merchants who are partially investors in local industry and who are also partially compradors. The right wing is composed of the anti-nationalist forces, such as the compradors, the landlords and their rabid intellectual and political agents".

What is the political task of the mass movement? Sison continued:

"To tilt the balance for the purpose of isolating the right wing composed of the enemies of progress and democracy, it is necessary therefore for the main and massive forces of the workers and peasants to unite with the intelligentsia, small property owners and independent handicraftsmen, win over the nationalist entrepreneurs and at least, neutralize the right middle forces. The resulting unity is what we call nationalist or anti-imperialist and anti-feudal unity."

The fundamental task for workers and peasants, the overwhelming majority of the population, was not to fight for their own independent interests but to win over the "middle middle"—the nationalist bourgeoisie.

This is a hard thing to sell. What Sison was effectively promoting was trickle-down economics. It had not yet received that name, for this was not yet the era of Reagan. The claim of Recto, however, and in Sison's early articulations it took the same form, was that if you improve Filipino capitalism you will improve the lot in life for everyone, including the working class. Let's be honest, telling a worker, "support your boss, it will be good for you," is not an effective slogan on which to build a mass movement.

Sison's graduate career ended and he travelled to Indonesia. He was facilitated in this by a member of the Indonesian Communist Party named Bakri Ilyas. In Indonesia, Sison worked closely with the large Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) and over the course of his half-year stay in the country he learned what I am terming the program of Stalinism. Allow me to explain precisely what I mean by that.

Stalinism is not simply the mechanism that I think is popularly associated with the name—show trials, purges, the cult of the great leader. These things are part of Stalinism, but they are its necessary expressions and not the essence of the matter. Stalinism is first and foremost a political program. The historical record bears this out in spades.

Stalinism was a political program that articulated the interests of the ruling bureaucracies, first in Moscow and subsequently in Beijing. These social layers, of whom Stalin was the foremost representative, came to feel that their interests were best served not by promoting world socialist revolution but by the development of the national economy of the USSR. It was this national economy that funded and stabilized their privileges. In service to this end they put forward a political line that was fundamentally antithetical to all prior Marxism, something that Lenin had never dreamed of—socialism in one country. They argued that you could build socialism within the borders of a single country.

The idea of Marxism was that socialism had to be a step beyond capitalism and thus had to build on the highest achievements of capitalism and that among these achievements was creation of the world market. Socialism could thus only be achieved on a global scale. This was no longer a perspective being put forward by the leadership of the Soviet Union under Stalin. This was the programmatic core of Stalinism: socialism in one country.

Not all of the Soviet Communist Party adopted this perspective. Stalin was fiercely opposed in this by what was known as the Left Opposition under the leadership of Leon Trotsky. In opposition to Stalin, Trotsky put forward the program of permanent revolution, which argued that socialism could only be achieved by the international working class carrying socialist revolutions around the world; it could not be constructed within a single country. The political task, therefore, was to organize workers and peasants throughout the world in a fight for socialism.

The international interests of Stalinism, in service to the program of socialism in a single country, were above all to secure trade ties and diplomatic relations with capitalist powers. It needed markets for goods, a source of supplies for creating heavy industry, and stability on its borders. How could they secure such things, what weight could they bring to negotiations?

The success of the Russian Revolution and the heritage of Marxism, which the party claimed as its own, gave Stalin and the bureaucracy an immense political capital: the cadre of Communist Parties around the globe. They instructed these cadre to ally with a section of the capitalist class. In this way they could negotiate with the ruling class around the globe by bartering with the support of a mass movement. The Stalinists created the theoretical justification for supporting a section of the capitalist class by rehabilitating an old theory, originally put forward by an opponent of the Bolsheviks, the Mensheviks—the idea of a two-stage revolution.

The two-stage theory argued that in countries of belated capitalist development, such as the Philippines, the tasks of the revolution were not yet socialist. It was first necessary to carry out national and democratic measures, and among these was land reform. These were immensely important tasks. The two-stage theory argued that it was impossible to attempt to carry out socialist measures until these national democratic tasks had been completed.

The tasks were thus not yet socialist but capitalist in character, and as a result, the Stalinists argued that a section of the capitalist class would necessarily play a progressive role—these layers they referred to as "the progressive section of the national bourgeoisie."

This then was the fundamental program of Stalinism: socialism in one country, a two-stage revolution and the bloc of four classes, which required an alliance with the capitalist class.

Trotsky and the Left Opposition, which organized itself into the Fourth International, opposed this program and argued that in countries of belated capitalist development the capitalist class was fundamentally incapable of carrying out national and democratic measures.

Capitalists in the Philippines, for example, would not carry out land reform because they are not a separate class from the landlords. All of the big capitalists are in fact also the landed elite. If you examine the history

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of the CPP's alliances over the past 50 years a great many of their allies have been the representatives of the sugar barons. These are not forces with any interests in carrying out land reform. The tasks of the national democratic revolution, Trotsky argued, could only be carried out by workers, leading the peasantry, for their own independent interests, and this required that they adopt a socialist program.

Having laid out what I mean by the program of Stalinism, I would like to explore what its political expression was in the 1960s and early 1970s.

Sison addressed an audience of young people in early 1967, quoting from Mao extensively. Mao had stated:

"Some people fail to understand why, so far from fearing capitalism, Communists should advocate its development in certain given conditions. Our answer is simple. The substitution of a certain degree of capitalist development for the oppression of foreign imperialism and domestic feudalism is not only an advance but an unavoidable process. It benefits the proletariat as well as the bourgeoisie, and the former perhaps more."

Note that Mao is saying that capitalism is in fact better for the proletariat than it is for the bourgeoisie. Stalinism had supplied the trickle-down arguments of Recto with the guise of Marxism. Sison's quote from Mao continued:

"It is not domestic capitalism but foreign imperialism and domestic feudalism which are superfluous in China today, indeed, we have too little of capitalism."

Sison elaborated on this perspective: "It is a basic principle of Marxism that bourgeois-democratic conditions must first exist before a socialist society can be built up. What we need in the Philippines today is a conscious national unity strong enough to assert our own sovereignty and achieve Filipino democracy before we are divided on the question of socialism."

This was the essence of the matter. According to Sison, the perspective of socialism for the Philippines was that it was not yet time for socialism. It was necessary to find the progressive capitalists and ally with them.

The first progressive representative of the national bourgeoisie endorsed by the party during Sison's time in the leadership of the PKP was President Diosdado Macapagal.

In 1962, on returning from Indonesia, Sison was brought into a newly-formed, five-member executive committee of the PKP. Among the other members of the committee was the trade union leader, Ignacio Lacsina. Working through the confidential papers of the US embassy, I discovered that Lacsina was not only a member of the executive committee of the party but he was also a regular informant for a representative of the CIA housed at the US embassy. Lacsina met with his embassy handler regularly to inform him of developments within the party.

One of the more remarkable developments in the 1960s was the foundation of a Workers Party known as Lapiang Manggagawa (LM). It was an independent organ of workers formed out of a merger of all the major trade unions into a political party that was founded in January 1963. Such a thing had never existed before. Lacsina was given the most powerful position in the LM, secretary general, while Sison served as Vice President for Propaganda, a position which made him responsible for all of the party's public statements.

Within seven months Sison and Lacsina had merged the independent workers' party with the ruling Liberal Party (LP) of President Macapagal. Macapagal was establishing friendly ties with Sukarno in Indonesia and both the PKI and the PKP saw this as a step toward geopolitical non-alignment. This was their motive in proclaiming him the progressive representative of the national bourgeoisie.

Sison and Lacsina arranged the merger of the LM with the LP during the midst of the government's brutal suppression of some of the sharpest labor unrest in the country's history. In 1963, 3,000 longshoremen at the Manila Port went on strike. The strike lasted for 169 days—shutting down the country's main port. Commerce ground to a halt. Workers were murdered on the picket line by both government troops and scabs. Some workers died of malnutrition because none of them were given strike pay. By mid-August official estimates placed the business losses incurred by the port strike at over one billion pesos with more than a month to go.

The port was directly controlled by the government. The workers were picketing and striking against the Macapagal regime, not a private company. On August 6, 1963, as Macapagal concluded the Manila summit with Sukarno, Joma Sison and Ignacio Lacsina oversaw the merger of the Lapiang Manggagawa with the Liberal Party.

A document signed by both the LM and the LP declared,

"Aware of the epochal social and national reforms now being energetically carried out under the leadership of President Diosdado Macapagal;

"Believing that nothing short of the unity of all forces for democratic change can assure the success of these reforms...

"Realizing that the forces opposed to reform programmes have banded together under the banner of the Nacionalista Party; ... "agree to coalesce the parties effective immediately…"

This was the logic they presented to the working class: Macapagal was carrying out reforms and the forces opposed to reform had banded together in the political rival of the LP, the Nacionalista Party. On this basis Sison and Lacsina merged the independent workers' party with Macapagal's LP.

The workers at the pier were already on strike, and had been for two months, when the merger document was signed. Lacsina had publicly announced that he intended to call out a general strike of the LM in support of the port workers. He used this threat to negotiate ties with Macapagal and then called off the general strike before it could commence, abandoning the port workers.

In early September, while the port workers' strike was still ongoing, Philippine Airline workers went on strike and shut down nearly all domestic travel in the country. Macapagal deployed the Philippine Constabulary and they bayoneted the workers on the picket lines on September 8. I doubt if a single person in this meeting was aware that these events ever took place. They have been erased from history because those who were responsible for the leadership of the workers' organizations betrayed them.

What was Sison busy doing at this time? He was writing the Handbook of Macapagal's Land Reform program. The land reform of the Macapagal administration had been written by a man named Wolf Ladejinsky of the Ford Foundation. Its function was to transform sharecroppers into cash rent paying tenants. Peasants who were interviewed later in the 1960s declared that this transformation had made their lives worse.

We know that Sison wrote this handbook for the LM, because he has listed it as one of his publications on the bibliography of his writings on his personal website. The frontispiece of Sison's book carried a smiling picture of Macapagal and an inscription that reads "To President Macapagal, for his relentless struggle to emancipate the Filipino peasant." Sison told his readers,

"President Diosdado Macapagal believes that the land problem cannot be solved by merely regulating share tenancy and/or by coercing a restless peasantry with civilian guards and military operations.

"In the Agricultural Land Reform Code, the basic solution to the basic problem is provided: Share-tenancy is to be totally abolished and owner-cultivatorship be instituted in its place. To accomplish this principal objective the Code offers a full panoply of implementing land reform agencies whose functions and operations are all revealed in this primer."

That's what Joma Sison wrote in 1963. Seven years later, he wrote *Philippine Society and Revolution*, which became the most important work of the Communist Party of the Philippines. This is what he had to say about the Land Reform Code of which he had served as the lead promoter in 1963:

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"To further make itself appear progressive and to swindle the peasantry, the Macapagal puppet regime enacted the Agricultural Land Reform Code. Like all previous land reform laws, the code amounts to nothing when shorn of its glittering generalities and when the provisions favorable to landlords are exposed. After a few token land reform projects, the bankruptcy of the code becomes conspicuous...."

Macapagal's land reform was "a bombastic collection of words to cover the oft-repeated lies of the landlord class."

That was in 1970. Recall again the pattern: the party supports Duterte; the party declares that it is an "outright lie" that they supported Duterte. Sison wrote the handbook of Macapagal's Land Reform; Sison declared that Macapagal's land reforms promoted the interests of the landlords and swindled the peasantry. Lies upon lies.

Macapagal proved to be of limited usefulness and he turned against Sukarno in 1964. Joma Sison oversaw the shift in the front organizations of the party from their support of Macapagal to support for Marcos. The party instructed workers, peasants and youth to support Marcos on the claim that Marcos would keep the Philippines out of America's war in Vietnam.

Lyndon Johnson reached out to Macapagal in 1964 asking the Philippines to deploy troops to Vietnam in anticipation of a surge in US deployment to the country. It is historically noteworthy that this appeal was made prior to the Gulf of Tonkin Incident. Macapagal promised to send troops and sent a bill to the legislature. Then Senate President Ferdinand Marcos attacked Macapagal, accusing the President of attempting to implement a dictatorship.

On the basis of the claim that Marcos would keep troops out of Vietnam, Sison delivered a series of speeches in support of the Nacionalista Party, and by November 1965 he had instructed MASAKA, the peasant organization, Lapiang Manggagawa, the workers' organization, and Kabataang Makabayan, the newly founded youth organization, to support Ferdinand Marcos.

One week after Marcos was elected, in an interview with Stanley Karnow of the *Washington Post*, he declared that he would deploy Filipino troops to Vietnam.

The Kabataang Makabayan had been founded a year before it was instructed to support Marcos. In his speech to the Founding Congress, Joma Sison told his audience, in rhetoric that should sound familiar by now:

"On the side of imperialism are the compradores and the big landlords. On the side of national democracy are the national bourgeoisie, composed of Filipino entrepreneurs and traders; the petty bourgeoisie, composed of small-property owners, students, intellectuals and professionals; and the broad masses of our people, composed of the working class and the peasantry to which the vast majority of the Filipino youth of today belong."

The militant youth wing of the PKP was founded on the perspective of the bloc of four classes and an alliance with the capitalist class.

As Ferdinand Marcos took office in early 1965, and as a result of global circumstances not national developments, an immense social crisis loomed. Marshall Wright, of the US National Security Council, sent a confidential memo to National Security Advisor Walter Rostow, in which he said:

"It would be nearly impossible to overestimate the gravity of the problems with which our next ambassador to Manila must deal. It has become common-place for people knowledgeable on the Philippines to predict a vast social upheaval in the near future. There is widespread talk that the current president will be the last popularly elected Philippine chief executive. Many high-level American officials consider the Philippines to be the most serious and the most bleak threat that we face in Asia."

A social explosion was imminent. The response of the ruling class around the globe was a turn to authoritarian forms of rule. There are more than shadows of the present contained here. We are confronted with social crisis and the rising tide of global authoritarianism: Suharto, Marcos, Pinochet. Like the capitalist class around the globe, the ruling elite in the Philippines felt its class position to be imperiled. The entirety of the ruling elite, and not simply Marcos, sought the solution to this danger in dictatorial forms of rule. There was hardly an individual amongst them that was determined to defend democracy.

The architecture for police-state rule in the Philippines had been written by US imperialism, which wrote martial law into the constitution of its former colony and wrote trial by jury out. Numerous prior presidents, including Macapagal and Garcia and Quirino, had all indicated that they would employ these clauses and declare martial law.

Why did Marcos succeed where they had failed? His success rested upon context of social crisis that led to the rise of global authoritarianism, and a universal sentiment among the elite that they could no longer afford the trappings of democracy. If I could use an analogy: the implementation of dictatorship by Ferdinand Marcos was like a game of musical chairs or, as we call it in the Philippines, Trip to Jerusalem. All of the ruling elite were engaged in a game circling Malacañang, knowing that when the music stopped, when martial law was imposed, whoever was seated in the presidential palace would be dictator.

It was in this context that the Sino-Soviet split played out across the Philippines. One of the most damning indictments of Stalinism is the fact that the vast economies of China and the USSR never merged. The program of "socialism in one country," I argue, was always a betrayal of Marxism, but you could argue it had a certain logic: there only was one country in which to build socialism. But after 1949 there were multiple countries, each of them committed to building "socialism in one country," each with their own national interests. Those national interests inevitably diverged, and that divergence turned into a fraternal conflict, and that conflict into an armed dispute, and it split communism around the globe.

The Soviet Union, situated behind the buffer zone of Eastern Europe and on a fairly stable industrial base, was able to articulate a program of peaceful coexistence with Washington, and pursued ties with dictators around the world as a means of stabilizing its diplomatic and trade relations. When Suharto oversaw the crushing of the PKI, murdering over a million Indonesian communists, workers and peasants, and took power, the Indonesian army had been operating, to a certain extent, with arms that had been sold to them by the Soviet Union. In the wake of the slaughter, Moscow established friendly ties with Suharto.

Beijing, meanwhile, confronted Taiwan, Japan, the US war in Vietnam and a dramatically underdeveloped economy. In an attempt to diffuse the threat of US imperialism from its borders in 1965, Lin Biao put forward the line of "protracted people's war": armed guerilla movements throughout the countryside of the world. This was still in service to the program of support for the progressive section of the national bourgeoisie, but it was not to the ruling dictators. It was to, as I like to call them, the conspiring understudies in the drama of dictatorship: those forces in the Philippines like Ninoy Aquino, who sought to displace Marcos, but did not do so, in the end, in defense of democracy. They did so to ensure that they themselves would be in the position of power.

The armed movement of the CPP, and the persuasive force that its radical rhetoric gave it over the social crisis, was brought in service to these layers, the conspiring layers of the national bourgeoisie.

I do not have time to adequately elaborate the manner in which this played out, but I would like to make a few points.

The PKP, oriented to Moscow, took up salaried positions in the Marcos administration in 1966. They secretly facilitated his negotiations with Moscow, which he could not democratically conduct because he was hampered by certain reactionary clauses in Philippine law that prohibited him from interacting with Communist countries.

The PKP then had members of their periphery ghost-write Ferdinand

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Marcos' justification for martial law, a book entitled *Today's Revolution: Democracy*. It was written by Adrian Cristobal, who was in the periphery of the Communist Party, and it declared: "To Lenin we owe the statement that there could not be revolution without a revolutionary theory. … Lenin conceived of the revolution in two steps: the first the bourgeois, then the proletarian."

The argument of a two-stage revolution was Stalin's not Lenin's, but what is even more striking is that this was the voice of Ferdinand Marcos. The PKP ghost-wrote the justification for martial law, pretending that Lenin had put forward Stalin's perspective and then put these lines in the mouth of the wannabe dictator. What an extraordinary act!

Jesus Lava, longtime head of the party, proclaimed that Marcos' book was "a brilliant analysis of the ills of Philippine society."

When Marcos imposed martial law in 1972, a section of the PKP broke away and attempted, through armed struggle, to oppose the party's support of the regime. These layers had waited far too long to break from the party, a point that I elaborate in great detail in my dissertation. The PKP, however, was unable to enter into the cabinet of Ferdinand Marcos if there was a section of the ranks that opposed martial law. And thus, denouncing their opponents as Trotskyites—a language that Stalinists use to murder their opponents—they assassinated and executed their insubordinate rank-and-file. The estimates are hard to come by, but somewhere from 60 to 70 of the cadre of the PKP were murdered by the leadership of the PKP so that they could endorse military dictatorship. While the numbers are not yet clear, it is safe to say that more communists were killed by the PKP than were killed by the Marcos administration.

The PKP justified its support for the dictator on the grounds that he was using martial law to rapidly create the conditions for functioning native capitalism. At their Sixth Party Congress held in early 1973, the PKP wrote,

"The Philippines is a neocolonial country of dynamic capitalist development. Its economy is in the main backward and deformed by colonial plunder. ... Under the hegemony of finance capital, spearheaded by US imperialism, the Philippines is vigorously being transformed from a predominantly feudal country into a modern capitalist economy. Today it is experiencing a tremendously rapid pace of capitalist buildup through the instrumentality of the martial-law dictatorship."

Now, if you didn't know it, that doesn't sound like an endorsement from a Communist Party: international finance capital is developing capitalism through martial law dictatorship. This formulation did in fact express the class orientation of the PKP and served as the endorsement of dictatorship that they published at their Sixth Congress. Every member of the party was compelled in the wake of the congress to resubscribe to the party in order to remain a member. If you were to be a member of the PKP, you were obligated to sign on to this political resolution endorsing the dictator.

The leaders of the PKP carried out a tremendous political crime. They entered into the administration of the martial law dictatorship. They took up positions in Foreign Affairs, the Labor Ministry and military intelligence, where they were responsible for crushing their rivals, the Maoists. Many of them are still alive, some of them are in prominent positions.

The CPP meanwhile was oriented to the conspiring sections of the bourgeois opposition. The party held sway over the vast mass movement of the time, and using the rhetoric of Cultural Revolution and protracted people's war, they were able to channel this unrest behind their bourgeois allies.

Above all, the CPP was allied with Ninoy Aquino, scion of a leading political dynasty who stood at the center of a vast set of sugar interests. Aquino had facilitated the establishment of relations between Sison and the head of a local armed movement, which was based on Aquino's sugar estate, a man known as Commander Dante. The meeting between Sison and Dante was instrumental in the creation of the New People's Army.

This point in my dissertation has been taken out of context by certain Duterte apologists, who latch onto Aquino's relations to the CPP to argue that Marcos was somehow justified in imposing dictatorship. They deliberately leave out the central fact that Marcos had the full-throated support of his own Communist Party which assisted in the implementation of dictatorship.

Aquino was not an opponent of martial law. A memorandum of the US Embassy, on September 12, 1972, summarizing a meeting between Aquino and political officers of the Embassy, reads:

"Aquino believes that martial law is the most likely means Marcos will use in order to stay in power. Aquino said that he would support Marcos if this is the course he adopts. Since the law and order and economic situation is deteriorating so rapidly, in Aquino's view, the good of the country requires strong measures on the part of the Central Government. The growing threat from the dissidents, the worsening law and order problem … were cited by Aquino as reasons why stronger central government action is needed. Such action means martial law. Were he President, Aquino indicated that he would not hesitate to take such strong action and would, for example, execute several corrupt officials at the Luneta Park in Manila as a lesson to other officials that he meant business."

Aquino was not a democratic figure. He fully represented the social layers with which the CPP had allied, and whom they promoted as the opponents of "fascism." In the end it didn't matter who won: Marcos and the PKP or Aquino and the CPP. Regardless, the Filipino working class confronted dictatorship.

When dictatorship was finally imposed, Sison hailed it as good for revolution, for he claimed that "repression breeds resistance." This has always been the line of the party: the worse that "fascism" gets, the better it is for building opposition. This is a fundamental falsehood. Workers have everything at stake in defending democracy. It is the air they breathe for the development of a political movement.

Sison did not just double down on his line that repression would cause the revolution to grow. He also insisted, two weeks after military dictatorship had been imposed upon the country, on October 1, 1972, that the party need to find and ally with the progressive sections of the national bourgeoisie:

"The Party should win over members of the national bourgeoisie, in the cities and in the countryside, to give political and material support to the revolutionary movement. Since they themselves cannot be expected to bear arms against the enemy …"

The party did not expect these progressive capitalists to bear arms. That was the task of workers, peasants and young people. These were the forces that the party expected to labor, and suffer, and die.

"… they can extend to the revolutionary movement support in cash or kind ..." The capitalists were expected to give the party money, to fund it. And in return, Sison continued, "The party should protect their legitimate interests …"

This was Sison's response to martial law: it was good for revolution; workers would take up arms; capitalists would give the party money; the party would instruct the armed workers to defend the interests of the capitalists.

Mao, meanwhile, went a very different way. Confronting the threat of a possible Soviet invasion in the wake of the crushing of the Prague Spring and the declaration of the Brezhnev doctrine that the Soviet Union would interfere with the affairs of any socialist country that threatened Soviet interests, Mao crushed the Cultural Revolution, ostracized Lin Biao, reached out to Kissinger and Nixon and established ties with US imperialism, with Washington.

Mao then turned to countries around the world and, like the Soviet Union, established relations with dictators. He embraced Marcos and

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Pinochet. Salvador Allende was tied to the Communist Party of Chile, which was oriented to Moscow, and when Pinochet crushed the Communist Party and the Chilean working class, the Communist Party of China immediately welcomed Pinochet.

Marcos used martial law to carry out the repression of the working population on an industrial scale, crushing the social unrest of the time. When Marcos visited Beijing to establish trade and diplomatic relations with the People's Republic of China, Mao issued a public statement that the CCP would not interfere in the "domestic affairs" of the Philippines.

Sison proclaimed that Mao's opening of relations with Marcos was a "diplomatic victory for the People's Republic of China and a victory for the Philippine revolutionary struggle." The word "lies" is inadequate to encapsulate this argument.

It is impossible to defend human rights, not simply within these organizations, but on the basis of their political line. The CPP and its allied organizations do not represent a force defending democracy. That is my historical summation.

The party was responsible for purges within its own ranks that killed 1,000 of its own members. It also recruited child soldiers, producing comics and reading primers, so that they could recruit children as young as ten and eleven years old to the New People's Army in the late 1970s and early 1980s.

Those who are interested in defending human rights need to look elsewhere. This is not that I don't defend the human rights of the CPP and its front organizations. I read an explicit defense of them against the violence of the state at the beginning of this lecture. My point is otherwise. If you are interested in defending democracy, preventing the rise of dictatorship and defending human rights, these are not the social forces that you should be looking to.

My final appeal is to all scholars and to broad public who have listened to this lecture. The rhetoric of Sison and company, with his bald-faced assertion of "outright lies," his violent vulgarities—he told me that I should "wallow in my own saliva"—and his circulation of doctored images—these are the tactics of the far-right. The language of the CPP is indistinguishable from the Diehard Duterte Supporters, the DDS, on Facebook. You could do a little online quiz, "Who said it: Joma Sison or a DDS troll?" You'd be hard-pressed to tell the difference.

The CPP has no interest in defending historical truth. I would like to conclude by quoting what Trotsky said about the Stalinists in this regard. "With every zig and zag they are compelled to revamp history all over again."

The Stalinists allied with Macapagal, but then declared that he was reactionary and they buried the evidence of ever having supported him. They allied with Marcos, but then, of course, he was reactionary. This pattern has repeated again and again. They allied with Cory Aquino, but then she was reactionary. They allied with Duterte, but now declare him a fascist, and they denounce me as a "paid CIA agent" for bringing up the evidence of their own history.

"The lie serves, therefore," Trotsky continues, "as the fundamental ideological cement of the bureaucracy." It's what holds the whole thing together.

"The more irreconcilable becomes the contradiction between the bureaucracy and the people, all the ruder becomes the lie [I think we're witnessing that now], all the more brazenly is it converted into criminal falsification and judicial frame-up."

Don't rely on what's being said at present. Find the contemporary written record. It is the only thing that we can be certain is accurate. Check it for yourself, review the evidence for yourself. This applies not just to my own field but to scholarship in general. We are in a period where historical truth, the very idea of truth, is under assault, and where authoritarian figures are rising to power the world over on the basis of outrageous lies.

I am speaking in defense of civil discourse, of democratic and public discussion, of verifiable evidence, of logical arguments and the defence of democracy and historical truth. Thank you.

Questions and answers:

Q: In light of the ongoing crisis and the fragmentation of the left, not just here in the Philippines but worldwide, can you provide a sketch on how to deal with the ongoing demise of the liberal state and the surge in populist tides, with both bearings from the left and the right?

A: I would love to address that. It's a marvelous question. A number of people could speak on this topic for a considerable period of time. So I'm going to give you bullet points.

The first is this: Duterte is a political type. He has his political siblings around the world: Donald Trump, Jair Bolsonaro, political parties such as the AfD in Germany and so on. What we're dealing with is a global problem. And so the first point for those who are concerned with the rise of authoritarianism is: this is not a national problem. Our solutions cannot be national solutions. This requires a global political perspective, a profound interaction between people around the globe, workers, scholars, etc., in defence of truth and in opposition to the rise of authoritarianism.

Second, you spoke of the "fragmentation of the left." I understand the concern, but my paramount concern is the fragmentation of the working class, the fragmentation of the social force that can put an end to the danger of dictatorship and can defend democracy. And the defense of democracy is fundamentally a question of the unity of the working class. And if my historical assessment of the history of the Philippines is correct, it's a question of the independence of the working class, its own interests, not the interests of allying with this or that section of the capitalist class.

Now, that's a very clear political conclusion that I'm drawing from this historical record. But in the end the fragmentation of the left, I think, is less a concern than the fragmentation of the working class along national lines.

Q: [inaudible]

A: That is a long question, I cannot possibly do justice to it. I will make this point, however: those who are looking in the Philippines for an alternative are not starting from scratch. I think this is a really important point. The Philippines has a rich, proud heritage of revolutionary struggle, a revolutionary movement to overthrow Spanish colonialism, a protracted and courageous fight against American imperialism at great sacrifice. And a series of uprisings and organizings, labor struggles such as the port strike that I documented. All of this is the rich history of the Filipino people, of the Filipino workers and peasants. Any new movement builds off this history, learns from this history.

But it doesn't just build off of this. You don't start within national boundaries, you start from the existing movement of workers around the world. I think that anyone in the Philippines looking to build a new movement should be looking to their brothers and sisters around the world for their political ideas, for their organization. That's what you build off of.

Q: Based on the tenets of Marxism and Leninism, is Joma Sison a true blue communist? If yes, how come? If not, then why call their party the Communist Party of the Philippines when in fact he's a Maoist? Is this not a case of misrepresentation?

A: Thank you for the wonderful question. Yes, and no. Historically speaking, both. Is Joma Sison a communist in the sense of the Communist Manifesto or in the sense of the Communist Party that took power in October 1917? No, he is not. He does not bear that legacy. But it was the betrayal of Stalinism that allowed it to assume the mantle of this legacy and present itself as the continuation of Marxism. This betrayal allows him to be the leader of the Communist Party, purporting to be the continuator of Marxism. This in fact is his greatest political capital: that he can point to this history and say this is his. It is not. The history that is his is the history that I have outlined in my lecture. And so no, he does not

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represent the continuation of Marxism. But he does represent the continuation of Stalinism.

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