

Educators must defend historian Joseph Scalice from Stalinist attacks

The Committee for Public Education
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The Committee for Public Education (CFPE) calls on all educators and education staff to defend historian Dr Joseph Scalice from attacks by the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP).

Scalice's lecture, *First as Tragedy, Second as Farce: Marcos, Duterte and the Communist Parties of the Philippines*, delivered on August 26 at Nanyang Technological University in Singapore, courageously exposed the historical and criminal record of Maoism and Stalinism in the Philippines.

The CPP and earlier Stalinist parties utilised the Stalinist and Maoist "two-stage theory" to justify the deadly suppression of the working class and its subordination to the national bourgeoisie. This took the form of assisting the coming to power and then supporting the reactionary regimes of Presidents Ferdinand Marcos, Corazon Aquino, and most recently the fascistic Rodrigo Duterte.

Scalice's lecture has educated ordinary people in the Philippines and across the globe on Leon Trotsky's program of Permanent Revolution, which calls for the complete political independence of the working class from all capitalist parties.

In response to Scalice's exposure, the CPP's founder, Jose Maria Sison, has issued a barrage of falsifications, slanders and implicit threats of physical violence against him. These are the tactics of Stalinists, who cannot answer political exposures from the left and so resort to lies and intimidation.

Sison is attempting to re-write the historical record to suit the CPP's current political aims of supporting yet another Washington-backed regime-change in the Philippines. After supporting Duterte's rise to power, Sison is now calling for "patriotic and pro-US sections of the military" to back Vice President Leni Robredo.

In doing so, Sison is attacking the right and obligation

of all historians and academics to research, document and publish the historical and political truth.

The defence of Scalice and academic freedom is inseparably connected to the broader issues facing educators. In Australia and internationally, university staff are being laid off in the thousands, while school teachers are being imperiled by COVID-19 infection, as part of the pro-business drive to reopen schools and workplaces. Academic freedom is under attack, as governments seek to subordinate educational institutions ever more directly to the dictates of the corporations and the military.

It is therefore critical that students, teachers, academics and workers study the political and historical lessons drawn by Scalice, circulate his lecture widely, and call on defenders of free speech and academic freedom to speak out in his defence.



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