

Statements from Canada, India and Sri Lanka in support of Dr. Scalice

Our reporters
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The World Socialist Web Site is publishing messages of support for Dr. Joseph Scalice from throughout the world. Dr. Scalice who has come under attack from the Philippine Stalinists for his powerful lecture, “First as Tragedy, Second as Farce: Marcos, Duterte and the Communist Parties of the Philippines,” which 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.

In response to the exposure 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 urge our readers to come to the defence of Dr. Scalice, including by sending statements of support to the WSWs opposing the slanderous attack on him by the CPP and sharing his lecture widely.

Anton, an art history PhD student from Canada:

Joseph Scalice’s doctoral dissertation, “Crisis of Revolutionary Leadership: Martial Law and the Communist Parties of the Philippines, 1957–1974” (2017) is probably the single most thorough historical account of the post-war Philippine Communist movement currently available. In it, and in Scalice’s subsequent research, we have a rare left-wing critique of Philippine Maoism written from the perspective of a clear-eyed commitment to Marxism as the self-emancipation of the working class.

Scalice’s research therefore offers all of us a chance to reassess the difficult history of the struggle against oppression and exploitation as it has so far been fought in the Philippines—and therefore to make an accounting

of the principles, politics, strategies and tactics of those who have claimed leadership in that struggle. Perhaps Joma Sison and other ideologues of the Communist Party of the Philippines and of the National Democratic Front truly believe that their record in this struggle has been defensible. If that is the case, then it is deeply unfortunate that, rather than mount a historical and political defense of that record, they have instead chosen to defame Scalice with a violently uncomradely sectarian vehemence that denies those of us on the left, but outside the Maoist milieu, the chance to learn from the experience of the CPP’s leaders. On the other hand, perhaps no political defense has been mounted because none is possible in the face of the thoroughness of Scalice’s critique—in which case, the response of Sison and his allies is a lesson indeed.

Sumita, a WSWs reader from Kolkata, India:

The history of the archipelagic country, the Philippines, has recently caught my attention after Dr. Scalice’s rich historical lecture and his excellent work on how the Stalinist party has carried out a big betrayal against the working classes’ effort to defeat capitalism. In fact, Stalinists, in essence, have always diverted the movement of the international working class. Dr. Scalice pointed out this role in relation to the CPP and since then he has become the target of Sison’s stark criticism, vilification and even a subtle threat of violence.

After being exposed for his real intentions of defeating the workers, Jose Maria Sison, who is the founder of CPP Stalinists in the Philippines, launched a campaign of brazen slanders against the scholarly work of Scalice. This is an attack on all intellectuals, something which can be observed in India as well. It is an attempt on the part of the rulers to repress and oppress anyone who criticizes them. Dr. Scalice has

enriched our understanding of what socialism means, against anti-Marxist “socialism in one country” followed by the Stalinists.

The programmatic core of Stalinism, “socialism in one county” and the “two-stage theory of revolution” are diametrically opposed to the [Trotsky’s] permanent revolution. On that basis Stalinists are trying to build up ties with the so-called “progressive sections” of the national bourgeoisie. This is the same historically significant theoretical point shown in case of the CPP. The CPP was attempting to share power with Duterte’s PDP while campaigning for him in 2016 presidential election. Then Duterte announced the privatization of essential government assets including social security and hence promised to form a coalition with the CPP.

The power-hungry games of the CPP, along with its own ideological stance, is harmful to the workers of Philippines. Distinctly, the abundance of knowledge provided by Scalice on such a sensitive topic and his scholarly work is important for an IR [International Relations] student like me. He rightly educated us with his research about the pitfalls of a belated capitalist country like the Philippines.

WSWS reader from Hyderabad, India:

Dr. Scalice has thoroughly exposed the politically criminal role played by the Stalinist Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP) in paving the way for the anti-working class dictatorial regimes of Marcos and Duterte. The historian has collected an enormous amount of material and presented it in his lecture to establish the historical truth. Jose Maria Sison, founder of the CPP, responded to this exposure by denouncing Dr. Scalice as “a paid CIA agent” without a shred of evidence and issued threats of violence.

I categorically condemn this type of cheap reactionary slander and threats of violence issued to silence the true Marxist historian.

What we see in the Stalinist attacks on Dr. Scalice in Philippines is what all authoritarian and anti-people regimes have been doing in the past and in the present—to demonize the critics and whistle blowers in order to intimidate other conscious citizens from speaking up. Governments have no way to rationalise their policies and actions or to appeal to the justified interests of common working people, youth and the intelligentsia. They find a quick and easy way to demonize and take drastic actions to silence the dissent.

But all such historic blunders have failed everywhere across the world. Truth will prevail.

Liyanage, a health worker at a Hospital in Kandy, Sri Lanka:

I came to know of Scalice through an SEP member. As I listened to Scalice’s lecture, I understood that it was not specific to Sri Lanka that people are cheated with socialist posturing by political parties in order to have a hearing and help the rulers.

Workers all over the world should be united to defend those people like Scalice who revealed the truth to the world working class. It is because, in opposition to the leaders of pro-capitalist parties, they have done a great service and otherwise we would never learn about those betrayals.

The same thing has happened in Sri Lanka. Throughout their history the Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna (JVP) Party and Frontline Socialist Party have been cheating people by falsely posturing to be socialist. I understand that the same thing happens in the Philippines and know that Duterte is a mass murderer. Some people who present themselves as intellectuals are engaged in careerist politics and support this or that government.

I honour Scalice. I express my opposition to the slanderous attack against him. I appeal the people to come forward against treacherous cheaters and the Stalinists all over the world.



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