

STATEMENT

The Workers' Party released a media statement today (11 Feb 2022) on the Report from the Committee of Privileges (COP). The statement suggests that the COP's recommendations are related to the political work of Mr Pritam Singh and Mr Muhamad Faisal Bin Abdul Manap, as opposition Members of Parliament (MPs). It further suggests that this would affect the building of a democratic society.

The findings of the COP are based on objective evidence, which is available to all to see. The COP looked at the conduct of Mr Singh and Mr Faisal. Their conduct before the COP amounts to potential criminal offences.

The Motion on the COP's findings and recommendations will be debated and decided on their merits, in full public view. Attempts to politicise the matter even before it has been debated are regrettable.

Based on evidence given by the Workers' Party leaders, including notes voluntarily produced by Ms Sylvia Lim, the COP was satisfied that Mr Singh had lied under oath. And that he had guided Ms Raeesah Khan to continue with her untruths. Mr Faisal had directly and repeatedly refused to answer the COP's questions, despite being warned that this might amount to an offence and constitute contempt of Parliament.

Based on these findings, Parliament has the power to proceed to impose sanctions on Mr Singh and Mr Faisal. However, rather than sanctions being imposed by Parliament, the COP recommended that Parliament consider referring the matter to the Public Prosecutor. In that way, the Public Prosecutor will have to consider the matter again; and if charges are brought, Mr Singh and Mr Faisal will have the full opportunity to defend themselves in a Court of Law. This process will give Mr Singh and Mr Faisal the best chance to vindicate themselves, if they are indeed innocent.

This is how democracy should work. A strong democratic system requires that those who are elected respect the institutions of democracy, especially Parliament, and uphold our laws - including the laws against perjury and prevarication. It will be a perversion of democracy, for an MP to lie, on oath, and then say that such lies should not be dealt with, or that he is above the law because of who he is.

In this matter of Mr Singh's and Mr Faisal's conduct before the COP, if there are any charges, the Courts will decide. And regardless of what the COP has found, the Courts will have the final say. That is what the COP has recommended.

Mr Tan Chuan-Jin, Speaker of Parliament
