

Editorial: Philosophical Radicals

The first witness is the Bertrand Russell Peace Foundation:

The Yugoslav Government has grossly disappointed its many well-wishers in this country by its inexcusable decision to secure the dismissal of the members of the Faculty of Philosophy from Belgrade University. The professors who are being dismissed are all distinguished scholars whose offence is to be found solely in their heterodoxy. . . . A governmental intervention in the conduct of a university's affairs not only contravenes all the canons of academic freedom: in Yugoslavia it also breaches the basic code of self-management, which is the country's fundamental constitutional principle.

Gross disappointment can be felt only by those who have formed optimistic expectations. Dr Leszek Kolakowski, in his contribution to *Neutrality and Impartiality: The University and Political Commitment*, edited by Alan Montefiore (Cambridge University Press £2.20), gives convincing reasons against such optimism:

One probably cannot claim that the highest requirements of impartiality have been met absolutely in any university; it may also be said that no university, even under the worst conditions, has been so utterly corrupted as to leave no element of its teaching or research free from political bias. To infer from this that the difference between the open and totalitarian university is imaginary, or that any difference between them is insignificant ('quantitative only') and so on, is a piece of reasoning very typical of totalitarian crudity. . . . Nobody who knows both kinds of universities—open and totalitarian—from his own experience can honestly claim that the differences between them are unimportant or only apparent.

It is to be hoped that our own philosophical radicals, currently conducting in *Radical Philosophy* a witch-hunt against Professor D. Z. Phillips, are as aware of the differences as of the similarities between Swansea and Belgrade. If not, they may be helped by a notice recently issued by the Editorial Board of *Praxis*, the journal with which the dismissed Yugoslav philosophers have been closely associated:

Quite recently the printing house in which the Yugoslav Edition of *Praxis* has been printed since its first issue sent us a written notice saying that '*the political activists and the governing body of this OUR (Organization of Associated Work) have taken the decision that in the future the service of printing the journal Praxis should be discontinued*'. Accordingly we have no other choice but to state that *further publication of the Yugoslav Edition of the journal Praxis has been rendered impossible*.