

WITTGENSTEIN: TWO PUBLIC STATEMENTS

KENNETH BLACKWELL

Wittgenstein's public statements are rare. In researching Russell's bibliography and post-WWII actions I came across two new ones. The *Report of the Conference on Academic Freedom* (Cambridge: Heffer, 1935; B&R B58), which met at Oxford in August 1934, included "The Auckland Resolution" (p. 80). Many British academics signed it, including "L. Wittgenstein":

1. The university teacher has no less freedom of speech within the law than any other citizen, excepting that there is a special responsibility on him to weigh his public utterances. It must also be recognised that his position in the community may sometimes seem to him to involve a special obligation to speak and, indeed, to make a pronouncement not in accordance with the opinions and traditions of the majority of citizens.
2. The exercise of this freedom (as defined in Clause 1) and indeed, the obligation to speak should not place in jeopardy a university teacher's tenure of his post or make him subject to supervision or correction by the governing authority.

Russell did not sign it, presumably because he was not an "academic" at the time, though his speech appeared in the proceedings (see *Papers* 21: 65). The second statement is a memorial, presented 3 January 1946, to Prime Minister Attlee from "Save Europe Now", Victor Gollancz's organization to alleviate post-war German starvation. A ten-page mimeograph is in RA1 550. The many adherents are classified. Under Universities we find "Dr. L. Wittgenstein". Russell, now returned to academia, is under the Royal Society. Attlee rejected the request in a letter printed in *The Times*, 29 January 1946, although by April, as starvation worsened, the UK increased its relief. The text of the memorial, also signed by T. S. Eliot, Alys Russell, George Orwell *et al.*, reads:

Taking note of the statement by the Foreign Secretary on November 23rd that "Hunger and privation may bring a further terrific human loss more devastating even than the atomic bomb", we earnestly beg that, without prejudice to the claims of special categories, such as children, nursing and expectant mothers, and heavy workers, general rations in this country should not be raised so long as there is famine on the Continent of Europe.