

By **Eleanor Harding**
Education Correspondent

ACADEMICS who attacked an Oxford professor over his views on the British Empire have been likened to Joseph Stalin by a former race equality chief.

Trevor Phillips, former chairman of the Equality and Human Rights Commission, said they were wrong to criticise Professor Nigel Biggar simply for voicing his opinion.

He said the academics were trying to suppress free speech by dictating what lines of inquiry professors should pursue, just like the Soviet dictator.

Mr Phillips is the latest public figure to defend Prof Biggar, who was shamed by dozens of colleagues earlier this month over his views on colonialism.

The eminent theology don wrote an article arguing that society should take a more balanced view of the empire rather than simply remembering it with shame. In response, 58 Oxford academics signed an open letter

saying they 'rejected' his views because they gave the impression the university 'celebrated' imperialism. They also said his new research project, titled Ethics and Empire, 'asks the wrong questions, using the wrong terms, and for the wrong purposes'.

Prof Biggar said the letter, which was posted on the internet, was 'collective online bully-

ing'. And in a letter to the Times yesterday, Mr Phillips said universities were 'permitting the intimidation of minority voices' because anyone with a different opinion was shouted down by hard-Left campaigners.

Mr Phillips said he was the author of the 'no-platform' initiative at the National Union of Students when he was its presi-

dent. In the past, 'no-platform' policies – or bans on speakers – existed to protect ethnic minority students from far-Right thugs, he added.

'We wanted all students to be free to speak their minds in a society that still treated people of colour as unwelcome interlopers.'

Mr Phillips said he was 'dismayed' that the policies had become 'abused', and that anyone with a differing opinion was shut down.

And the Biggar saga indicated that academics were leading the way in these campaigns, he added.

'Today's perversion of the policy means that universities are failing to protect the vulnerable, and permitting the intimidation of minority voices,' he said. 'However, students' misreading of history is entirely understandable if they are instructed by the academics who criticise Nigel Biggar for asking "the wrong ques-

tions, using the wrong terms", an attack line of which Joseph Stalin would have been proud.'

Mr Phillips also said that while he himself had 'no reason to defend colonialism', he agreed with Prof Biggar that 'we should constantly reappraise its consequences'.

He said one was 'today's multi-ethnic Britain' – and that 'we are only here because you were there [in the former colonies]'.

History tutor Dr James McDougall, one of the letter's signatories, said yesterday: 'Our open letter explicitly affirmed Prof Biggar's right to hold and to express whatever views he chooses... we also have the right to disagree with them.'

Oxford University has stood by Prof Biggar, saying it 'supported academic freedom of speech' – but it also said his critics were entitled to their views.

Like Stalin! Ex-race chief slams critics of Empire row don



Defence: Trevor Phillips



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Legal notice
CR - 2017- 004219

IN THE MATTER OF THE STATE BANK OF INDIA
and
IN THE MATTER OF STATE BANK OF INDIA (UK) LIMITED
and
**IN THE MATTER OF PART VII OF THE FINANCIAL SERVICES
AND MARKETS ACT 2000**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that, on 20 December 2017, an Application was presented to Her Majesty's High Court of Justice by the State Bank of India (SBI) and State Bank of India (UK) Limited (SBI UK) pursuant to section 107(1) of the Financial Services and Markets Act 2000 (FSMA) for an Order:

(a) under section 111 of FSMA sanctioning a banking business transfer scheme for the transfer to SBI UK of the Transferring Business (as defined in the Scheme) of SBI carried on in the United Kingdom (the Scheme); and
(b) making ancillary provision in connection with the Scheme pursuant to section 112 of FSMA.

The Transferring Business to be transferred pursuant to the Scheme comprises part of SBI's deposit taking, loan and mortgage businesses in the United Kingdom as carried on by SBI's UK branch. The Transferring Business will include all applicable third party guarantees and other forms of security which will therefore be transferred to SBI UK pursuant to the Scheme.

If the Scheme is sanctioned by the Court, it will result in the transfer of the Transferring Business to SBI UK, notwithstanding that a person would otherwise be entitled to terminate, modify, acquire or claim an interest or right, or to treat an interest or right as terminated or modified. Any such right will only be enforceable to the extent the Order of the Court makes provision to that effect.

An explanatory statement setting out the terms of the Scheme and/or a copy of the Scheme will be provided free of charge to any person who requests it before the making of an Order sanctioning the Scheme by emailing SBI at customercare.sbiuk@statebank.com, writing to SBI at 15 King Street, London EC2V 8EA or calling 0800 532 532. Alternatively you can access the explanatory statement and the Scheme until the making of an Order sanctioning the Scheme on the website www.sbiuk.com/subsidiary.

If you have any questions or concerns relating to the proposed transfer, please contact the Transfer Information Line using the telephone number 0800 532532.

The Application is directed to be heard before the Judge at the Royal Courts of Justice, Strand, London, WC2A 2LL, England on 6 March 2018.

Any person who believes that he or she will be adversely affected by the Scheme is entitled to attend (in person or by legal representative with advocacy rights) and be heard by the High Court at the hearing of the Application. Anyone wishing to do so is asked to give notice as soon as possible and preferably before 20 February 2018 of such intention and of the reasons therefor by writing to the address or email address above.

KPMG LLP of 15 Canada Square, London, E14 5GL (Ref: KK/RF/SBI), Solicitors for State Bank of India and State Bank of India (UK) Limited.