**LOOKING THE OTHER WAY**

The *Times,* January 16, 1969

Sir—The ruling that the Commonwealth Con­ference may not declare upon or even discuss events within any member state is highly mischievous. The doctrine of non-interference in the internal affairs of other states permits much evil in the name of proto­col. Any Hitler may build his gas-chambers while the Commonwealth looks steadfastly the other way.

How can the Prime Ministers meet at the present time without discussing the main events in the Com­monwealth? The most horrible wars are raging in Vietnam and Biafra with enthusiastic Commonwealth participation. Pakistan celebrates Human Rights Year by imprisoning indefinitely good men such as Mr. Zulfikar Bhutto, the former Foreign Secretary. Racism is rampant and on the statute books of several Commonwealth states, including Britain. Investiga­tions of the elections in Guyana have revealed alarm­ing irregularities. Britain continues to sell armaments indiscriminately wherever there are profits to be made,

There are some who suggest that these matters are best left to quiet diplomacy. It is precisely quiet diplo­macy which has permitted most of them to happen, and meanwhile the Commonwealth leaders are seen to condone nearly even.- evil of the day. How many more lives must be sacrificed on the high altar of diplomatic nicety?

Yours faithfully,

BERTRAND RUSSELL,

Plas Penrhyn, Penrhyndeudreath, Merioneth,

January 11.