

INTERNING ALIENS

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—It is hard to write with composure about the present treatment of friendly aliens in East London. How can one explain or excuse the internment of elderly men, many of them invalids, who have lived here blamelessly for 40 or 50 years? Men who have not been away from London for 20 years; men who have occupied a single residence for half a century; men who are ailing or who have ailing wives; obscure and helpless men about whom the synagogue and their neighbours know all that can be known; men of whom it is not even pretended that there is any suspicion, are being or have been interned in scores.

It does not seem to weigh with the authorities whether or not those now being interned were interned during the last War, or whether or not they have sons fighting with the Colours. Nothing seems to weigh with them except that men are alien and not over 70. Such men are taken at short notice, often inconsiderately and harshly, and apparently without leave to communicate with their families. It is hardly credible, though it is true, that innumerable families in East London do not know the whereabouts or the condition of aged and feeble fathers or grandfathers who were whisked away from them a week or a fortnight ago. I spend much of my time receiving the representatives of such families. Two who suspect that their fathers are in hospitals in Surrey have gone this (Sunday) afternoon to visit these hospitals on the offchance that they may be right and be allowed an interview, or given information. Both of these men are about to join up; in what heart they will do so can be imagined.

Surely in the interests of sanity and humanity and of the national cause the Government will intervene. Yours truly,

J. J. MALLON.

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