

# INTERNED ALIENS

## A JOINT COMMITTEE FOR WELFARE

### THE BRITISH TRADITION TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—In view of the public interest created in the question of the internment of aliens, including many refugees, will you allow me to state that shortly after the outbreak of war there was organized, at the suggestion of the Home Office and War Office, a joint committee for the welfare of interned civilians and prisoners of war? This committee includes representatives of the Churches, of the Society of Friends, of the Jewish community, of the British Red Cross Society and Order of St. John, of the Y.M.C.A., and of the refugee organizations—both Christian and Jewish.

Efforts are made by the bodies represented in this committee to attend to the needs of the internees on different sides. Religious services are provided, provision is made for games, equipment, books. In certain camps employment of the internees has been organized, and recently, since so many refugees have been interned, steps have been taken to enable those for whom emigration to the United States and elsewhere was already being arranged to have those arrangements completed. The joint committee is not itself an administrative body, but brings together for common consultation the different bodies which are charged with the several aspects of this total task. The joint committee has access to the Home Office and War Office, and joint consultations have taken place.

There is, I believe, a general desire in this country that the measures taken to protect the State against espionage and subversive activity shall not prevent us from making the internment of those whom the State has decided to intern as little onerous as possible. Apart altogether from the question whether too many have been interned, it is agreed—and has been stated to the internees by the camp authorities—that their internment argues no reflection upon their moral character. I believe that many of your readers will be glad to know that both the Churches and other bodies have been actively concerned with this problem since the beginning of the war.

The address of the Joint Committee on Welfare of Internees and Prisoners of War is 20, Balcombe Street, Dorset Square, London, N.W.1.

I am yours faithfully,

WILLIAM PATON, Chairman of  
the Joint Committee.

Edinburgh House, 2, Eaton Gate, S.W.1,

July 12.