

INTERNMENT OF REFUGEES

TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES

Sir,—The need for immediate action to prevent further wholesale internment of refugees from Nazi oppression is so urgent that I beg space to make another appeal. I am an American, drawn from childhood by strongest ties to England, to which my life is now wholly bound, in war as in peace. For Americans, as for other nationalities, the British tradition of personal freedom is an inspiration; as an American whose forefathers fought even the British to maintain this liberty, I feel it my right and duty to make strong protest against the present internment policy which embraces Nazis and anti-Nazis alike.

I am not unaware of the difficulties of discrimination, but they cannot be insurmountable: we dare not let them be, else we lose the battle before it is well joined, for surely fundamental to our fight is the maintenance of the liberty of the individual. Yet in haste and fear we arrest and intern those to whom we have given refuge and whose credentials we are supposed to have examined. This whole policy is degrading Britain in the eyes of the world, and is bringing disillusion and suffering to innocent people and potential friends. Last week a refugee doctor, who is 64, and his son, who is 19, anxious and eager to give useful service to the State, were interned. The doctor's wife wrote me: "Our domestic happiness was the only thing that Hitler did not take from us. Now persecution continues in this country that offered us hospitality and freedom." In the face of this, how long can we proudly vaunt our heritage?

Yours faithfully,

RUTH MULFORD ROBBINS.

Rookery Farm, Kingsley, Bordon, Hants,
July 20.