

For

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THE Leverton Harris case cannot be left where it is. The affair has ceased to be a question as to whether the conduct of a Ministerial subordinate was correct or not. It has got mixed up with much wider issues which are agitating the public mind to a degree which should make front-bench satraps apprehensive if a breath of the national life is ever allowed to penetrate to their exalted nostrils. If Mr. Leverton Harris has so complete an answer to the charges brought against him as he and his Ministerial backers imply, it is clearly as much to his interests as to those of the State that he should make a full explanation. It may be prejudicial to him that the matter of the internment camp should have come to light coincidentally with the investigation into his own record, but the combination of dubitable circumstances makes it all the more incumbent upon him either to demand an authoritative inquiry or to resign the position he now holds. Without making any unreasonable demands upon the standard of official conduct, we fail to see that he has any other alternative.

EVER since the internment of Laszlo, the Hungarian portrait-painter, the public has taken what the Home Office evidently regards as a quite unreasonable interest in the doings of naturalised enemies, and particularly of those naturalised since the war. To the normal man the naturalisation of any enemy after the war began appears preposterous; and the motives for this extraordinary laxity and the names of the sureties who guaranteed the loyalty of these new citizens are matters in which he feels a vivid interest. Baron von Schroeder's zeal in the consumption of coal has not rendered him a particularly welcome fellow-citizen, while it now appears that a second member of the firm was also naturalised since the war. The German manager of Siemens is another of these favoured individuals. This gentleman has not, however, yet been given a knighthood like the fortunate Sir John Jarmay, also an enemy naturalised since the war; doubtless that will some day follow. All the Government Departments resolutely keep silence when invited to state how many naturalised persons they employ; and suspicion that the number must be considerable is increasing. We can only hope that the unofficial Committee of five appointed by the Prime Minister will be able to force satisfactory action, and that speedily; otherwise a dangerous situation may arise.