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Moore, B. (2026) Enemies in their midst: British imperial policy on POWs and internees and its impact on South Africa during the Second World War. Immigrants & Minorities. ISSN: 0261-9288

<https://doi.org/10.1080/02619288.2026.2718191>

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Immigrants & Minorities

Historical Studies in Ethnicity, Migration and Diaspora

ISSN: 0261-9288 (Print) 1744-0521 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/fimm20

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To cite this article: Bob Moore (26 Aug 2026): Enemies in their midst: British imperial policy on POWs and internees and its impact on South Africa during the Second World War, *Immigrants & Minorities*, DOI: [10.1080/02619288.2026.2718191](https://doi.org/10.1080/02619288.2026.2718191)

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619288.2026.2718191>



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Published online: 26 Aug 2026.



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Enemies in their midst: British imperial policy on POWs and internees and its impact on South Africa during the Second World War

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ABSTRACT

The societal fractures within the Union of South Africa created a series of unique problems when war broke out in 1939. With a disaffected Afrikaner population and governance over the former German colony of South West Africa, questions of security dominated the thinking of the government under Jan Smuts. This article surveys the British Imperial and Dominion policies on internment during the Great War to show how these influenced the Union's Second World War regime – by balancing security concerns with the need to maintain social peace.

ARTICLE HISTORY Received 25 April 2026; Accepted 3 August 2026

KEYWORDS Internment; World War II; South Africa; Prisoners of War; security

Although a long way distant from major theatres of land warfare in the Second World War, the Union of South Africa nonetheless played a significant role in the conflict – contributing men and materiel to the British Imperial cause, and being a crucial waystation between Europe, India and the Far East. Yet in 1939, internal political divisions meant that the country's participation was by no means certain. The animosity between British and Afrikaner groups that had erupted during the Boer War and echoed in the short-lived Afrikaner Rebellion of 1914 had not disappeared. Indeed, as Europe descended into war after the German invasion of Poland, the long-standing United Party Prime Minister, J. B. M. Hertzog, attempted to keep the Union neutral. His proposal was defeated in the Union Parliament, but only by 13 votes, and the country declared war on Germany on 14 September under a new Prime Minister, Jan Christiaan Smuts. Smuts had been influential in British Imperial politics since before the Great War and was keen to maximise the Union's

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contribution to the Allied war effort but in so doing, he still had to consider how best to maintain domestic security against the threat of German, and possibly also Afrikaner subversion. In such circumstances, one key weapon in the government's armoury was to consider internment as a wartime measure, but this was inevitably tempered by previous experiences, and by the fact that the Union was acting not in isolation but as part of an imperial war effort against the Axis powers. To understand how the Union determined its internment policies towards enemy aliens and subsequently also became a major detaining power for prisoners of war, it is important to examine the precedents created by the Great War, the influences of Great Britain and other Dominions such as Canada and Australia as well as considering the particular circumstances pertaining in South Africa.

The legacy of the Great War

In the Great War, the government in London had declared war on the Central Powers on behalf of the British Empire as a whole and had effectively dictated policies to be adopted in the metropole and the colonies on security issues and the internment of enemy nationals.¹ However, the Dominion governments already had a degree of autonomy in developing appropriate local policies to meet their specific needs. Most of the available literature on both Britain and its Empire before and during the Great War concentrates on the retreat from the liberal principles espoused in the nineteenth century and the move towards much more draconian policies, although some commentators have argued that the settler Dominions never possessed this liberal grounding and enacted discriminatory legislation against non-British aliens after achieving a degree of self-government.²

On the outbreak of war in 1914, both the United Kingdom and its imperial territories were faced with a common problem – how to deal with resident or visiting enemy nationals – Germans and citizens of Austria-Hungary, permanent settlers from these countries who had not yet been naturalised, and merchant seamen. The policies adopted in both Britain and the Dominions were much the same; emergency legislation was introduced to sanction measures against enemy aliens and information from the police and secret services was used to identify the most obvious targets. They were all often referred to as prisoners of war – a term more usually restricted to military personnel – but despite the

majority being in civilian occupations, some of the first candidates for internment were men of military age or reservists.

In August 1914 the United Kingdom had approximately 50,000 resident German nationals, a further 8,000 who had become naturalised British subjects and smaller numbers of Austrians, Hungarians and Ottomans.³ By the end of the first month, more than 4,300 were already in some form of custody, primarily those males of military age or reservists. They also included naturalised British or Imperial subjects who had retained their German citizenship under the so-called Delbrück Law enacted by Berlin in January 1914 to encourage those abroad to fulfil their military obligations to the fatherland.⁴ By the end of September the number of internees had increased to 10,500, fuelled partly by fears of an imminent invasion and by an increasing level of spy-mania in the country as a whole.⁵ Further internments were suspended as the authorities ran out of space, and between November 1914 and April 1915 some 3,000 women, children and men not of military age were released after investigation by tribunals. In addition, there were a series of reciprocal repatriations agreed between London and Berlin involving around 6,000 to 7,000 women and children and a smaller number of men.⁶ This reduction in numbers was soon counteracted by the public reaction to Zeppelin raids on East Coast ports and especially to the sinking of the *Lusitania* in May 1915 that provoked riots in Liverpool and London and led to press and public clamour for the government to take more radical action so that by November that year the number of interned enemy aliens had grown to 32,440.⁷ Here and elsewhere, the treatment of the internees was governed by international law and the reciprocal arrangements made with the German government whose own internment policies had led to the concentration of as many as 5,500 British Imperial nationals at Ruhleben near Berlin. This had begun slowly in November 1914 but faced with a domestic press campaign that contrasted the 'atrocities' carried out against Germans in Britain with the generosity shown to Britons in Germany, Berlin extended its internment policies to include Dominion and Colonial subjects in January and February 1915.⁸

The pattern in the United Kingdom was repeated in Canada where Orders in Council on 7 and 13 August set out the parameters for the restriction of enemy aliens. During July, the press had reported that European consuls were arranging for the return of reservists to their native countries but exactly how many had been able to embark before Britain entered the war against Germany on 4 August and Austria-

Hungary on 12 August is unclear.⁹ Once war was declared, the Minister of Militia was empowered to prevent enemy reservists from crossing into the neutral United States to continue their journeys homewards and suspects were interned at a number of places.¹⁰ However, their supervision proved inadequate and 'large numbers' were reported to have escaped.¹¹ It can be assumed therefore that at least some made the journey successfully but later departures were hindered when the government in London empowered the Royal Navy to stop and search neutral shipping and arrest enemy reservists on board.¹² However, it was the subsequent War Measures Act that gave the state and its local agents sweeping powers to search, arrest and detain any person suspected of illegal activity. The designation of enemy alien was applied to any non-naturalised immigrant from the Central Powers and was used primarily to target those who were unassimilated and often unemployed and thus by definition outside the community.¹³ The fear of the alien, already apparent in Canadian society before the outbreak of war, was enhanced and reflected in further government measures, not least Order in Council PC 2721 of 28 August that created the basis for internment. This was a step considered not only for domestic security reasons, but also to prevent civilians from crossing the border into the neutral United States since the Canadian authorities felt obliged to stop their escape.¹⁴ Further legislative steps led to the arrest of some 8,200 aliens by November 1914, the majority being citizens of the Austro-Hungarian Empire of Ukrainian origin.¹⁵ As in the United Kingdom, the sinking of the *Lusitania* provoked huge public outrage, unrest in Victoria, British Columbia, and the reading of the riot act.¹⁶ While some internees were paroled, the overall number gradually increased until it reached a peak of 8,579, composed primarily of indigent Ukrainians from the major cities and the Western provinces but also including enemy reservists and some (German) merchant mariners gathered up from the Caribbean colonies.¹⁷

In Australia, internment policy was heavily influenced by news from the United Kingdom and the idea of the 'enemy in the midst' was reproduced in the Australian press. This in turn gave the government help in 'selling' the war to the public and justifying total mobilisation.¹⁸ While there were almost immediate investigations into suspect enemy aliens after August 1914, it was only on 29 October that the War Precautions Act gave the government wide-ranging powers *inter alia* to intern enemy subjects, a provision that was widened to include 'disloyal' natural born subjects as well.¹⁹ In total, Australia interned

some 6,890 persons – four fifths of them Germans, of whom around 4,500 had been resident in the country in August 1914. The remainder were civilians deported from other British colonial territories in the Pacific or enemy merchant mariners who had been trapped in Australian ports or captured on the high seas.²⁰ In all these examples, the focus had been on male enemy aliens and neither Canada nor Australia interned women or children, although in the latter case 67 women and 84 children were transferred from other British colonies at London's request.²¹ This in itself created a problem of destitution for families when male breadwinners were arrested – a problem 'solved' by the Australians with a means-tested benefit just above starvation level.²² Another similarity between all three cases was the importance of public opinion and vested interests in pressuring for more widespread and more comprehensive internment policies. That said, the sheer size of the German and Austro-Hungarian immigrant populations in the Dominions meant that calls for restriction had to be tempered by some reassurance that law-abiding members of the community would not be subject to restrictive measures.²³

By contrast, South Africa entered the Great War with a troubled legacy of domestic internal dissent and the stigma of the internment policies carried out during the Boer War, including of women and children. Louis Botha's government was only too aware of the continuing animosity between the English-speaking and Afrikaner populations and was careful to obtain the support of the House of Assembly for a formal declaration of war on 14 September. Yet even before this, the regime had acted quickly to deal with the perceived threat from the 12,798 white settlers inside the Union who had been born in Germany. On 7 August 1914, all German reservists between the ages of 18 and 56 were arrested, followed by their Austro-Hungarian counterparts a week later. This was to prevent their return to Europe, but non-reservists were also arrested and by October around 2,000 men 'reasonably suspected of being in any way dangerous to the safety of the realm' had been brought to a permanent detention camp at Fort Napier in Pietermaritzburg from all parts of the country.²⁴ Women living inside the Union were excluded from internment but 529 women and children evacuated from German South West Africa were shipped to the Union and accommodated in two other camps in Pietermaritzburg and were later joined by cohorts from other sub-Saharan German colonies and from the Belgian Congo.²⁵

As we have already seen, distinctions between prisoners of war and civilian internees were not clearly drawn, but most Dominions were far away from the theatres of war and accumulated very few, if any, genuine prisoners of war as defined by the terms of the 1899 and 1907 Hague Conventions. In this, South Africa was the exception, being in the front-line and immediately under pressure from London to mount an attack against the adjacent German colony of South West Africa. This was primarily to deal with wireless stations there, although the acquisition of this German territory had been a Union objective for some time 'if the opportunity arose'.²⁶ While the Afrikaner rebellion in 1914 had been a major concern for the regime, it did not prevent what remained of the Union Defence Forces (UDF) after deployments to Europe, resignations and defections to begin offensive operations against the *Schutztruppen* defending the neighbouring German colony.²⁷ Although the UDF suffered an initial setback at Sandfontein on 26 September 1914, a second invasion in December involved three separate forces that far outnumbered the enemy and the war effectively ended with the surrender of the 2,166 remaining German *Schutztruppe* near Khorab on 9 July 1915. South African losses numbered only 295 and the 660 men captured by the Germans during the initial campaign were then released.²⁸ This was the first time that the UDF had fought outside South Africa and the first time it had been responsible for enemy prisoners. Perhaps surprisingly, neither the German officers nor their soldiers were brought to the Union but held in camps inside the newly occupied territories. The German Governor Theodor Seitz was permitted to stay at Grootfontein and subsequently on a farm in the Khomashochland while the military commander, Erich Victor Carl August Franke, was interned at Okawayo. *Schutztruppe* reservists were released, but prisoner of war camps were established for serving troops and policemen at Kanus, Aus, Albrechts Camp, Okanjande (officers) and Grootfontein.²⁹ Unlike ordinary German soldiers taken prisoner in other theatres, these men were never put to work by their captors but were not repatriated until 1919.

Dominion internment policies in the Second World War

The period between the two world wars saw a loosening of ties between Britain and all the Dominions, epitomised by the Statute of Westminster in 1931 that created the framework for their legislative independence. Yet even before this, the Dominions were signing international treaties in

their own right, for example the Paris Peace Settlement in 1919, and more relevant to this discussion, the 1929 Geneva Convention on Prisoners of War. This did not mean that their decision-making was completely autonomous. The Statute of Westminster was no more than a road map for the future, the Dominions Office continued to advise and inform Dominion governments, and their respective High Commissioners were important conduits for inter-Dominion affairs as well as relations with the United Kingdom. Indeed, once war broke out, the Dominion High Commissioners had almost daily meetings with the Secretary of State to keep them apprised on intelligence and War Cabinet decisions. That said, there was no apparent discussion or advice offered on domestic issues – for example on internment policies.³⁰

This was epitomised by the dissemination of information about British internment policies once war had been declared in September 1939, when all Dominion governments were kept clearly apprised of London's intentions.³¹ The story of internment in Britain during the Second World War is well known, with most of the scholarly discussion focusing on the policy as an attack on human rights.³² In fact, initial government policy in both London and the Dominions had been to avoid the perceived mistakes of the Great War and only use internment as a last resort for the most obvious threats to state security. In the interim, all German and Austrian enemy aliens in the United Kingdom had been categorised as either A, B or C by tribunals – albeit that they were often ill-equipped to make such decisions. The limited response lasted only until May of 1940 when defeat in Norway and the overrunning of the Low Countries fuelled rumours of a 'fifth column' undermining military and domestic security led to Churchill's famous *volte face* and his instruction to 'collar the lot'. While this was essentially playing to public disquiet and the scapegoating of the remaining enemy aliens at liberty, many of whom were Jewish refugees from Nazism, it provided a convenient explanation for the government's failures at a time when an invasion was considered imminent.

Once mass internment had begun, the British government's desperation to deport at least 2,500 of its most dangerous pro-Nazi individuals was almost palpable and the Empire was scoured for possible destinations. A report on 7 June admitted that of all the locations surveyed, only St Lucia was considered suitable but could accommodate only around 500 internees. Even the Crown Colony of Newfoundland was rejected, partly because of its climate and partly because of the paucity of available

accommodation and guards.³³ None of the Dominions were enthusiastic but were, perhaps not surprisingly, more worried about accommodating the 'Category A' internees than they were about the prisoners of war.³⁴ London sent further requests in early June and Ottawa was finally persuaded to take c. 2,600 internees and a putative 3,000 prisoners of war.³⁵ At the same time, Australia also agreed to take a limited number of civilian internees, but transportation and guards remained a significant problem for this longer journey.

In the event, the number of internees sent to Canada from the United Kingdom was limited to a few transports in June and July 1940 as the policy was rapidly reconsidered after the sinking of the *SS Arandora Star* on 2 July.³⁶ There was no initial screening and 'professionals, [...] baffled schoolboys and mid-European peasants' were corralled in one of eight internment camps alongside committed Nazis and Fascists.³⁷ Worried about the need to provide guards for all the internees and the problems engendered by the coming winter,³⁸ the Canadian authorities took some action to segregate the most dangerous category A internees from those classified as either B or C, but refused to assume that the latter were all victims of Nazi oppression and waited for the British government to send representatives to oversee re-classification. In the interim there was also a debate as to whether Canada was acting as an agent for the United Kingdom government or being a detaining power in its own right.³⁹ The British representation included Alexander Paterson, the prison reformer, who reported on conditions while the category C internees were assessed for their usefulness to the British war effort. Some 2,500 of these men were ultimately reclassified as refugees. Of these, around 1,200 were released in Canada and nearly 1,000 returned to the United Kingdom beginning in December 1940 when many of the younger men joined the Auxiliary Military Pioneer Corps.⁴⁰

The Canadian government had been planning for the internment of its own enemy civilians from 1936 and rapidly put those plans into operation on 3 September 1939 in the form of the Defence of Canada Regulations (DOCR). This was before Canada officially became a belligerent but was justified by the existence of an 'apprehended war' and sanctioned by the War Measures Act of 1 September. Enemy aliens already identified as subversives by the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and the Security Services were arrested, and after the Dominion formally declared war on Germany on 10 September 1939, all German immigrants who had arrived after 1922 were forced to

register with the authorities.⁴¹ This sounded like a very seamless process but was in fact marked by administrative chaos and lacking in understanding of the issues involved. The RCMP had little viable intelligence on German organisations in Canada and while it noted the existence of a 250-member branch of the *Auslandsorganisation der NSDAP* (AO) and a 500-strong German Workers Party, neither were thought to be particularly dangerous, and the acronyms HJ (*Hitlerjugend*) and BDM (*Bund Deutscher Mädel*) remained a complete mystery. While these were organisations for German nationals, there was also the much better supported German *Bund* – which catered to Canadians of German origin.⁴² When required by the government to provide lists of the most dangerous Germans in the Dominion, the haphazard and incomplete lists compiled by the RCMP were the only information available, and the panic engendered by the potential for subversion led to an almost arbitrary internment of Germans, and later Italians and Japanese as well.⁴³

Most of the Germans involved were members of Nazi organisations, suspected saboteurs or men of military age while the roundup of Italians, after Italy came into the war in June 1940, included ‘persons of influence in the Italian communities’.⁴⁴ There were also captured merchant seamen of both nationalities who were initially treated as civilians but latterly transferred to prisoner of war status. The DOCR was also extended to intern some German and later Italian Canadians who were supposedly pro-Axis, or in the case of the Canadian Communist Party, pro-Soviet, but it appears that inclusion on the RCMP lists was not based on investigation but relied heavily on denunciations – something that the police actively encouraged.⁴⁵ Ultimately, the Canadian authorities interned 1,479 Germans and Italians but all were released before the end of the war. Nearly all internees were male, but Canada did have 14 German women who were held in a special block of the female penitentiary at Kingston. Some were later exchanged for Canadian women captured at sea and the last, Katherine Haidinger, was released on 9 August 1943.⁴⁶ The process in Australia followed the British and Canadian pattern, with early roundups of Germans with known Nazi sympathies, expatriate employees of German firms and later also known Italian Fascists. These measures were sanctioned by the Australian ‘War Book’, a document that owed much to its British counterpart, but one that stipulated internment ‘be restricted to the narrowest limits consistent with public safety and public sentiment’.⁴⁷ Australia also introduced categorisations (more sophisticated than the

British ones) and from November 1940, established tribunals to adjudicate on appeals.⁴⁸

The intention in all three states had been to avoid the material and manpower costs of mass internments experienced during the Great War and only to incarcerate those who were likely to be a security risk. Yet as we have seen, this noble objective came under pressure at a time of crisis; in the Australian case after the fall of France in 1940 and again after the fall of Singapore in 1942.⁴⁹ This led to greater numbers of aliens being incarcerated in every state by their respective military authorities, but with some remarkable variations. Queensland interned 43.1 per cent of its enemy aliens while in Victoria the figure was just under 3 per cent.⁵⁰ This can be accounted for in part by geography, with Queensland being much nearer the front line with Japan, the personalities of the commanders involved, and the nature of the aliens involved. Queensland had much higher numbers of Japanese among its aliens while Victoria had a substantial proportion of Jewish refugees from Nazism.⁵¹ It was notable that neither Prime Minister of the period chose to focus on aliens as a problem and their potential danger receded as the Allies began to win notable military victories: against the Italians in 1941 and against the Japanese in 1944. Nevertheless, the numbers interned reached the same proportions as they had in the Great War and releases did not begin until 1943 – thus somewhat later than in either Canada or the United Kingdom. Like Canada, Australia accommodated 2,036 internees transported from the British Isles, primarily those sent on board the HMT *Dunera*, many of whom were Jewish refugees and some also survivors of the sinking of the *Arandora Star*.⁵² During their eight-week voyage, they were victimised by the guard units on board and on arrival were sent to Hay Camp in New South Wales. Once on Australian soil, their treatment improved, and all were released as ‘friendly aliens’ after the Japanese entered the war in December 1941. Around half chose to join the Australian armed forces while others were repatriated to the United Kingdom. With hindsight, it is easy to suggest that the potential for subversion in Canada and Australia at least was exaggerated. Canada recorded only three instances of Nazi spies and no incidents involving German Canadians.⁵³ Hitler himself had refused to sanction the creation of espionage networks in the United Kingdom while there was some chance of keeping the British Empire neutral and agents despatched after the outbreak of war were easily identified, intercepted and in some cases turned. For example, between September and November

some 25 men were captured on arrival in the United Kingdom. Arriving by parachute or small boat they were described as inadequately trained, poorly equipped and 'easy prey' for MI5.⁵⁴

Compared with the other Dominions, domestic tensions within South Africa were of a different order, and the potential for internal subversion within the Union had not diminished since the end of the Great War, although it now took slightly different forms. As Jan Smuts reflected in early August 1939:

...I have been busy with [...] the secret movements of a subversive character in some parts of the country – reminiscent of 1914 – the propaganda and the fomenting of strife carried on by foreign agents with foreign capital, the doings in South West Africa, and all the other forms of mischief to which nationalistic South Africa is such an easy prey. [...] Propaganda, falsehood and delusion are rampant among the people, and one has one's hands full in preventing mischief from taking a fatal turn.⁵⁵

On the eve of war, there were numerous potential threats to Union participation. The country's governing United Party had a pro-German Prime Minister, J. B. M. Herzog and a similarly inclined Minister of Defence Oswald Pirow, both of whom sought at least to keep the Union neutral. In this, they were supported by the main Afrikaner daily newspapers, *Die Transvaler*, *Die Burger* and *Die Vaderland*, all of which took an avowedly anti-British line. Radical Afrikaner interests were supported by D. F. Malan's Purified National Party as well as the extra-parliamentary *Ossewabrandwag* (OB) led by Hans van Rensburg and its paramilitary *Stormjaer*.⁵⁶ Underpinning these organisations was the *Afrikaner Broederbond*, an underground and Masonic-style association with around 3,000 members whose main purpose was to infiltrate all aspects of life in the Union, including culture, the Churches, education, the Civil Service, the Police, broadcasting, railways and harbours, with a view to creating a South African Republic. It was described by government sources as a serious threat and 'a malignant cancer in our body politic, and [that] only the knife [could] remove it'.⁵⁷

Much has been written about the fascist influences within these groups, and their connections to Nazi Germany, but at the time they were seen primarily as a threat to the internal security of the Union.⁵⁸ Beyond these well-supported groups, there was also the overtly National Socialist and antisemitic Greyshirt (*Gryshemde*) movement led by Louis Weichardt attached to the South African Gentile National Socialists coupled with the external arm of the German Nazi Party, the

Auslandsorganisation (AO) that actively sought to organise German nationals in South West Africa as well as in the Union and claimed the membership of one in six of all German nationals.⁵⁹ German influence was also aided by the *Afrikaans-Duitse-Kultuurvereniging* (ADK) which arranged private meetings between German diplomats and radical Afrikaners such as van Rensburg.⁶⁰ With these myriad threats to address, the men in charge of the South African security services after September 1939 had to tread a fine line between curtailing the real threats to the country's internal and external security on the one hand, and unnecessarily inflaming Afrikaner opinion on the other.

Smuts' government moved into action quickly after the declaration of war with the immediate re-appointment of Sir Theodor Truter as Chief Control Officer and the rapid internment of some suspect German nationals, but this was by no means a blanket measure. In this regard South West Africa presented a major headache because of its substantial Germanic population. Although many Germans in the mandate had accepted automatic naturalisation in 1926, they were still seen as problematic and the local police continued to raise alarm bells, reporting on the proliferation of Nazi activities and the recruitment of men for military service in Germany which had led to 'automatically naturalized British subjects fighting in the German Armed Forces' at least one of whom had been killed in Poland and another who had lost a leg.⁶¹

A major source of government information was the weekly Internal Security Intelligence Reports compiled by Lieutenant-Colonel B. W. Thwaites as UDF Director of Intelligence. These gave a clear indication of the problems involved and reflected the intelligence service's view of how policies should be framed. In late November there was reference to the Union having been 'subtly soaked' in pro-Nazi and anti-British propaganda for years with schools as a particular problem and the teachers as a hotbed of agitation.⁶² As internment began to be implemented there were conflicting reports on its efficacy. The arrest of the watchmaker Feldman in Bloemfontein was said to have given great satisfaction to loyalists in the Free State and 'done more good to Smut's cause than loads of propaganda', but in South West Africa it was reported that a committee to provide foodstuffs and comforts for the internment camps there had been overwhelmed with offers.⁶³ By this time, internment camps had been established at Jagersfontein and Koffiefontein, south west of Bloemfontein, Baviaanspoort near Pretoria, Leeuwkop and Andalucia near Johannesburg. In the meantime the Afrikaner newspapers

Die Transvaler, *Die Volksblad* and *Die Burger* railed against every aspect of the policy insisting that while it was mainly directed at German nationals, '[could] Afrikaners be far behind?'⁶⁴ In fact, the 928 internees at the end of January included only 84 Union nationals, of whom 38 were automatically naturalised Germans. By this stage, 8 Union nationals and 61 other nationalities had already been released and further cases were being considered.⁶⁵

By February 1940, the reports were more optimistic. They suggested that internment and censorship had given the government 'an all-round control of the situation which did not seem possible in September last' and that any further internments of un-naturalised Germans would 'be accepted with philosophic calm and give relief to certain loyal and hard-working public servants'.⁶⁶ By the same token, the releases of internees that had taken place in the Transvaal in March would make the tasks of the Chief Control Officer and the South African Police that much harder. Reflecting on the example set by the British government in keeping internments to a minimum, it was argued that the 'leniency' shown towards German nationals in South Africa was being abused.⁶⁷ The pre-war activities of the AO had been clearly understood, as was its close relationship and overlap with the German diplomatic representation in the Union. A report in late October 1939 had given an in-depth analysis of the structures and personalities involved. It was noted that the AO used coercive methods not only against German nationals but also against Union citizens of German origin – threatening their professional qualification and/or their families still in Europe.⁶⁸ The report also noted the links between the AO and the *Ossewabrandwag*, as well as the role played by German missionaries in 'spreading subversive propaganda among the native population', a charge reminiscent of the Great War and even the Boer War.⁶⁹ However, by the time of the report, the leading AO agitators had either been expelled (because of their diplomatic status) or interned, thus thwarting any attempt at a rebellion and leading the authors to suggest that this had 'much diminished' Nazi activities.⁷⁰

This careful approach was all set to change with the end of the phoney war in Europe, the collapse of France and the entry of Italy into the war. At this point the fears of a fifth column within the Union increased and more German nationals and several high-profile state officials were arrested. The Prime Minister ordered the internment of a further 853 German nationals in South West Africa and on 26 June 1940, they were brought from the Klein Danzig internment camp in Windhoek to Andalusia camp

in South Africa.⁷¹ The country interned all Italian males between the ages of 18 and 60, despite evidence that most did not approve of Mussolini 'throwing in his lot with Germany'. At much the same time, there was pressure to take internees from East Africa although Smuts was initially unenthusiastic – hoping that Canada might 'agree to take the lot' and suggesting either St Helena or the Falkland Islands as alternatives.⁷² However, in the spirit of imperial co-operation, Smuts agreed to take 510 (mainly German) male internees from East Africa, but maintained his refusal to accept around 330 women from there as 'the Union government had not deemed it advisable to intern women.'⁷³ Ironically the Union later agreed to take three internees *from* the Falkland Islands – two German seamen and a British fascist who had been employed there as a schoolteacher. By mid-August the South African press was reporting an internee population approaching 5,000 but it remained the case that most were enemy aliens and only 47 Union nationals were involved.⁷⁴ While the collapse in Western Europe was a disaster, it did have one positive outcome for the Smuts regime. Intelligence reports suggested that the German invasion of the Netherlands had an immediate effect on sections of Afrikaner opinion and many 'Herzogites' were reputedly coming around to supporting the war. In this way, it was thought possible to isolate the Nazi enemy aliens and the Afrikaner 'bitter-enders' from the rest of the population.⁷⁵

Despite these initial steps, the Union authorities nonetheless were caught up in the panic of late May 1940 that had prompted wider internment measures in the United Kingdom. Defence Circular E.C.65 set out new internal security arrangements and a newly formed Internal Security Committee (ISC) was much exercised in safeguarding the railways – insisting on more manpower in the form of an Internal Security Corps, an extended oath for all personnel and, more broadly, on the internment of all enemy aliens.⁷⁶ Theodor Truter as the Chief Control Officer was charged with finding increased accommodation for internees but at this stage refused to hear any appeals.⁷⁷ In the first instance, the internment camps would be guarded by the Prisons Service, with segregation of aliens from Union nationals. Aliens, who included naturalised Germans and Union nationals of German birth, would be allowed only one next-of-kin visit per month to be overheard by qualified staff and with no opportunity to pass messages. It is also worthy of note that the authorities thought camps needed to be guarded against attacks both from within and without.⁷⁸

Although the ISC was clear about its policy on enemy aliens, the threat from home-grown Union nationals had to be more deftly handled. The basic principle was established that they would only be interned if there was 'substantial evidence' against them, and even then, all cases had to be referred to the Cabinet Committee for approval.⁷⁹ By late April 1940, there were already direct references to the idea of a 'fifth column' presumably derived from the fears engendered by events in Western Europe. A more telling source is a memorandum from Truter that spoke of public disquiet about some government institutions and sub-departments and their being described as 'Nazi cells' or 'rebel centres'.⁸⁰ He noted that public servants whose conduct left something to be desired had been 'seriously warned' as to their future behaviour and (perhaps optimistically given later events) there was 'no reason to think that any officer [...] who had given an undertaking to render loyal service to the State has failed to conduct himself properly'.⁸¹ In South Africa the main fear was the influence of the *Broederbond* and the growth in support for the *Ossewabrandwag* among Afrikaners, but there was also greater surveillance of other groups such as district rifle associations where it was thought 'only 50% of the officers could be trusted'.⁸²

In reality, internment did little to stop the growth of the OB or the underlying power of the *Broederbond*.⁸³ In May 1941, the Director of Military Intelligence, Colonel Ernest G. Malherbe, characterised its menace as psychological rather than military. It could not directly oppose the armed might of the UDF, but its true and more insidious purpose was to seize power at an appropriate moment and institute a totalitarian state under a dictator. Writing after the Johannesburg riots that exposed rifts in the police force, he stressed that government weakness and inability to protect ordinary citizens invited them to fall into line with the OB.⁸⁴ Government departments and every sphere of the civil service was likewise affected in spite of a ban on membership initiated in April 1941.⁸⁵ There was a moment when it appeared that there might be a fatal split in the OB after the summer conference of the HNP in Bloemfontein. Smuts' 'brilliant strategy' in not interning Pirow, or banning the OB or its organ *Die Transvaler* was also praised for having allowed the Afrikaner movement to splinter through internal dissension.⁸⁶ However, this triumphalism was relatively short-lived and later reports warned of increasing OB/AB domination of provincial education departments and many of the

Churches. Likewise, while civil servants had been banned from joining the OB in early 1941, it had only a limited effect with continuing infiltration being reported in many departments.

The prisoner of war diaspora within the Empire

On the outbreak of war, imperial authorities had given relatively little thought to the question of prisoners of war. Even in Britain, there had been an assumption that captives would be mainly held in France – as had been the case in the Great War. Elsewhere in the Empire, the belief was that the war was a European affair and the Empire overseas was only likely to encounter small numbers of genuine prisoners of war. For Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King, housing prisoners of war and internees from Britain could be portrayed as a tangible token of Canadian participation in the war and as an indication of success. In fact, Canada's willingness to take prisoners of war can be traced to an internal discussion in February 1940 but at that time, it was thought that any such gesture might embarrass London, and that if it were thought that enemy soldiers were being shipped to the barren prairies Berlin would present this to the world as an act of barbarity. It was therefore decided not to make the offer and wait for a request from London.⁸⁷ When it came, the disquiet about moving prisoners outside the theatre in which they had been captured remained, but Berlin raised no objections and continued to see the British Empire as a single entity. With Churchill anxious not to keep German prisoners in Britain, Canada became their detaining power for the first four years of the war with more than 35,000 being accommodated in camps scattered across the Dominion by 1944.

This relatively small number of German prisoners taken prior to the Normandy landings in June 1944 was dwarfed by the major military successes against the Italians in North and East Africa from the end of 1940 onwards. Mussolini's attack on Egypt from Libya was soon thwarted and driven back with substantial losses, but it was the Italian colonies in the Horn of Africa that generated the largest numbers of captives and a major headache for the Commander in Chief, General Archibald Wavell. Feeding, housing and guarding tens if not hundreds of thousands of Italian troops was a major drain on his limited resources and their continued presence in Egypt represented a tangible internal security threat. As such he was anxious to 'export' as many as possible to other imperial territories, including East Africa, India and South Africa. While the Smuts

government had resisted the arrival of civilian internees from Europe on security grounds, it was much more welcoming to the idea of hosting Italian prisoners of war.

Unlike the difficulties with Germans, there were no substantial Italian communities in South Africa and mirroring the stereotypes voiced in the United Kingdom, the Duce's soldiers were generally considered as uncommitted to Fascism and therefore less of a security threat.⁸⁸ The Union had acquired its first Italian prisoners when two ships were caught by the Italian declaration of war on 10 June. The liner *Timavo* attempted to escape to Lourenço Marques but was scuttled after being attacked by SAAF planes, and the *Sistiana* had been seized in Table Bay with both crews being interned.⁸⁹ When South Africa was approached and asked for the maximum number she could accommodate and at what date, London pointed out that India was preparing to take 16,000 and that Canada and Australia had already taken both prisoners of war and civilian internees. To sweeten the pill, Britain offered to meet the costs of transport and maintenance.⁹⁰ In fact, no such incentive was required as Smuts agreed to take 20,000 'as soon as they could be sent' and would examine whether this number could be increased.⁹¹ His rationale was twofold; in the same vein as Mackenzie King, they would provide a visible Union contribution to the war effort and a visible example of military success, as well as having the potential to offset major domestic labour shortages in road building and agriculture.⁹² By April 1941 10,000 men had already arrived but the 'political and strategic menace' the Italian prisoners created in Egypt prompted Dominions Secretary Clement Attlee to request space for a further 25,000 men – again readily agreed by the Union government – as was a further cohort of 15,000 in July.⁹³ There seemed to be no limit to Smuts' appetite for prisoners as a labour force, but he was also keen, as Minister of Defence, to concentrate them in one place, the military training camp in the Premier Mine Complex at Zonderwater.⁹⁴ By the autumn of 1941, Smuts agreed to take a further 40,000 Italians during 1942, although the net increase would only be 19,000 as the remaining 21,000 would be sent on to the United Kingdom, and the first of these selected cohorts left Zonderwater between 18 and 21 November as the metropole also looked to offset its own chronic agricultural labour shortages.⁹⁵

The intention was to segregate prisoners with specific trades and skills, but this proved increasingly problematic because of the 'difficulty most POWs appear to find in telling the truth' and because there were no tools

available to carry out practical tests.⁹⁶ Moreover, a request in August 1942 to ship 12,500 men to the United Kingdom at short notice (presumably because shipping had become available) was deemed impossible by the South Africans, not least because the railways could not 'take the strain'.⁹⁷ In the event, the numbers transported during the summer were lower than planned and their removal was further affected by the sinking of the RMS *Laconia* in September 1942 when large numbers of Italian prisoners' lives were lost and the Admiralty imposed a limit of only 500 prisoners for each transport.⁹⁸ While the centralisation at Zonderwater was an economic solution, it was not without its problems. The site itself needed major work by the Quartermaster General's Department to bring it up to an acceptable standard for the numbers of prisoners involved, but little was done in the first year, and both Pretoria and London became worried about compliance with the Geneva Convention and the possibility of protests from the Italian government.⁹⁹ Moreover, keeping all the prisoners in one place limited their use as a labour force and, in contrast to what happened in the United Kingdom where imported Italians were dispersed to camps where they could quickly be engaged in agriculture, prisoners in the Union remained in idleness. Detailed regulations for their deployment outside camps were drafted only in the autumn of 1941 when prisoners were sent to other locations and used on government schemes or paroled to farmers. While this allowed nearly 6,000 prisoners to be employed on outside contracts by January 1943 and three times that number a year later, constant problems remained in guarding and maintaining some level of control over their behaviour.¹⁰⁰

Whilst the Union government had refused to accept German prisoners for detention it did have to make certain compromises. German naval ratings captured when their ships were apprehended or sunk off the African coast were meant to be sent on to the United Kingdom, but transport difficulties often meant that their stay in Clairwood camp near Pietermaritzburg was 'for longer periods than anticipated'.¹⁰¹ This became more of an issue at the beginning of 1942 when the Imperial government ordered an immediate evacuation of prisoners from the North African theatre lest they were liberated by an Axis counterattack. The evacuated Germans were destined for detention in Canada, but with the outbreak of war against Japan it was deemed essential to keep as much shipping as possible in the Indian Ocean.¹⁰² In the first instance, prisoners arriving in South African ports were transferred between vessels by tugs and lighters without setting foot on land, but with a shortage of

ships to make transatlantic crossings, South Africa was asked to provide temporary accommodation for both officers and men while their onward transport was arranged.¹⁰³ It was assumed that they would come in relatively small numbers and be on South African soil only for a short time. Smuts reluctantly agreed but the first transport, due on 19 February 1942, failed to materialise and nothing further was heard until 5 March when the Union was suddenly asked to take 2,000 men immediately and up to 300 officers and 10,000 men in total.¹⁰⁴ Although unhappy, the Chief of the South African General Staff admitted that there was 'no alternative [...] and we must therefore make the best of a bad job' but suggested an immediate discussion about the maximum capacity at one time 'in order to get the job over quickly'.¹⁰⁵

South African officials were even less amused when the first cohort of Germans contained 199 officers, including Generals Johann von Ravenstein and Artur Schmitt, the first two Wehrmacht officers of this rank to be captured by Allied forces. Transported on board the HMT *Pasteur*, the voyage had been beset by problems, not least the apparent mental instability of the officer commanding the guard, and this led to a series of protests from the two Generals and many other officers about looting and ill-treatment. As one described it, they had been 'pasteurised'.¹⁰⁶ It fell to the South African authorities to deal with the fallout and to control a cohort of men already angered by their treatment. Initially, it had been thought to house them at the Clairwood Camp but this was deemed too small and did not allow for the segregation of officers so alternative premises were found on the Durban Road. There was also the question of finding suitable guards for the 'battle-hardened' Afrika Korps and as Colonel R. D. Pilkington-Jordan observed, this was the first time the Union had admitted combatant officers. It was accepted that the guards at the camp would have to be strengthened and the cape coloured units replaced by 'white' troops, but this was easier said than done as the constant pressure to use white soldiers overseas meant that even reserve units were regularly combed to find additional men for front-line service. Even in 1940 commanding officers had described such units as 'less than robust' and composed largely of men 'unfit for military service'.¹⁰⁷

Finding enough suitable guards proved impossible and provoked further protests from an already inflamed cohort of Germans who saw the presence of coloured troops among their sentinels as a racial slur. Faced with protests made to the representatives of the Spanish

protecting power, the officials in Pretoria had to manage the situation carefully while hoping that the problem would soon go away. Left unfuted, the danger was that there would be Axis reprisals against South African prisoners, including the 10,722 men taken captive during the fall of Tobruk in June 1942.¹⁰⁸ In fact, all the officers and most of the men from the first cohort were shipped to Canada after about six weeks, but were almost immediately replaced by a second cohort consisting almost exclusively of NCOs and ordinary soldiers. With no officers save a few protected personnel, the camp leadership fell to Gefreiter Walther Werner, a man whose influence lay more in his political power than in his rank. Initially welcomed by his captors for his palliative reports to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), his malevolent influence soon made itself evident in protests and in the death of an inmate – ostensibly executed for treason. Here again, the South African authorities were saved by the onward transport of the Germans and it was only at the end of the war that statements made by other prisoners and further investigations uncovered Werner's guilt and led to his subsequent punishment back in South Africa.¹⁰⁹ Ultimately South Africa received a total of 6,822 German prisoners between March 1942 and June 1943 in four distinct phases, with never more than around 2,000 in the country at any one time.¹¹⁰ With the exceptions noted above, the fears voiced in 1940 about the dangers they might pose to the volatile domestic situation proved largely unfounded. The management of these unwanted guests was not without its tribulations, for example in dealing with escapes and what was thought to be an orchestrated campaign of complaints, but their expeditious departure meant that contacts with Afrikaner nationalists and indigenous National-Socialists were minimised until the danger had passed.¹¹¹

Ostensibly less dangerous were the 1,657 (Vichy) French intercepted on the high seas who were also interned at Pietermaritzburg. The majority were 651 soldiers of the 10th Régiment d'infanterie coloniale who had sailed from Saigon on 27 March 1940 and a further 464 men of a Labourer Company (ONS) that had left Haiphong on 17 October 1939. To these could be added small numbers from Régiments Tirailleurs Tonkinoise, Tirailleurs Senegalais and sailors from all parts of the French Empire. While there was no question of these troops being sent back to Indochina or the merchant seamen being released, they were all disadvantaged by having no protecting power to look after their interests and no means of communicating with their families. An ICRC report in

May 1943 noted that they were all in good health but requested some adjustments to their diet and some means of communication with their homelands. Insofar as it was possible, the South African authorities seem to have complied with these requests but these men were destined to stay incarcerated in the Union until the war ended.¹¹² The same was true for a much smaller mixed group of 54 interned Vichy French (and presumably European) civilians who were housed at a newly-built facility at Jagersfontein in September 1943.¹¹³

Conclusions

What is clear about both internment and prisoner of war policies in these three Dominions during the Second World War is that although Canada, Australia and South Africa were able to exercise a greater degree of independence in decision-making to take account of their specific circumstances, they were nonetheless still guided by precedents set during the Great War, by the policies and requests emanating from London, and bound by the international treaties such as the 1929 Geneva Convention that they had signed as sovereign entities. They were also bound by the collective war effort being fought by the Empire as a whole and involved in collective decision-making and policies where necessary. For example, the Imperial Prisoners of War Committee was created precisely to maintain a common approach in dealing with enemy prisoners and in trying to protect Allied servicemen in Axis hands. There were, nevertheless, some disagreements, for example when Ottawa parted company with London over the policy of shackling German prisoners in 1942, but the principle of a single imperial policy was retained. By contrast, policies on the internment of aliens were left to the individual dominions. Experience during the Great War had created precedents and the possibility of learning from previous perceived mistakes. While there was little apparent discussion on this issue between the Dominions, they were kept apprised of government policies in London. All of them entered the war in 1939 hoping to avoid the mass internments of foreign nationals that characterised the previous conflict, with arrests limited to those who represented a clear danger to security, but then followed the panic in Britain about internal subversion and the possibilities of a 'fifth column' to extend the categories and numbers of internees. Only later were these measures tempered by releases of those who presented no danger or, as in the case of many Jewish refugees from Germany and Austria, were actively pro-Ally.

In South Africa Smuts' avowed desire to aid the Allied war effort in every possible way was epitomised by his telegram to Churchill when the latter became Prime Minister in May 1940: 'Anything I can do to support your magnificent leadership will always be gladly done'.¹¹⁴ Nonetheless, even this staunch supporter of the imperial project had to tread carefully. With his country well away from the major theatres of war saving the conflict on the high seas, he was able to dictate the Union's contribution to housing Allied prisoners and seeing both the propaganda and economic advantages of the Italians but avoiding, for the most part, any involvement in accommodating the Germans captured in North Africa. When it came to the potential for internal subversion, he had much more to worry about than any of his dominion counterparts. The two-pronged threat from German nationals and pro-German Afrikaners presented a major headache in both the Union and South West Africa and while his Intelligence Service under Malherbe constantly advocated a stronger line against opponents, Smuts knew that provoking them through mass internment would play into their hands. As a result, he trod a careful legislative and executive tightrope in order to maintain a semblance of social peace in his politically divided country.

Notes

1. See, for example, Murphy, "Prisoners of War and Civilian Internees." Also Murphy, *Colonial Captivity*; Manz and Panayi, *Enemies in the Empire*; Manz and Dederling, "Enemy Aliens in Wartime"; and Manz, Panayi and Stibbe, *Internment during the First World War*.
2. See, for instance, Kay Saunders, "'The Stranger in our Gates'", 22. Also Kordan, *Enemy Aliens, Prisoners of War*; and Fischer, *Enemy Aliens*.
3. Garner "Treatment of Enemy Aliens."
4. Formally the Reichs- und Staatsangehörigkeitsgesetz of January 1, 1914, popularly named after the German Vice-Chancellor Clemens von Delbrück. See Fischer, *Enemy Aliens*, 118.
5. See Panayi, "An Intolerant Act," 55–6; and Pennell, "The Germans Have Landed!" 96.
6. See Stibbe, "A Question of Retaliation?" 11; and Panayi, "An Intolerant Act," 58.
7. Garner, "Treatment of Enemy Aliens," 38–42.
8. Stibbe, "A Question of Retaliation?" 16. See also Wilkinson, *British Prisoners of War*; and Stibbe, *British Civilian Internees*.
9. See Castell Hopkins, *The Canadian Annual Review*, 278–9; and Hryniuk, "The Bishop Budka Controversy," 157.
10. Castell Hopkins, *The Canadian Annual Review*, 277, 282.
11. *Ibid.*, 282–3.

12. See, for example, The National Archives, Kew, London (henceforth TNA), ADM 1/8393/314, Interception of Dutch vessels Zeelandia, Potsdam, Tubantia and Nieuw Amsterdam by HMS Inflexible.
13. See Castell Hopkins, *The Canadian Annual Review*, 277–8; and Kordan, *Enemy Aliens*, 16–22.
14. Kordan, *Enemy Aliens*, 29.
15. Ibid., 33–4, 36. See also, Marti, *For Home and Empire*, 98.
16. Garner, "Treatment of Enemy Aliens," 39.
17. For more recent investigations and conclusions about Canadian internment policy in the Great War, see Chaktsiris, "Identifying the Enemy"; and Kordan, "First World War Internment in Canada".
18. Fischer, *Enemy Aliens*, 4.
19. Marti, *For Home and Empire*, 95.
20. See Fischer, *Enemy Aliens*, 77; and Marti, *For Home and Empire*, 91, 95. The latter also notes the New Zealand Government's rapid internment of more than 600 enemy reservists on Somes Island.
21. Fischer, *Enemy Aliens*, 78.
22. Ibid., 81.
23. Castell Hopkins, *The Canadian Annual Review*, 283. This situation also brought questions of legal status and nationality into sharp relief for all Dominion authorities.
24. See South African Archives (henceforth SAB), SAP 17/6/245/14/98 "Internment and Treatment of Enemy Subjects," October 10, 1914. Also Manz and Dederig, "'Enemy Aliens,'" 542–3.
25. See ibid., 545–6, citing Brodersen-Manns, *Wie alles anders kam*, 17, 69–76.
26. Samson, "Duty to Empire?" 10–20.
27. These never numbered above 6,500 in total, including perhaps 200 South African dissidents from the Maritz rebellion. See Van der Waag, "The Battle of Sandfontein"; and *The Union of South Africa and the Great War 1914–1918 Official History*, 14–15.
28. See Van der Waag, "The Battle of Sandfontein," 158; and Cruise, *Louis Botha's War*. Also Rosengarten, "'A Most Gruesome Sight'". Ploeger, "The Action at Sandfontein," 49, records the capture of 1 Colonel, 14 Officers and 200 NCOs and Riflemen who were taken to Windhoek. See also Ritchie, *With Botha in the Field*, 66.
29. Murphy, "German Prisoners of War," 55, 87. Cited in Manz and Dederig, "'Enemy Aliens,'" 544.
30. See, in this context, Fedorowich, "The Other Side of The Picture," and the records of said meetings in TNA, DO 121.
31. See for example, TNA, DO 121/8, Meeting of Dominion High Commissioners and Secretary of State, 14 May 1940, that spoke of the desirability of a wider application of internment.
32. See, in this context, Simpson, *In the Highest Degree Odious*; and Pistol, *Internment during the Second World War*.
33. TNA, FO 916/2560, "Civilian Internees," June 7, 1940.

34. See Canadian National Archives (henceforth CNA), King Papers, C-4572, Vol. 292, 247,118 Secretary of State External Affairs to Canadian High Commissioner, London, June 5, 1940.
35. See TNA, FO 916/2580, Telegram from Vincent Massey (High Commissioner for Canada in London) to United Kingdom High Commissioner in Canada, June 6, 1940; and Under Secretary of State Dominions Office to Massey, June 7, 1940. Massey to Secretary of State Dominions Office, 10 June. Also King Papers, C-4572 Vol. 292, High Commissioner for Canada to Secretary of State for External Affairs, 7 June 1940; Auger, *Prisoners of the Home Front*, 22; Carter, *Behind Canadian Barbed Wire*, 46; and Waiser, *Park Prisoners*, 218.
36. See TNA, DO 121/9, Meeting of Dominion High Commissioners and Secretary of State, July 2, 1940; and Gilman, *Collar the Lot!*, 203–7.
37. See Avery, “Canada’s Response to European Refugees”, 191. Also CNA, 382.013 (DI), Major and Barber, “Memorandum,” 7–11. Massey also complained to the Dominion Office about the harmless refugees being included alongside dangerous Nazis – see TNA, DO121/9, Meeting of Dominion High Commissioners and Secretary of State, July 16, 1940.
38. CNA, King Papers C-4572, Vol.292, Secretary of State for External Affairs to High Commissioner for Canada in London, September 23, 1940.
39. *Ibid.*, High Commissioner for Canada to Secretary of State for External Affairs, October 31, 1940.
40. Avery, “Canada’s Response,” 192; CNA, 382.013 (DI), Major, and Barber, “Memorandum,” 11; and Stevens, *The Dispossessed*, 228.
41. Auger, *Prisoners of the Home Front*, 19–20. The Order-in-Council PC 2097 was passed on 20 August 1936, forming a Canadian Defence Committee.
42. Keyserlingk, “Breaking the Nazi Plot,” 55–57.
43. *Ibid.*, 58.
44. CNA, 382.013 (DI), Major and Barber, “Memorandum on Internment Operations,” June 27, 1947, 5.
45. Keyserlingk, “Breaking the Nazi Plot,” 60–1.
46. See CNA, 382.013 (DI) Major and Barber, “Memorandum,” 7; and South African Archives, Central Archives Depot (henceforth SAB), BTS 100/8, Secretary of State External Affairs Ottawa to High Commissioner for Canada in the Union of SA, 8 January 1942. There were seven Canadian women survivors of the SS Zamzam sunk by the German raider Atlantis in April 1941. Taken to Germany, they were part of a prisoner exchange in June 1942. See Gossage, *The Accidental Captives*; and Keyserlingk, “Breaking the Nazi Plot,” 61, 63. Vance, *Objects of Concern*, 162–3 also mentions some Canadian women interned in France who were released after Canada gave assurances that it did not intern German women unless they contravened the Defence of Canada Regulations (DOCR).
47. Saunders, “The stranger in our gates,” 35, cites Secretary of Cabinet to Secretary of External Affairs, extract from Annexure B to supplement no.1 to War Cabinet agenda 09/1941, MP 729/6, secret correspondence files, multiple series (class 401), 1936–45, file 65/401/135, AA.
48. *Ibid.*, 36.

49. Bevege, *Behind Barbed Wire*, 228.
50. *Ibid.*, 230–1.
51. *Ibid.*, 230–2.
52. Dennis, "The Internment of Aliens."
53. Keyserlingk, "Breaking the Nazi Plot," 54.
54. Andrew, *Secret Service*, 480–1.
55. SAB, Smuts Papers, Vol. 246, 1047, August 3, 1939.
56. Much of the discussion about these groups is related to their adherence to National Socialism or Fascism. See for example, Hagemann, "Very Special Relations."
57. See Malherbe Collection, Killie Campbell Memorial Library (henceforth EGM-KCM), 56,975 (110), "The Afrikaner-Broederbond," March 27, 1944; and BC 640 HGLP E3.263–4 "Interim Report: The Afrikaner Broederbond" November 11, 1941.
58. See for example, Furlong, *Between Crown and Swastika*.
59. Quoted in Jacobsen, *Nationalsozialistische Ausenpolitik*, 662–5. For a much more detailed examination of the German elements in South Africa, see Gess, "Germans in South Africa."
60. See Marx, "'Dear Listeners in South Africa,'" 151–2; and Hagemann, "Very Special Relations," 128–9.
61. South African Department of Defence Archives (henceforth DOD), formerly SADF, Union War History (UWH), Box 265, Internal Security, Intelligence Summary, March 2, 1940.
62. DOD, UWH Box 265, Internal Security, Intelligence Summary, November 24, 1939.
63. DOD, UWH Box 265, Intelligence Summaries, December 23, 1939 and January 5, 1940.
64. DOD, UWH Box 265, Intelligence Summaries, January 12, 1940. See also *Die Transvaler*, January 8, 1940.
65. DOD, UWH Box 299, File 335, Internment Policy. See also *Star*, January 30, 1940; and *Rand Daily Mail*, January 31, 1940. Of the 840 non-Union internees around 400 had been seized from ships
66. DOD, UWH Box 265, Intelligence Summary, February 3, 1940.
67. DOD, UWH Box 265, Intelligence Summary, April 20, 1940.
68. SAB, BC 640 HGLP E3.1-E3.34, Memorandum Relating to Nazi Activities in the Union of South Africa, October 28, 1939.
69. SAB, BC 640 HGLP E3.1-E3.34, Memorandum, 6. BC 640 HGLP E3.172 Deney's Reitz, Minister for Native Affairs to Minister of the Interior, May 30, 1940.
70. SAB, BC 640 HGLP E3.1-E3.34, Memorandum, 8.
71. SAB, BC 640 HGLP E3.170, Meeting of Internal Security Committee, June 6, 1940. At the end of 1940, 1,220 Germans were interned there.
72. TNA, DO119/1133, Sir Edward Harding, UK High Commissioner in Pretoria to Secretary of State, June 18, 1940; and Smuts to Harding, June 22, 1940.
73. TNA, DO119/1133, Botha (External Affairs) to Harding, September 9, 1940; DO119/1132. Governor Dar-es-Salaam to Sir Edward Harding, United Kingdom High Commissioner in Pretoria, 28 May 1940; *Rand Daily Mail*,

- July 12, 1940; DOD, UWH Box 299 File 335; *Star*, July 11, 1940; UWH Box 265, Intelligence Summary, June 15, 1940.
74. DOD, UWH Box 299, File 335. See also *Rand Daily Mail*, August 19, 1940; and *Star*, August 23, 1940.
 75. DOD, UWH Box 265, Intelligence Summaries, May 18, 1940 and May 25, 1940.
 76. SAB, BC 640 HGLP E3.158, First Meeting of the Internal Security Committee, May 23, 1940. There was also concern about subversive broadcasts from the South African Broadcasting Corporation, See BC 640 HGLP E3.200, "South African Broadcasting Corporation"; and Gess, "Germans in South Africa," 61.
 77. SAB, BC 640 HGLP E3.158, Meeting of Internal Security Committee, May 28, 1940.
 78. SAB, BC 640 HGLP E3.158, Meeting of Internal Security Committee, May 29, 1940; Minister of the Interior to Minister of Defence, May 30, 1940; Meeting of Internal Security Committee, June 3, 1940.
 79. SAB, TES 1980 File 7/168, Emergency Measures General Minute 11, J. H. Basson for Chief Control Officer, June 10, 1940; BC 640 HGLP E3.170 Meeting of Internal Security Committee, June 3, 1940.
 80. DOD, UWH Box 265, Internal Security, Intelligence Summary, April 20, 1940; TES 1980, File 7/168 Emergency Measures, J. H. Basson for Chief Control Officer, June 13, 1940.
 81. SAB, TES 1980 File 7/168, Emergency Measures, J. H. Basson for Chief Control Officer, June 13, 1940.
 82. SAB, BC 640 HGLP E3.190, Meeting of Internal Security Committee, June 17, 1940.
 83. See in this context, La Grange, "The Smuts Government's justification," 39–64.
 84. EGM-KCM, 56,975(99)C, 'The Real Menace of the Ossewa-Brandwag, May 1941.
 85. EGM-KCM, 56,975(101) No.18, *Rand Daily Mail*, April 23, 1941.
 86. EGM-KCM, 56,975 (1181) Lt. Mrs J. A. Malherbe, "The Ossewa-Brandwag on the Brink of the Great Divide," August 18, 1941; La Grange, "The Smuts Government's justification," 56.
 87. CAN, RG24 Vol. 6585, Coleman to Oscar Skelton, February 28, 1940 and Skelton to Coleman, February 28, 1940.
 88. See, for example, Sani, *History of the Italians*, 294–303.
 89. See *ibid.*, 296; and Marsh, *South Africa and the War at Sea*. The *Sistiana* was eventually renamed the HMT *Empire Union* and was sunk in the Atlantic by U-356 on Boxing Day 1942.
 90. TNA, PREM3/363/1, Telegram to UK High Commissioner in South Africa, January 11, 1941.
 91. TNA, PREM3/363/1, Telegram, UK High Commissioner in South Africa, January 22, 1941.
 92. Moore and Fedorowich, *British Empire*, 54.
 93. See TNA, CO968/45/1, C-in-C India to War Office April 8, 1941. Also Moore and Fedorowich, *British Empire*, 54–5, 57.
 94. Moore and Fedorowich, *British Empire*, 56.

95. DOD, AG Box 79, File 46, Vol.1, Secretary of Defence to AG(POW) and QMG, November 13, 1941.
96. DOD, AG Box 79, File 46 Vol.1, Officer Commanding Zonderwater to AG(POW), February 16, 1942.
97. DOD, AG Box 79, File 46 Vol.1, MilMis Pretoria to Troopers London, August 4, 1942.
98. Martin and Orpen, *South Africa at War*, Vol. 7, 192; DOD, AG Box 80, File 46 QMG to AG, November 25, 1942.
99. Moore and Fedorowich, *British Empire*, 59–60. The problem was made worse by an outbreak of dysentery and the necessary works were eventually taken over by the Adjutant-General's Office.
100. Ibid., 61–3.
101. DOD, AG Box 98/522, AG(POW) to O/C Natal Command, September 13, 1941.
102. Moore, "The Last Phase of the Gentleman's War," 43.
103. DOD, UWH Box 3512, Cape Area Intelligence, Notes no.154, 3. Item 11.
104. Moore, "Unwanted Guests," 68–9.
105. DOD, AG (POW) Box 99, File 526/1 Memorandum, Colonel Pilkington-Jordan DAG(O), March 9, 1942, No.58/26.
106. See, for example, TNA WO 141/97, for letters of complaint. Also Moore, "The Last Phase of the Gentleman's War."
107. Martin and Orpen, *South Africa at War*, 251–2; DOD, CGS Box 186, File 40/9 A. Cott O/C 1st Reserve Brigade to Adjutant General, August 26, 1940.
108. Orpen and Martin, *South Africa at War*, 148; Moore, "Unwanted Guests," 75–6; DOD, AGPOW Box 95, File 511. D. D. Forsythe (External Affairs) to Colonel J. H. de Wet (Adjutant-General's Office), June 23, 1942.
109. Moore, "Unwanted Guests," 78–82. Other prisoners had been frightened to speak out before the end of the war but resented Werner having reinvented himself as a Social Democrat who would be repatriated quickly. He and an accomplice were sent back to South Africa, tried and sentenced to five years, but returned to Germany after a year and released from custody.
110. Moore, "Unwanted Guests," 86; DOD, AGPOW Box 95, Statistics File 504B; and Gess, "Germans in South Africa," 68–9.
111. See DOD, Union War Histories Box 20; and Parkin, *German Prisoners of War in South Africa*, 1–3.
112. SAB, BTS 9/55/1/1B, Vol.1, Report by Rev. H. P. Junod (Assistant Delegate ICRC), Durban Road POW Camp, Pietermaritzburg, May 17, 1943.
113. SAB, BTS 9/55/1/1B, Vol. 1, Report by Rev. H. P. Junod (Assistant Delegate ICRC), Jagersfontein Internment Camp, October 28, 1943.
114. SAB, Smuts Correspondence, Box 247, Vol. 61, Smuts to Churchill, May 22, 1940.

Author contributions

CRedit: **Bob Moore**: Writing – original draft.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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