Methods

Our research team uploaded the relevant archive data into NVivo for qualitative analysis; read the **universe** of archived material **chronologically** and in its **entirety**; identified the pages that referred to or were otherwise relevant to internment; identified and coded internment-related concepts of interest; maintained detailed research notes; and developed a Python pipeline for computationally analyzing qualitatively coded material. We used a combination of **deductive** and **inductive** qualitative methods in order to gain a comprehensive understanding of the decision-making processes that led to the initiation and continuation of internment in Northern Ireland. The following sub-sections describe our methodological paradigm and detail the practical steps we took to code and analyze the data.

Methodological paradigm

Archives as political artifacts Archives provide an historical record from documents "created in the normal course of the life of an institution" (Foster and Sheppard, 2016, ix)—here, the executive branch of the British government (Her Majesty's Government, HMG). The facts and documents of record which a given archive preserves are shaped and filtered through the worldview of the government actors that produced them (Jennings, 2011, 5). Archival data are therefore unavoidably incomplete, contain bias that under-represent or omit certain events, prioritize the worldviews of some (often more powerful) perspectives over others,[1] and can (intentionally or unintentionally) advance political agendas—e.g., by omitting the experiences of colonized subjects or other marginalized actors (Decker, 2013, 2014; Foster and Sheppard, 2016; Stoler, 2010). Furthermore, archives are often a tool of colonial rule that manipulates information and silences the voices of colonized subjects (Decker, 2013; Stoler, 2010). Since Britain's relationship to Northern Ireland has several colonizing aspects, this is a relevant consideration in our data.

We adopted several techniques and frameworks to consider these limitations to using archive records for producing historical political knowledge. First, we worked to blend an analysis of facts (as evidenced by the archival record) with an iterative, interpretive understanding of the political context that shaped—and provided meaning to—those facts (Gilliland and McKemmish, 2004). Second, we read documents "with the grain" (i.e., for the material the authors intended to communicate) and "against the grain" (i.e., to gain ethnographic knowledge about the broader social and political contexts) (Stoler, 2010). Third, we triangulated this archive record with other (mostly external or secondary) sources (Decker, 2013; Gilliland and McKemmish, 2004). Fourth, we looked for, and made note of, what appeared to be gaps in the material—including missing documents or voices, under-documented time periods, or known events not covered in the archives—and filled these gaps with secondary sources where possible. Finally, we maintained extensive, open-ended "fieldnotes" to facilitate our critical reflection about the material and to considered the role we (as researchers) played in shaping our understanding of the evidence (Emerson, Fretz and Shaw,

[1] Archivists adopt practices that can lead to gaps or biases in the resulting files. These include: access to information policies, weeding by archivists, organizational principles of archiving, selection of documents to archive, the types of sources and information included (and excluded), collection of information, and silences (especially colonial) in the creation of documents (Decker, 2013).

1995). Together, these steps allowed us to extract evidence and develop defensible conclusions without erroneously treating the data as complete or unbiased.

Within-case process-tracing We conducted a within-case **process-tracing approach** to understand the process by which HMG arrived at its decision to initiate and continue internment without trial in Northern Ireland. This process-tracing approach provided several analytic benefits. First, it enabled us to test and critically evaluate several competing or complimentary hypothesized mechanisms. Second, it allowed us to incorporate Bayesian logic into our qualitative analysis (Charman and Fairfield, 2015), providing an infrastructure to update our prior assumptions (hypotheses) with evidence that affirms and/or casts doubt upon those priors (Bennett and Checkel, 2015, 16). Third, it provided the space to conduct a deductive hypothesis-testing analysis (Schimmelfennig, 2015) alongside inductive theory development, shaped by unanticipated mechanisms evidenced in our data (Pouliot, 2015). Fourth, leveraging deductive and inductive approaches, it allowed us to avoid the under-determination common in some quantitative scholarship and to induce analytically generalizable insights that may apply to other cases. Finally, it allowed us to uncover evidence of individual mental processes, internal divisions, and dissenting opinions so that we could better understand the heuristics through which state agents make decisions (Bennett and Checkel, 2015, 5). This also allowed us to more directly identify the (often overlooked or denied) human agency responsible for controversial government decisions.

Process tracing is not easily replicable, because conclusions are shaped by individual researchers' judgments.[2] To address this issue, we provide detailed, comprehensive, transparent documentation of our processes, judgments, uncertainties and considerations (Fairfield, 2013). In accordance with permission guidelines from the British National Archives at Kew (and as stated above), we will make our digitized, coded files and our research logs publicly available. Conclusions based on process tracing can also be inaccurate or skewed if the analyzed data is truncated or unrepresentative. Because we are analyzing the universe of relevant archive data, we are not significantly concerned about this issue. To further ensure the accuracy of our conclusions, we cross-validated our analysis with evidence from the British government's public statements and additional secondary evidence.

Structured analysis in practice

The size and scope of our archive data (more than 8,000 pages) introduced challenges for systematic analysis. To structure our analysis of the data, we adopted a coding procedure that enabled both deductive process-tracing and inductive observation. In particular, the structured process of identifying and classifying rationalizations provided us the opportunity to observe the influential factors and outcomes that resulted from government decision-making processes.

Deductive approach We adopted three rounds of qualitative coding aimed to identify rationalizations for internment within the text. In Round 1, we employed a team of coders to read the entire corpus and identify the pages that were relevant to internment. This

[2] Zaks (2017)'s "Relationship Among Rivals" framework has made significant progress in improving the replicability of qualitative analyses.

yielded approximately 1,400 unique pages. In Round 2 (pilot of 164 pages, Table **??**) and Round 3 (main coding round, Section **??**), a single coder—one of the authors of this article—identified each piece of evidence that constituted a government official explicitly or implicitly rationalizing internment, coded at the sentence level.

The same coder manually classified each rationalization sentence into a deductively generated ten-category scheme and maintained a daily coding log to record relevant and/or unexpected observations. A sentence received more than one rationalization label if it referenced multiple distinct rationalizations or contained a single idea relevant to more than one category. After Round 2, we modestly updated our classification strategy to most accurately accommodate unanticipated themes and to correct initial classification errors according to our evolving understanding of the data. A second coder reviewed a random sample of pages to assess inter-coder reliability (**??**).

Each piece of evidence (rationalization) was coded in NVivo; linked to one or more of the above rationalization categories; assessed for whether and how strongly it supports or undermines each relevant category; and assessed for its substance, importance and reliability. When we encountered evidence of unanticipated theories, we flagged, noted, and, as appropriate, incorporated those theories into coded rationalization categories.

Certain government actors (e.g., lower-ranking officials or those harboring minority perspectives) may have censored or moderated their attitudes for the record, leaving these perspectives under-represented in our data. However, the resulting aggregated data (**??**) represents our main concept of interest: the predominant, prevailing government perspectives about internment without trial. These rationalizations demonstrate the pressures, objectives, motivations, or frameworks that drove the government's ultimate decisions to initiate and continue internment in Northern Ireland.

Inductive approach Alongside our deductive coding strategy, we flagged and recorded inductive observations about the policy-making process, including: evidence of the substantive importance of some motivations over others; evidence of actors *opposing* internment; evidence of deliberation, debate, disagreement, or hesitation about internment policies; evidence of a state actor's desire to hide, control, limit, restrict, constrain, prevent, misinform, or redirect public knowledge about state internment policies; evidence of actors' interests, attitudes or normative frameworks shifting over time; and other explicit evidence of the policy-making process.

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