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BRITSKÁ UNIE FAŠISTŮ: IMAGE STRANY A JEJÍ VYSTUPOVÁNÍ  
NA VEŘEJNOSTI VE 30. LETECH 20. STOLETÍ

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THE BRITISH UNION OF FASCISTS: PARTY'S IMAGE AND ITS  
PERFORMANCE ON PUBLIC DURING THE 1930s

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### Z á s a d y p r o v y p r a c o v á n í :

Předmětem této práce bude vzestup fašisticky orientované organizace British Union of Fascists (BUF) během třicátých let minulého století. Autorka se zaměří na charakterizaci způsobů prezentace této strany a jejích ideálů na veřejnosti. Práce nejprve načrtne důvody vzniku pravicových radikálních organizací v Británii v politicko-společenském kontextu. Stěžejním posláním autorky je zmapovat "kulturu" britského fašismu - užívané symboly a stereotypy, formy propagandy a veřejných vystoupení či přístupu k židovské komunitě tak, aby byl zviditelněn rozdíl mezi německým/italským pojetím fašismu na straně jedné a jeho formou v Británii.

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Mé díky patří také rodině a přátelům, kteří stáli při mně po celou dobu vytváření této práce.

## Annotation

*The submitted paper deals with the symbols, propaganda and public performance of British Union of Fascists. It supplies the reader with the information about the origins of radical right and fascism in Great Britain, the political career of Oswald Mosley, the founder of the afore-mentioned party, and also with the foundation and the background of the movement. Attention is payed to the Jewish question which is closely connected with fascism. In the paper, the symbols that were adopted by the party from its Italian and German counterparts and which were later suited to the British character are discussed along with the propaganda in the newspapers, cinema and radio, and within the public appearances, including marches and rallies, during which, apart from other things, the party members were delivering speeches. The aim of the paper is to describe the above mentioned and discover to which extent it affected the party's public image.*

## Key words

*fascism; 1930s; Oswald Mosley; British Union of Fascists; Great Britain; propaganda*

## Název

*Britská unie fašistů: image strany a její vystupování na veřejnosti ve 30. letech 20. století*

## Souhrn

*Předkládaná práce se zabývá symboly, propagací a veřejným vystupováním Britské unie fašistů. Seznamuje čtenáře s počátky krajní pravice a fašismu ve Velké Británii, s politickou kariérou Oswalda Mosleye, zakladatele zmiňované strany, dále pak se vznikem a charakteristikou hnutí. Pozornost je věnována také židovské otázce, která je obecně úzce spjata s fašismem. Diskutovány jsou symboly, jež strana převzala od svých italských a německých protějšků a které později přizpůsobila specifikům britské společnosti a kultury, dále propagace v tisku, filmu a rozhlasu, a také veřejné výstupy, zahrnující pochody a sjezdy, v rámci nichž členové strany mimo jiné řečnili. Cílem práce je zmapovat výše zmiňované a zjistit, do jaké míry byl ovlivněn obraz strany v očích veřejnosti.*

## Klíčová slova

*fašismus; 1930s; Oswald Mosley; Britská unie fašistů; Velká Británie; propaganda*

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## **Abbreviations**

<b>BF</b>	British Fascisti/British Fascists
<b>BUF</b>	British Union of Fascists (and National Socialists)
<b>IFL</b>	Imperial Fascist League
<b>ILP</b>	Independent Labour Party
<b>NFP/PNF</b>	National Fascist Party/Partito Nazionale Fascista
<b>NP</b>	New Party
<b>NSDAP</b>	Nazional-Sozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei
<b>TRL</b>	Tariff Reform League

# 1. Introduction

Fascism is an ideology that captured Europe during the interwar period, especially Italy and Germany. Britain was no exception, though it was not affected so heavily. The issues that emerged during the late Victorian era and the consequential Edwardian times prepared the conditions for the emergence of radical right-wing parties to which the fascist movements indubitably belonged. In the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, several parties avowing the fascist creed were launched in Britain. The biggest and the best known one was British Union of Fascists led by former Conservative and Labour MP Sir Oswald Mosley. The party took its inspiration from its Italian and German counterparts where the fascist parties were the ruling ones before and during the Second World War. Nonetheless, BUF was never successful in general elections and never reached the status of Britain's ruling party.

This paper attempts to reveal the general symbolics of the party that was adopted from the BUF's European counterparts. The distinctions between the original symbols and their British variations are examined in the first part of the analysis. The work also deals with the party's propagandistic activities and reveals which promotional tools were used by BUF and how. The attention is paid to the party's performance on public and to what extent the events within the meetings affected BUF's public image. The aim of the paper is to prove that BUF's propaganda was not successful at all. This statement is supported by the fact that Mosleyites had never been elected to Parliament.

In the first part, the reader is acquainted with the formation of radical right-wing and fascist parties in Britain. Attention is paid to the political attempts of Oswald Mosley, the leader of BUF, and the establishment, evolution and objectives of British Union of Fascists (and National Socialists). The party's attitude towards Jews is discussed at the end of the chapter.

The second chapter is dedicated to the analysis that has two parts. In the first part, the party's symbols, including the emblems, uniforms and marching songs are discussed. Attention is paid to the shape and character of the symbols and distinctions between the BUF's and the original versions of particular symbols. The second part of the analysis deals with BUF propaganda that is divided into three subchapters with the

third one being the longest. First, the brief definition of propaganda is supplied. It is followed by the newspaper propaganda together with the BUF's own periodicals and publications. The second subchapter briefly focuses on propagandistic films and broadcasting. The last subchapter is dedicated to the BUF's public appearances, including meetings and marches. Mosley's oratorical style as well as the three major gatherings are analysed.

In the conclusion, the data and information obtained are summarized and concluded. The part supplies the reader with the results of the carried out analysis.

## **2. Origins of british fascism and British Union of Fascists**

This chapter deals with the historical and social context preceding and clearing the ground for fascism. It provides the reader with a brief overview of events that led to the formation of radical right-wing and fascist parties in Britain. As the relevant sources give the same, or at least similar, information, the part dealing with the Victorian era is based mainly on the work of Martin Pugh, one of the best authorities on the topic of fascism.

What is necessary at the beginning of the paper is to supply a definition of what fascism is as there are many misinterpretations of this term. For this purpose, the citation of Brett Boyanowski is used:

The term fascism comes from the word fasces; an ax tightly wound with sticks. Fascism can be defined as a political attitude and mass movement that arose during time between the first and second World War. Fascism is the attitude of giving full interest in economic, social, and military power to a dominant race or state led by a single dominant leader. Fascism basically rejected the idea of Socialism, Capitalism, and Democracy. Fascism's are single-party dictatorships characterized by terrorism and police surveillance. It focuses on ethnicity and "our" race being better than "your" race. Fascism is not limited to one culture alone. Each culture can believe that it is better and each person can consider himself to be better than his fellow man. Fascism is used to categorize censorship and oppression. Ones who take away freedom from others can be considered fascist (Fascism).

Throughout the paper, the reader is informed about specific forms of fascism in Britain, as it was distinct from other variations in Italy and Germany. Especially it differed in terms of intensity of the fascist beliefs and applied principles. The following part deals with the formation of radical right-wing parties in Britain and with the origins of British fascism.

## 2.1 British Radical Right

It is a frequent point of argumentation which period was the one to have enabled fascism to have appeared in Britain after the Great War. Majority of theorists and scientists examining the area claim that ideas of and tendencies to what was later called British fascism emerged for the first time in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century as a reaction to the social, economic and political problems of the late-Victorian period and the oncoming World War I in the early days of 20<sup>th</sup> century. Only a few historians see the roots of British fascism in the Elizabethan period. For example Linehan in his book *British Fascism* points out that Elizabeth I's attempts to cure poverty resembled the fascist ideals of social justice (2000, p. 15). However, these ideas are rather spurious, for fascism emerged practically four hundred years later and in the meantime, almost no tendencies to fascism were observed.

What is considered to be a milestone for the later emergence of fascism in Europe as well as for undermining British confidence in parliamentary democracy, is the unification of Germany. On 19<sup>th</sup> September 1870 Prussian troops finished the encirclement of Paris making it inevitable for Napoleon III to capitulate four months later<sup>1</sup>. Not only France but also other European countries were struck by the account of the swift and unexpected victory of Prussian armada, which, without any doubt, brought the dark clouds above the whole Europe as the new united Germany emerged on the scene. It was a new era of fear and insecurity about the future of Europe. During the previous twenty years Britain had very visibly reached the peak of its industrial, commercial and imperial strength and what's more, the country has not ever been challenged or even jeopardized by a major external power (Pugh, 2005, p.7).

Not only did the emergence of new industrialized powers threaten Britain, but the country was also menaced by disadvantages and risks of liberal free trade. Everywhere in Europe, free trade was considerably limited but in Britain it still remained through the use of free trade tariffs. (A Century of British)

During the pre-war period Britain was in need of a radical political, economical

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<sup>1</sup> These events pertain to the Franco-Prussian war that took place between 1870 and 1871.

and social reform. Although the Victorian era is generally said to have given the world a model of parliamentary government and is considered to be the period of progressive political developments, in some terms it had nothing to do with democracy. Despite the fact that the vote was extended and the campaigns for female emancipation were almost a routine advent that time, four out of every ten men, and all women, still lacked the right to vote. In fact, British people enjoyed few of the rights and liberties of citizens (Pugh, 2005, pp. 7-8).

The real foreboding of fascism in Britain can be seen in the gradual formation of the radical right as a reaction to the pre-war situation. Martin Pugh sees the reasons for the rise of such parties in the historical events and social state mentioned above as well as in the ideas of eugenics<sup>2</sup> and various racist theories that were very popular in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (Pugh, 2005, 13).

Some of the historians assume that the Edwardian era is the period of relative social stability but actually, it is far from the truth. The differences between classes widened rapidly as time went by. This fact led to the development of radical groups and the principles of liberalism were challenged. The growth of radical groups reached its peak between 1911 and 1914 when the suffragette movement, the Ulster Volunteer Force<sup>3</sup>, syndicalism and other extremist movements and creeds developed (Thurlow, 2005, p.2).

The radical right-wing movements started to emerge in the first decade of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and the word *radical* (as well as *ultra* or *far*) is used there to express that the parties that proclaimed themselves to be radical were somehow extremist, usually radically patriotic, nationalist and racialist.

Excepting minor dissimilarities, particular parties had the same objectives. They were supporters of tariff reform, compulsory military service together with the expansion of the army and navy, development of social welfare as well as the

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<sup>2</sup> The term *Eugenics* comes from the Greek word *eugenia* meaning „well-born“ and was coined by Francis Galton, a British geneticist. Eugenics involves modifying natural given genes (not only the human ones) to make it as perfect as possible. The positive features are enhanced while the negative ones are decreased or prevented. This may be connected with a superman theory adopted by the Nazis in a form of a belief in the superiority of an Aryan race.

<sup>3</sup> The Ulster Volunteer Force was a unionist militia formed to block Home Rule for Ireland

introduction of the political referendum. These parties also struggled for a prohibition of foreign immigration following the ideas of the afore-mentioned eugenics. The attitude to Wilhelmine Germany<sup>4</sup> was characterized by a discrepancy in opinion as British politicians were fearful of Germany's military and industrial strength, and on the other hand, they saw its administrative efficiency and the social welfare programmes as a role model for modernization of British society. British radical right was captivated by the leading role of the state in Germany's national development and became interested in establishing a similar system in Britain (Thurlow, 2005, p.4).

The most significant of the radical right-wing and one of the first to have appeared was called the Tariff Reform League (formed in 1903). As the title suggests, this group urged to replace the no longer satisfactory free trade with a system of import tariffs according to the Joseph Chamberlain's proposal.<sup>5</sup> This plan was meant to prevent Britain from the foreign competitors. TRL was noted for its strong anti-Semitic ideas. (A Century of British)

After the Great War, first fascist parties emerged. The industrial unrest and a rise of the 'socialist' Labour Party as well as the threat of the imminent Bolshevik revolution brought the establishment of anti-socialist and anti-Semitic organisations. Parties like Economic league (formed in 1919), National Citizens Union (1919) or the Britons (1919) are worth mentioning. These movements believed that the Labour Party was controlled by the 'Jewish-Bolshevik' agents and their goal was to resist the Labour's attempts to 'bolshevize' Britain. They were convinced that there was a need for the establishment of a paramilitary force per sample of Mussolini's forces. (A Century of British)

The first proto-fascist party emerged in 1923 and was called British Fascists. The group took inspiration from Mussolini (They admired the way he had dealt with the socialist menace. That reflected in its original name *British Fascisti*, which was in 1926 changed to more English sounding *British Fascists*), however, in one fact it was unique. The BF was founded and led by a woman, Rotha Lintorn Orman, which was, except

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4 The term 'Wilhelmine Germany' is used for the period between 1890 and 1914 under the rule of Wilhelm II., the last German Emperor and King of Prussia.

5 Joseph Chamberlain was an MP and a Unionist

suffragette movements, rather unusual then (Thurlow, 1998, p. 34). BF was virulently anti-Communist movement that struggled for a reduction of income tax that would heal unemployment, simply because opulent people would have got more money to hire more servants. Later they adopted ideas of a corporate state whose establishment was one of the BUF's objectives as well. The party was characterized as a cross between a boy scout movement and a quasimilitary group and that might be the reason why its impact on a political scene was that marginal. Due to this fact, Orman failed in promoting feminized imagery of fascism. The party soon became a fringe organization superseded by the BUF (Linehan, 2004, pp. 16-17).

Another party worth mentioning is Imperial Fascist League (\*1929) led by a BF's former member Arnold Leese. This movement might have been seen as an embodiment of racial fascism. Although Leese never received so much attention as Oswald Mosley, he was the one who, without hesitation, expressed his critical attitude towards Jews. He also criticised Mosley for being a 'puppet of the Jews' and nicknamed the BUF 'British Jewnion of Fascists'. By these statements, Leese reacted to the fact that the BUF was supported by the *Daily Mail*, the newspaper funded by rich Jews (Cashmore and Troyna, 1990, p. 169).

## **2.2 Sir Oswald Mosley's First Political Attempts and Formation of New Party**

During the Great War, the Sandhurst graduate Oswald Mosley joined the Royal Flying Corps where he was trained as a pilot. Unfortunately, a few days before obtaining a licence, he had a plane crash and was seriously injured. After his recovery he attempted to join the army again, however, the remaining health problems (limping) made him incompetent to fight on front and since 1916 he had been working in the Ministry of Munitions Office. Soon after he was employed by the Foreign Office and he dedicated this period to self-education. He was interested in history and also read many books on politics. During that time he was introduced to many politicians of the generation and under their influence he considered becoming a politician (Keeley, 1998, p.2-3).



“Tom”<sup>6</sup> Mosley began his political career as a member of the Conservative Party. In the General Elections of 1918 the twenty-two-year-old Conservative Unionist won a seat for Harrow. His success was astonishing and unexpected. His opponent suffered from an overwhelming defeat (13, 950 : 3, 000 votes) and Mosley became one of the youngest MPs of his generation (Dorril, 2006, p.40). He made his name as a brilliant orator, witty debater and self-confident political player in the House of Commons right from the beginning, but he was soon dissatisfied with the ideas and actions of Conservatives and in 1924 he resigned from the party and joined Labourists (Independent Labourist Party<sup>7 8</sup>) (Ramsden, 2006, p.541). Even in the ILP he did not stay long as he felt that the party did not give enough support to his keynesian solutions for British economic issues and were not familiar with his programme intended for dealing with unemployment issues. In May 1930 he expressed his ideas and solutions in a 'Mosley Memorandum'. Memorandum was, as well as the 'Manifesto' that was published in December the same year, rejected by the Cabinet (Thompson, 2006, p.88).

Disappointed by the established political structures, he decided to form his own party. With the financial support from a motor car tycoon Sir William Morris<sup>9</sup>, he and his five fellows from ILP launched the New Party on March 1<sup>st</sup> 1931<sup>10</sup>(Jones, 2004,p.55). After the announcement that he was to leave the party and form a new one, one of his former colleagues prophetically told him: “You will end up as a fascist party“(Jones, 2004, p.55). Mosley did not pay much attention to his message as he was not interested in fascist ideologies then, or not in the extent he became to be a year later. He was convinced that Britain needed a change in the system and the first step to do so was, in his opinion, to dismiss the 'old gang'. According to Mosley, the country was in need of 'fresh air' in terms of politics and it might be the reason why he had chosen the title 'New Party' for his new project. The New Party attempted to apply changes that would stop economic decline of Britain, but since the foundation of the party, Mosleyites have faced many difficulties. Labourists and Communists protested against

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6 Although Mosley was named Oswald Ernald, among family and his friends he was always called *Tom* or *Tommy*.

7 ILP was a branch of the Labour Party which professed a purer brand of socialism.

8 He was an MP for Smethwick between 1926 and 1931.

9 The gift came with a warning that further support would depend on Mosley's sustained success.

10 In some sources, the foundation of New Party is dated February 28<sup>th</sup> 1931.

the party and their objectives and very often they disturbed the party's meetings. It was dangerous for NP's speakers to perform on public as they were attacked by party's opponents and violence became the integral part of the NP's meetings. To protect his colleagues, Mosley decided to establish the so called Youth Movement, the group of young men popularly known as 'biff boys', defending the NP members against these violent actions. He hired a boxing champion Ted 'Kid' Lewis as his bodyguard and as a trainer of an NP's defence force (Oswald Mosley 2). Formation of such force was a step leading to fascization of Mosley's movement, but, as he stated, the New Party was fascist only theoretically, not practically (Ramsden, 2006, p.577). Although misunderstood, unwelcome and without any support in the press, the New Party stood for seats in General Elections in 1931. However, they were not successful at all. Actually, they never thought they could experience such a devastating defeat. Shortly after this failure, many NP's members decided to resign and the party in itself started to split. Party's turn towards fascism and unsuccessful candidature caused estrangement within NP's intellectual supporters as well (Oswald Mosley 2).

### **2.3 British Union of Fascists (and National Socialists<sup>11</sup>)**

Dissatisfied by the victory of the 'old gang', as he called the Conservative Party, Mosley decided to travel through Europe in order to 'study modern movements'. Apart from other countries he visited Italy, where he was introduced to Benito Mussolini and finally fascinated by the system he had established in Italy. These two had a lot in common. They were both leftists and sort of firebrands who were not satisfied with the policies of 'the old men' who had sent the soldiers to trenches. (Oswald Mosley 2). Captivated by Mussolini's fascist policy, Mosley dismissed New Party after his return to Britain and prepared the documents necessary for launching a new, completely fascist party. In the mean time, he was working on his book *Greater Britain*, a treatise combining his radical economic theory with his vision of the ideal authoritarian government and a corporate state (Keeley, 1998, p. 9).

On October 1<sup>st</sup> Oswald Mosley with the thirty-two founder members announced

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11 In 1936 the party was renamed to the British Union of Fascists and National Socialists.

the formation of the NP's successor the British Union of Fascists. In his speech that took place at 12 Great George Street, Mosley asked his partyliners 'to march with us in a great and hazardous adventure. We ask them to be prepared to sacrifice all . . .to dedicate their lives to building in this country a movement of the modern age' (Dorril, 2006, p.217). The language that he used might have been fitting more had he been speaking at a British version of the Nurnberg rally or at BUF's later Earl's Court Rally, but in case of such an intimate performance it sounded rather ridiculous. On the other hand, it shows that Mosley took his new organization seriously and wanted to announce the foundation with respect and honour. The BUF's goal was to unify all British fascist parties, however, these attempts were not successful as he had many critics among members of those parties. Arnold Leese of IFL dubbed Mosley's fascism as 'Kosher Fascism' and regarded his movement as a disgrace to fascism (Cashmore and Troyna, 1990, p. 169). Leese still believed that Mosley's wife Diana had Jewish ancestors and Mosley was an agent hired by Jews to sabotage British fascism. This statement made Mosley angry and it led to the violent attack on Leese during the IFL meeting. It may be a point of argumentation what outraged Mosley as much as he attacked Leese. He might have protected Diana's credit or he might have feared that he would lose Fuhrer's favour, unless he intervened. Or he might have simply felt offended by Leese' imputation. Rotha Orman (BF), on the other hand, deemed that the BUF had communist leanings and therefore refused the unification (Keeley, 1998, p.9).

Although his idea to unify all the British parties under BUF failed, Mosley still believed that his party itself would be strong enough to capture the Parliament. He saw the crisis of British economy as plus points for BUF to succeed (Thurlow, 2005, p.93), as he was convinced that he would establish a strong party that would be able to enforce radical reforms. One of those most radical reforms was an establishment of a corporate state, which became the principal object of the party with which they planned to succeed in the next General Elections. In case of the BUF's victory in elections, the BUF would become the only political party in Britain and the electoral system would be changed. Citizens would vote for or against the party according to their opinion on party's actions and its ability to fulfill the set objectives. In the event that they were dissatisfied, the Government would be replaced (Oswald Mosley 1).

Since its early days BUF had been establishing a well-considered system of branches thanks to which the BUF ideas were spread throughout Britain. The organizational structure is illustrated in the following quotation.

The BUF quickly established a network of branches throughout Great Britain. Organisation was on semi-military lines: each branch consisted of Units under the charge of Branch Officer (later called District Leader) who was in turn under the supervision of a National Inspecting Officer. This reflected the fact that a high proportion of early members were ex-servicemen of the First World War....Women were organised in a separate local formation under a Women's District Leader (Oswald Mosley 1).

In 1933 Mosley bought the building of the former Whitelands Teachers Training College in Chelsea and turned it into the BUF's headquarters named 'The Black House' (further abbreviated as BH). The BH was without any doubt an imitation of the NSDAP's Brown House (Braunes Haus) in Munich. Both mansions were occupied by the parties' leaders and key officers who were guarded by a great number of 'Shirts'; brown in Germany, black in Britain (Jones, 2004, p.85). Moreover, the appellation itself suggests that the BUF took its inspiration from the Nazi model. The BH, besides being the BUF's main office, functioned also as a training house with parade grounds and dormitories for Blackshirts and last but not least, it was a base of the so called 'I Squad'<sup>12</sup>. Under military discipline the BUF members were drilled and taught martial arts and other combative sports (Oswald Mosley 1).

The movement always put an emphasis on propagandistic activities. Since 1933 Mosleyites have been publishing *the Blackshirt* newspaper that was later accompanied by another one named *the Action* (British Online). Not only did they publish papers, they also published various books that were together with the *Action* and *Blackshirt* the distributed in the street sales. Large meetings, marches and demonstrations were typical of BUF.

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<sup>12</sup> I Squad was a mobile defence force that was always in readiness to rescue their Blackshirt fellows in case that any of the party's meetings was interrupted by left-wing aggressors or other violators. They were able to mobilize very quickly and were dispatched to the place of destination in rather short time. What is interesting about this unity is the fact that they were not allowed to use weapons. Instead, they were trained in boxing and judo. I Squad also functioned as Mosley's personal force of bodyguards. It seems that the I Squad was a counterpart of Hitler's SS forces.

Thanks to the support of *the Daily Mail*, that wrote praising articles about the group, the number of the BUF members had risen from thirty two up to 50,000 by 1934. However, due to their frequent frays with Jews (see 3.2.2.1 for details about the infamous Olympia Rally of 1934), they soon lost the tabloid's favour and this fact led to the decrease in membership. The party never hesitated to use force to parry the attacks of their opponents and that is why they came in for the procrustean image in the eyes of British public. By 1935, the BUF had not much more than 5,000 members. Although, the party started to recover quickly (in five months 5,000 new people joined the party), it had never returned to the numbers that had been reached in 1934 (Patterns of Membership).

Concerning the BUF objectives, the party stood out against capitalist system and liberal democracy that in their opinion gave the birth to the economic crisis in Britain. In 1935 they came up with the solution and published the book *The Coming Corporate State*, where Mosley and the BUF's leading intellectual Alexander Raven Thompson profoundly introduced the idea of the Corporate State that was outlined earlier in the *Greater Britain*.

Thompson explained the need and asset of the establishment of the Corporate State in the introduction of *The Coming Corporate State*.

The Corporate State is a means of equating economic forces to the needs of the Nation. It is designed to end the chaos and disorder of the present economic system, and replace them by an organised economy. It is designed to break the hidden dictatorship of vested interests and alien financiers who exploit present conditions for their own benefit. These powers have driven Labour Governments out of office, they dictate the policies of National Governments, but they will never control a Corporate State (Thompson, 1935, pp. 2-3).

The ideas of the corporatism originated in Italy and were one of the Mussolini's policies that had inspired Mosley a lot. The establishment of the corporate state was assigned to cope with unemployment issues and poverty (10 points of Fascism). Under the corporate state, the Government would be empowered to rule the country (through the enabling bill) and would act as the central authority in Britain. Decision making body

would be formed by the Prime Minister (Mosley) and other four assisting ministers. The House of Commons would be replaced by the fascist parliament and its power would be limited. On the other hand, the House of Lords would be replaced by the important national corporation consisting of one representative from each of the twenty five self-governing corporations in Britain (What's the big). It is interesting that Thompson is talking about twenty five corporations, while Mosley mentions only sixteen in his pamphlet *The Greater Britain* (Oswald Mosley 1). The Crown would preserve<sup>13</sup> and the King would have the right to replace ministers but only with the fascist ones. No person not avowing to fascist creed would have a chance to become a minister.

The creeds of the BUF were summarized in the Earl's Court Souvenir Programme. The following original wording is taken from this short publication which was a guidebook for the event of the famous Earl's Court Rally (the rally is discussed in the third part of the paper).

- ✓ All shall serve the State and none the faction;
- ✓ All shall work and thus enrich their country and themselves;
- ✓ Opportunity shall be open to all, but privilege to none;
- ✓ Great position shall be conceded only to great talent;
- ✓ Reward shall be accorded only to service;
- ✓ Poverty shall be abolished by the power of modern science released within the organised State;
- ✓ The barriers of class shall be destroyed and the energies of every citizen devoted to the service of the British nation, which by the effort and sacrifice of our fathers has existed gloriously for centuries before this transient generation, and which by our own exertions shall be raised to its highest destiny – the Greater Britain that shall be born of the National Socialist and Fascist creed.

(taken from the BUF Earl's Court Souvenir Programme available at Free eBooks – see bibliography)

For more information about the BUF objectives and further explanation of them, see the booklet titled *10 Points of Fascism* (see Appendix 12). The pamphlet was pitched to those who were interested in the BUF ideology, to those who were interested in becoming the members of the party or to those who just needed an explanation of the

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<sup>13</sup> In the book *Fascism: 100 Questions Asked and Answered*, Mosley speaks about his absolute loyalty to the Crown and this might be considered the only rational reason why he did not plan to dissolve the Crown.

BUF programme.

The year 1936 was revolutionary for the party. At that time the BUF was renamed to the British Union of Fascists and National Socialists (further in the text the existing abbreviation for the party is used). By the name change, Mosleyites manifested their shift from the Mussolini-inspired fascism to the Hitler-inspired one<sup>14</sup>. That is illustrated by the words 'National Socialists' in its title as the German Nazi party's one consisted of these words as well (Nazional Socialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei). The new Nazi style uniforms and the new logo were introduced the same year. Along with these changes, the BUF's attention was focused on London's East End, the district highly populated by Jews (Levy, 2005, p. 87). Mosley organized numerous marches, appearances, and propagandistic activities (see Appendix to view the article published in the *Blackshirt*) at the area. The BUF's attacks on the East End dwellers culminated on October 4, 1936 when the infamous Battle of Cable street took place (discussed in...). The violent riots within the unsuccessful<sup>15</sup> march brought the BUF negative publicity and attention of the police and the consequent enacting of the Public Order Act.

The years 1937 and 1938 were quite restful for BUF. The British Union of Fascists was officially dissolved on May 30 1940. The same day, all the books and periodicals published by the BUF were banned (British Union).

For Hill et al. Mosley had not the qualities to become a successful leader of a fascist party as Mussolini had. In their opinion, he was too 'soft' and too 'modern' (1991, p. 575). However, there are authors who disdain his seeming incompetence and see the BUF as a strong movement. For example Thurlow describes the BUF as a movement “which was intellectually the most coherent and rational of all the fascist parties in Europe in its early years ”(2005, p.62). Nonetheless, they failed to convince people that authoritarian methods would prevent Britain from further decline. It is very improbable that a movement of the BUF's stature would not be able to present their ideas in the way that would attract the public, considering the party's speakers were trained in political rhetoric. Moreover, Mosley himself was a brilliant orator and passed for a capable

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14 This shift might have been caused by the fact that Mosley's wife Diana née Mitford and her sisters were close friends and admirers of Adolph Hitler

15 It was unsuccessful because it actually did not happen. The opponents made it impossible for the BUF to pass through the streets of East End.

politician. These qualities seem to have been a guarantee for success, thus it is necessary to seek the cause somewhere else. One of the reasons for such a refusal among citizens might be seen in party's violent public actions. The fact that Mosleyites were always ready to drub anti-fascists and other opponents might evoke the impression that in case they had led Britain, they would not hesitate to attack anyone who would dare not to support or even to thwart the plans of Mosley's regime. The fear of living in such state could discourage British to concern themselves in the BUF, or even to vote them.

The British Union of Fascists was officially dissolved on May 30 1940. The same day, all the books and periodicals published by the BUF were banned (British Union – spartacus).

## **2.4 British Union of Fascists and their attitude towards Jews**

By 1900, Britain's Jewish population had risen to 160,000 which represented approximately 0.3 of the total population (Pugh, 2005, p.213). These immigrants came mainly from the Eastern Europe and they tended to congregate in certain districts. That was the reason for many Britons to have complained, because Jews living in such communities were 'reluctant to assimilate' (Jackson, 1997, p.82). Not many British admitted that they hated them because of race and antipathies towards immigrants. British also blamed the Jews for stealing their jobs and thus causing the increase of a number of unemployed Britons. Jews were 'a splinter in the eye' of the Conservative Party that had campaigned against them since 1890s. Finally, in 1905 Conservatives, most likely in order to gain more voters, enacted the Aliens Act that was intended to limit immigration. Intolerance towards Jews preserved in such form until the Great War. Shortly before the war, the Jews became a target of radical and fascist groups.

The Jewish question is indubitably the more bounded up with fascism than the questions of any other races, but at the beginning, it is important to mention BUF's view of Hitler's racial theories and the immigration as it may reveal their attitude to radical nationalism or racism as such.

According to Mosley, there are differences between Germany and Britain that



cause the variance of both German and British attitudes towards racial theories of German Nazi movement. Mosley sees Britain as „a great Empire comprising many different races“ while Germany as a country that is not that racially varicoloured and whose aim is a „revived German race“ that would be geographically united within the Third Reich (Mosley, 1936, pp. 35-36).

More drivel is talked about the Jews than most subjects; both ways. The views that all Jews are born wicked, or that all Jews should be the sacred objects of the system, seems to me equal nonsense. I am neither an anti-Semite, nor a sycophant of Semites. The attitude of our movement has been both consistent and intelligible throughout. We have never attacked any man on account of race or religion, and we never shall. But we attack any man, whatever his race or religion, who acts against the interests of Britain or Europe; particularly Britons who ought to know better than to serve alien interests. It is a straightforward attitude, which has been formed by clear principles (Oswald Mosley 1).

By this statement, Oswald Mosley expresses his not negative (avoiding the word *positive* is purely intentional) attitude to Jewish ethnicity. Mosley always proclaimed himself not to be an anti-Semite. Nevertheless, his statements about his not offensive attitude to Jews did not correspond with his later public actions against this community that, in many cases, could not be considered accidental at all. However, Mosley, not being an anti-Semite, is not a guarantee that the rest of the party members were familiar with his attitude. Conversely, many leading members were obdurate enemies of the Jewish community in Britain. For example William Joyce, the BUF's propaganda director, often discoursed his hatred towards Jews. Once in Chiswick, he stated: “I don't regard Jews as a class, I regard them as a privileged misfortune”(Pugh, 2005, p.213). Neither his colleagues were in arrears with hostile statements.

In the eye of the public, British Union was seen as a racist movement. Every party that has in its title the word “fascist” makes people think that it is anti-Semite, however, anti-Semitism was not a part of the BUF's ideology and was banned by Mosley himself. It is necessary to highlight the fact that Mosley admitted many people of Jewish ancestry to his parties. Namely, Ted ”Kid” Lewis, responsible for the NP's defence force stewards training, was a Jew, and Mosley must have been aware of it as Lewis was widely known through the media and his Jewish ancestry was no secret then.

Notable names among the BUF interneees included John Beckett (Director of Publications and Editor of Action), Bill Leaper (Editor of the Blackshirt), Harold Soref (Standard Bearer at the Olympia Rally) or Albert Lynden aka Lewinska (a member of British Union's Ealing branch and Mosley's wartime cellman) (Oswald Mosley 1).

Although, Mosley forbade anti-Semitism among his partyliners, the situation was changing rapidly throughout the time, because 'Leader' and his followers were convinced that the majority of aggressors attacking the BUF speakers and news vendors were Jews (Oswald Mosley 1). Reasons for his turn to “anti-Semitism“ might be seen elsewhere. Starting 1933, the economic crisis of Britain began to improve and it meant that it was rather unlikely that the fascist party could succeed. And due to this fact, Mosley was in need of a new crisis and that is why he started to talk about the threat that Jews embodied for British nation. Another impetus can be seen in the loss of favour among rich Jews who financially supported the BUF's greatest popularizer, *the Daily Mail*. Many influential Jews were disturbed by the events connected with the violent attacks on Jews during the Olympia Rally in 1934. The sponsors forced Lord Rothermere, the owner of *the Daily Mail*, to stop writing praising articles about the BUF. Rothermere, who could not risk the loss of the promoters, acceded to their demands.

### **3. Symbols and propaganda**

This part reveals the party's symbols that were adopted from its European counterparts at the BUF's early years. Propagandistic activities of Mosley's movement are discussed further in the chapter. The attention is paid specially to the party's public meetings.

#### **3.1 Symbols**

Every fascist movement in Europe had its symbols. These symbols usually originated in Italy or Germany as these countries were considered to be the centres of fascist ideology from which the other proto-fascist movements took their inspiration. Besides ideology itself, the BUF adopted symbols including the emblem, uniform, marching songs and salutation. All these symbols were modified a bit in order to better assimilate with the British culture. This part gives the reader a brief overview of the individual symbols. The salutation is discussed separately in this introduction to the subchapter.

The fascist salutations consisted of the two-word greeting and the typical posture. The most widely known is the German greeting "Heil Hitler" which resembles the British "Hail Mosley" a lot for the pronunciation of "heil" and "hail" meaning the same is akin. The typical fascist posture consists of one's legs together and the right arm raised in an acute angle. This type of salutation is often attributed to Nazis, but actually, it was used in early Britain hundreds of years before the establishment of the fascist parties and it is considered the oldest salutation of European civilisation (Mosley, 1936, p. 8). The salutation was an integral part of the BUF's meetings as by its means, Mosley greeted and bade farewell to his audience.

##### **3.1.1 Emblems and flags**

Not many sources pay attention to the BUF emblems although it is a topic that is worth mentioning as none of the BUF's major public appearances could do without the

presence of the BUF's emblem. Watching the authentic takes or shots, one can see the flags and banners everywhere. During the movement's marches in the streets, the tens or even hundreds of flag bearers had been appearing in the crowd (see video). As well as the uniform, the emblems are forms of visual expression of a political allegiance. This paragraph is based mainly on the author's own analysis with the use of the relevant photographs and pictures of the BUF flags, banners, badges and other objects.

In its early years, Mosleyites adopted the emblem with the design that showed from where the party took its inspiration. The symbol itself was, except minor details in variation, the same and the flag was almost identical to that of the BUF's Italian counterpart called the Fascist National Party (Partido Nazionale Fascista) (see Appendices 12 and 15). Both parties used *fasces* as their symbol. Smith and Anthon describe *fasces* generally as “rods bound in the form of bundle, and containing an axe (*securis*) in the middle, the iron of which projected from them. These rods were carried by lictors before the superior magistrates in Rome“. Italian fascists perceived this type of an axe as a symbol of power that was typical of ancient Rome. The symbolism and meaning of *fasces* was mentioned in the BUF's short publication encouraging and inviting people to join the party titled *10 Points of Fascism*:

The Fasces are the symbol of service to the nation. They are one of the oldest symbols of the British race, and date from the time of the Romans, who were in this country for three centuries. The bundle of sticks symbolises the strength of unity. Divided they can be broken; together they cannot be broken. The axe represents the strength of action which cuts through the dead wood of the past to the creation of a Greater Britain (p.3).

Considering the design of the emblem, the British offshoot of fascism adopted *fasces*, however the *fasces* depicted on the flag were distinct a bit. The original ones have the axe blade right in the middle of the 'grip' (see Appendix 16), while the Mosley's ones' was in the upper part of the object (see Appendix 13). It is not clear whether it was an intention to avoid copying the whole symbol or whether they simply used a different type or design of *fasces*. The shape of the *fasces* is not the only difference between those two flags, but also the colouring and shapes are distinct. The

Italian version used yellow (or gold) fasces on a black field<sup>16</sup> (Appendix 16). The colour of the fasces was the same in case of the BUF's version, however it was placed over a blue or black disc in a red field (Appendix 13). It is difficult to determine what colour the disc actually had for the majority of photographs depicting the flag is monochrome and thus one must follow the later repaintings of the flag. It may be a point of discussion whether the disc was dark blue or black because colours were very important to the BUF. Blue colour with the other two would create a tricolour and thus indicate that the party was inspired by the Union Jack and through the flag they expressed movement's nationalistic ideas. Black colour would on the other hand correspond with the uniform colouring.

In 1936 the party was renamed to the British Union of Fascists and National Socialists (Levy, 2005, p. 87). This shift brought a change in the party's logo as well. The *fasces* were replaced with the lightening flash in a circle (see Appendices 14 and 18). According to Mosley, the symbol portrayed the 'flash of action in a circle of unity' as national action could come only from the national unity (1936, p. 8). Concerning the flag, the white (or silver) flash and the circle were placed over a red field. The circle had a dark blue filling and in this case there is no doubt that the new flag followed the British national colours (see Appendix 14). Although the shape of the flash might resemble the SS (Schutzstaffel) emblem, finding the associations between these two symbols is rather groundless. This emblem had been used until the dissolution of the BUF in 1940 and after the war it was revived by Mosley's new organization called the Union Movement.

The BUF flags were made in many variations. Apart from the basic rectangle shape, for example, the pentagon one was designed (see Appendix 17). This type of a flag was called the Standard of Honour and was made in sixty pieces (Oswald Mosley 1). This special type was held tight on the long bars during the marches or attached to the trumpets that were played during the public events directed by the party. The logos themselves appeared on all of the BUF's publications, including their newspapers

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<sup>16</sup> There were other versions of the Italian fascist flag. For example the one with brown fasces placed on the Italian national flag, but the article focuses on the version with a black field to show the similarities that it shares with the BUF's one.

(*Action, Blackshirt and Fascist Week*)<sup>17</sup>, on the walls during meetings and rallies (see video), on the armbands (see Appendix 20), stick pins (see Appendix 19) and other objects.

### 3.1.2 Blackshirt uniform

There is nothing that signifies a political (or ideological) allegiance more than a uniform. Without any action, without words, one expresses a membership in a particular group and the act of wearing a uniform makes the group visible. The uniform of the British Union of Fascists is indubitably 'the foremost icon of fascism in the 1930s' (Linehan and Gottlieb, 2004, p.89). This part is concerned with the description, meanings and functions of the uniform and with how it could be seen in the eyes of public.

Blackshirt uniform was without any doubt the most significant symbol of the BUF, simply because one could see it everywhere, as party members were wearing this garment on every occasion, not only within the party's public appearances. It was a question of prestige and their own choice as well as obligation to represent the party to wear the uniform not only within party's rallies, marches and other public activities of a political party, but also within social events, including balls, galas and others.

The shape of the later BUF uniform might have been determined by Mosley's background. Oswald Mosley came from an aristocratic family. Since he was a child, he spent his leisure time shooting, hunting and steeplechasing and doing other noble sports that most boys could only dream about (Keeley, 1998, p. 5). When performing these activities, he wore highly smart outfits worth an aristocrat. His fashion habits are reflected by in the shape of a British version of a blackshirt uniform. Although the British used the same appellation for their uniform as Mussolini's men and share the similar ideas, the BUF's outfit was not inspired by the Italian model of a blackshirt uniform. More than design they adopted the appellation itself, for the British uniform is much distinct from the Italian one (see Appendices 21 and 22). While the Italian is

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<sup>17</sup> These were usually black printed. The authentic colouring was omitted as the polychromatic print would have been rather expensive.

predominantly greyish, only the shirt is black, the British one is entirely black. A black shirt of the Italian version was of a traditional design with a collar and as an outer wear a typical man-tailored jacket was used. The uniform itself appeared ordinary and did not attract attention at all unlike its British counterpart. Sir Mosley was a votary of fencing and achieved acknowledgement as a talented and dynamic fencer and it is no wonder that the BUF's uniform was modelled on his fencing tunic. It was fastened with a wide leather belt with a big metal buckle and usually combined with long creased trousers (grey or black) and with a double-row suit of a lighter colour. For ladies, grey mid-calf length skirts were designed (see Appendix). A tunic also displayed insignia of the rank, however, Mosley himself wore a tunic without any distinction of rank (Oswald Mosley 1). This 'functionally elegant' design of a fencing tunic formed the basis for the first and the most famous shape of the BUF uniform. Mosley's own was tailor-made in black silk (Dorril, 2006, p.217), other members' tunics were made of more affordable materials but still looked very smart and impressive. That might evoke the impression that the British Union of Fascists was more the party promoting interests of nobility and British men of influence than the movement struggling for equity as well as deletion of a class system and fighting against climbing unemployment rates.

Although the design was different, the ideal background for wearing a uniform was shared to a certain extent by both, British and Italian fascism. The roots are seen in the pre-war Italy. From the very beginning, Italian fascists took pride in their uniforms. (Oswald Mosley 2) It is difficult to answer why the regime paid such enormous attention to the fashion of its fascist members but it is a fact that the idea spread quickly within the parties in other countries. Roots of this 'fashion obsession' may be seen in the neutral status of Italy during the outbreak of the First World War (Parkins, 2002, p.147). At one of the rallies supporting the war, Italian poet Cangiullo wore a suit designed by Giacomo Balla, one of the leading representatives of the Futurist artistic movement. The suit was based on the colours of the Italian flag, red, white and green, and was meant to express state's active war attitude. That is what inspired Mussolini and made him entrust such a great symbolic importance to a piece of garment. Uniform became a means of expressing an attitude and visibly articulate fascist ideology (Linehan and Gottlieb, 2004, p.100). Musollini referred to a black shirt uniform not as a uniform but

as a 'combat outfit' that can be worn only by those 'who harbor a pure soul in their heart' (Parkins, 2002, p.150). He was so consistent that he included the black shirt symbolism in the one of ten fascist commandments. As it was stated in the fascist 'decatalogue', Mosley saw it inevitable to adopt. However, another reason for the BUF's obsession may be seen among soldiers. The Europeans who experienced the war construed wearing a uniform as a symbol of a comradeship that used to be the only true value among recruits during the hard times (Oswald Mosley 2). Many of the later BUF members were fighting on front and have not forgotten this idea.

The choice of the black colour is not accidental and had probably nothing to do with Mosley's taste in terms of colours. Mosley himself explained that the colour black 'best expresses the iron determination of Fascism in a conquest of red anarchy [Communist Party]' (Mosley, 1936, p. 8). Moreover, Linehan and Gottlieb mention that black was always considered the colour of the powerful and has both positive and negative connotations. It was worn by the cleric, the assassin, the prince, and the devil. It is also connected with gravity, seriousness, restraint and on the other hand with death, devil, sin and decline (2004, p.102).

Around 1936<sup>18</sup>, Mosleyites introduced the new Nazi-style uniforms (see Appendices 23 and 24). The fencing jacket preserved but the rest resembled the German Nazi suits. With this change of clothing style, the BUF lost its uniqueness in this field and made the public tend to the opinion that the party decided to share Hitler's ideas and interests more than ever before. This type of the BUF uniform was recognized for the first time during the Battle of Cable Street in London. The day after the event, on October 5<sup>th</sup> 1936, *The Guardian* payed attention to the change in Mosleyites' clothing in one of their articles:

Sir Oswald Mosley, who usually appears hatless and wearing a high-collared black shirt and leather waist-belt, wore the new Fascist uniform yesterday - a black military-cut jacket, grey riding breeches, and jackboots. He had a black peaked military hat and a red arm band. Many of the Fascists

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18 Along with the new Nazi style uniforms, the so called *Action Press Uniforms* were introduced the same year. Those uniforms were given as a reward to those Blackshirts who sold a certain number of the BUF newspapers within the street sales.



on parade wore a similar uniform (Fascist march).

The armed bands were almost identical to the Nazi ones. Both were red and on both the parties' signs were used – swastika on the German one, a thunder in a circle on the British one. This confirms that the uniform was an imitation of the Nazi uniform and it shows Mosley's newly acquired identification with Hitler's ideas.

In 1936 Public Order Act banning the wearing of political uniforms in connection with political objects and proscribing the so called quasimilitary organizations came into force (Public Order). Moreover, the government (through the police) was given the power to control or even ban processions, i.e. marches, and assemblies, i.e. static demonstrations, that were very important for Mosley's movement. The act was a reaction to the events connected with Cable Street riots. Public Order Act caused that the BUF lost their power and many members left the party. As they could not march in the streets of London and therefore could not attract as much attention as they used to, it became difficult for the party to attract new applicants to become members. Although it was illegal to wear the uniform, dedicated activists continued to do so privately. Such meetings in full dress uniform became a kind of rituals among some of the BUF members (Macklin, 2007, p.17). The reasons for passing the Public Order Act are discussed in 3.2.3.2).

Later Mosley admitted that the uniform was a big mistake and if he could turn time back, he would not put wearing the uniform into practice again. "The old soldier in me got the better of the politician," he added (Private Armies).

### 3.1.3 Marching songs

Community singing was an integral part of the BUF meetings and marches. They sang both adopted and their own songs and that is why the songs may be considered the semi-adopted symbols. The lyrics of these songs were written on various topics and by various authors<sup>19</sup>.

The most popular of the BUF songs is called *Comrades, the Voices of the Dead*

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<sup>19</sup> The majority of the BUF songs were written by E.D.Randall.

*Battalions* (watch video 5) which became the party's anthem. The song was written by the British author, however the music was of the German origin<sup>20</sup>. It was sung to the tune of *Horst Wessel Lied*, the anthem of the NSDAP. By the adoption of the tune, Mosley expressed his admiration of the Nazi movement and Hitler's policy. Concerning the title of the song, the word *comrades* may seem rather absurd when sung by the fascist party. It is widely known that *comrade* is a salutation used among the members of Communist parties and the BUF was a virulent opponent of the Reds. This salutation appeared in other BUF songs as well (*Comrades! Raise the Martial Chorus*). However, for fascists it was apparently a word expressing affiliation to the party because it is rather unlikely that they would use it in case they considered it a communist salutation. In the speech delivered to the Blackshirts, Mosley uses the salutation 'Brother Blackshirts, my comrades' in the opening sentence. CVDB appeared on the party's propaganda films (watch video 3) and was sung during the meetings, whether public or private. The BUF had its own musicians and drum corps that accompanied the singing members. The idea of community singing might have had its roots in the members' war experience. Soldiers usually sing together when marching or moving to a different place.

The majority of the BUF songs praised Mosley and the British nation. Many of them also encouraged the British youth to join the party, or the Blackshirts to fight for Britain's business. Interesting fact about these songs is that they did not include attacks on the Jewish community. However, according to Endelman, the Blackshirts who were marching through the East End filled the pauses between two songs with chanting of anti-Semitic slogans (2002, p. 203). By this act the anti-Jewish part of the BUF compensated the omission of such topics in the songs.

The marching songs may be seen as a good promotional tool because a catching tune is a good means of attracting prospective members and voters. The BUF songs were rather simple and easy to follow and learn (watch videos 4 and 5) and that is why they might stick in Britons' memory.

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<sup>20</sup> It was composed by one of the SA members, however his name has never been mentioned.

## **3.2 Propaganda**

According to Merriam-Webster online dictionary, propaganda is defined as 'the spreading of ideas, information or rumours' in order to help or injure an institution or an individual. Such manipulating was typical of fascist parties (Propaganda - Definition). The propaganda of BUF was attacking its opponents and on the other hand, it was praising the party and its objectives. There are many ways how to influence opinion of the public. Thousands years ago, the art of public speaking was used for the purpose of spreading ideas. Later the power of books was revealed and since the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the newspapers had been a powerful promotional tool as well. All these tools are discussed in the following part. Attention is paid to cinema and broadcasting as well, as these two means of propaganda were rather new in the 1930s.

### **3.2.1 BUF's publications and party's publicity in the press**

Since its early days, the British Union of Fascists had been publishing many books, theses as well as their own regular newspapers and quarterlies. The party also enjoyed publicity, whether positive or negative, in various sheets. This part supplies the reader with the relevant information about the BUF publications and its promotion and image in the press.

#### **3.2.1.1 Role of the press in a fascist state**

Mosley was once in 1936 asked on what the role of the press would be and whether the press would be free in the fascist state in case such state would be established in Britain. According to Mosley, the press would be free to inform British public about current affairs not be allowed to tell lies. Mosley was convinced that the press was influenced by millionaires who bought the shares of the newspaper companies in order to dictate what will be written in the papers. And such influencing was in Mosley's opinion lying. This may be considered the reaction to the *Daily Mail's* withdrawal of support. He blamed the press for not being informative anymore. Instead

of providing news, it was a tool for spreading the ideas of those men of influence (Mosley, 1936, p. 10). His criticism may seem absurd as he did the same with the BUF periodicals. They were not informative at all (except informing about the oncoming rallies and other events) and were intended to formulate fascist creed and spread the BUF's propaganda.

### **3.2.1.2 Viscount Rothermere and the Daily Mail**

Mosley was aware that his new established party needed promotion to be able to attract voters and prospective members and thus he approached press barons for their support. After a few refusals he ingretiated himself with the first Viscount Rothermere<sup>21</sup>, the owner of the *Daily Mail*. Rothermere was known for his long-term adoration of the fascist creed and it was no secret that he corresponded with Adolph Hitler and admired Mussolini and his policies.

Thanks to the *Daily Mail* the BUF's real image and character was embroidered. The newspaper has been speaking highly of Mosleyites and what was negative about the party, that was not mentioned at all. Such exaltation may be seen as a sort of aestheticization of a fascist man. In the *Mail*, Mosley and his followers were depicted as young, strong and disciplined men capable of a leadership in Britain. Such depiction shows the BUF as the opposite of the 'Old Gang' that had in their opinion no competence to lead the country anymore.

The most famous of the *Daily Mail's* articles supporting the BUF was the *Hurrah for the Blackshirts* released on January 15<sup>th</sup> 1934 (for further reading see Appendix 4). The praising article about his favourite party was for Rothermere apparently more important than the news reports of the day as he put it on the front page of the issue and dedicated the large headline to it. Another fact suggesting that Rothermere was more than interested in the BUF is that he did not allow an average newswriter from his staff to write the contribution. The name of the author was written under the headline with the use of a rather large font to make it visible and demonstrate author's identification with the content. And the name belonged to noone else but the press baron himself.

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<sup>21</sup> His name was Harold Harmsworth.

In the article he briefly introduced the topic of fascism. Further in the text he criticized the 'Old Gang' for being incompetent to lead Britain and emphasized that the “new era requires new methods and new men”. By the new methods he undoubtedly meant the fascist ones and the new men referred to Mosleyites. He expressed his conviction that the future of Britain should be put in the hands of the BUF in the following excerpt, where he at the same time inconspicuously bade the British youth to join the party:

Britain's survival as a Great Power will depend on the existence a of well-organised Party of the Right ready to take over responsibility for national affairs with the same directness of purpose and energy of method as Mussolini and Hitler have displayed . . . . That is why I say Hurrah for the Blackshirts! . . . . Hundreds of thousands of young British men and women would like to see their own country develop that spirit of patriotic pride and service which has transformed Germany and Italy. They cannot do better than seek out the nearest branch of the Blackshirts and make themselves acquainted with their aims and plans (Curran et al, p. 49)

Collaboration with the *Daily Mail* was concededly a good step for the BUF because with Rothermere's support the number of members was rising fast and by 1934 the membership had reached 40, 000<sup>22</sup> people (Patterns of Membership). One may only speculate whether these numbers would have been rising, stagnating or falling onward in case that the tabloid did not withdraw its support in the spring of 1934. Nonetheless, the fact was that the Mail did not continue in managing the BUF free press campaign and it might have taken share (actually the major one) in the decrease in the BUF numbers that fell to no more than 5,000 men in the rest of 1934 (Patterns of Membership).

The case brought the BUF a lot of negative publicity (almost in all the periodicals) because they were perceived as the movement restraining liberties of Jews living in Britain and as an aggressive group using violence to silence their opponents.

Both Mosley's pre-war movements were significant for their publishing activities. For New Party was a short-lived organization, it is obvious that compared to

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<sup>22</sup> In some sources, one may find the information that the BUF had yet 50,000 members at that time. This may be true as well because it was difficult to determine the real numbers of the membership.

the BUF, it could not have published as many books as the BUF. The BUF's publications were sold at meetings, public sales and were available via mail as well (see Appendix 5 for the list of the most popular BUF publications).

Probably the most popular of the BUF's publications was Mosley's *The Greater Britain* (see Appendix 6a) that was published in the early days of the movement (1932). The book was a 40,000 word synthesis (see Appendix 32 for the handbill) of the inputs by Hobbes, Carlyle, Bolingbroke or Nietzsche and . Shortly after its release, the book met with success and 10,000 copies were quickly sold (Dorril, 2005, pp. 217-218). It was obvious that the public was interested in Mosley's proposals.

Not only did the BUF publish books, but they also printed their own newspapers and quarterly. Their first newspapers were called *Blackshirt* (see Appendices 2, 3 and 7) and were published since 1933. Within the next few years, the BUF came up with the new ones titled *Action* (see Appendices 7 and 31). Both newspapers had been sold in the street sales by the party's vendors who were rewarded according to their success at selling (Oswald Mosley 1). Mosley probably thought the two newspapers were not enough and to the two afore-mentioned the *Fascist Week* (see Appendix 9) was added. Regular readers had the opportunity to order a subscription of their favourite one for them or even for their friends (see Appendix 12). The newspapers were published on a weekly basis. The *Fascist Quarterly* (since 1937 the *British Union Quarterly*) emerged in 1935 and as the title suggests, it had been appearing four times a year. The magazine comprised of political essays, book reviews and party's proposals (Tryphonopoulos and Adams, 2005, p. 117). In the magazine, the cartoons criticizing Jews and the Government (see Appendices 10 and 11) by Alexander Bowie were included. In 1936, the short-living *East London Pioneer*, that was intended to be a monthly, emerged (British Online).

In their publications, the BUF held forth on their attitudes towards Jews, the 'Old Gang' or the miscellaneous events of the day. By means of the papers, they announced changes within the party, their upcoming meetings and marches so that the party's sympathizers (along with the BUF opponents) were informed about what actions the party was going to take or what the party's views were. Those periodicals also enabled

Mosleyites to propagate themselves the way they wanted to be seen in the eyes of the public. However, this information was delivered to the limited number of people as the British preferred to buy other periodicals like the *Daily Express* or *Daily Herald* (in 1933 the best selling newspapers in the world). The *Daily Mail* was also one of the biggest selling periodicals (the first UK newspapers to have sold more than 1 million copies) (Did you) and that is probably the reason why the movement gained such popularity in 1934 as well as it explains why they lost the favour of Britons during the after-Olympia era (June 1934 onwards).

### 3.2.2 Cinema and radio projects

The great number of periodicals suggests that the party was aware of the fact that newspapers were a powerful propaganda tool for politicians. Dr. Joseph Goebbels in his 1933 speech *Der Rundfunk als Achte Grossmacht* (Broadcast as an Eighth Power) mentions that in the nineteenth century politics was in principle co-created by the press. In his opinion, its power was great (Duffack, 2001, p.32). However, as the title of his speech suggests, the thirties were in token of broadcast and the propaganda was spread by its means. Nonetheless, Mosleyites were not able to derive benefit provided by the broadcasting. Moreover, William Joyce, the former head of the BUF propaganda, betrayed the party and took the job in the Nazi radio programme *Germany Calling* that was intended to discourage British people from the warfare. The absence of the wireless propaganda might have been one of the reasons that caused the party's failure.

It is widely known that film was part of the political strategies of many parties (Jones, p.19). For example, NSDAP produced a great number of propaganda films<sup>23</sup> that were quite successful in its mission. It is obvious that the BUF had an attempt to do so as well. The BUF's first political film was presented in 1934. It depicted the rally in Alberthall and the work of the Blackshirt branches in Milan (Jones, 1987, p.19). These propaganda films were sort of pictorial records of the Blackshirt activities and some of them appealed on the British society to live healthier and practice sports<sup>24</sup>. The film

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<sup>23</sup> It is necessary to mention Leni Riefenstahl, Hitler's chief producer and camera person.

<sup>24</sup> The BUF revered the cult of body. A typical fascist man was trained and his body resembled the physique of old sculptures from ancient Rome and Greece.

taken in 1936 (see video 3) depicts Mosley as the Leader<sup>25</sup>. For the project, the scenes from Mosley's appearance in the East End (London) and Millbank, Westminster together with the scenes taken during the Victoria Park Rally (June 7, 1936) were employed. The shots are from the very beginning accompanied by one of the BUF's marching songs (*Britain Awake* and the party's anthem *Comrades, the Voices of Dead Battalions*). Although the majority of the films of the day were the sound ones, this one has no voice records on it. There are pieces of text that inform the viewer about the scenes that were coming on. At the beginning, the film shows Mosley inspecting the Blackshirts in Millbank. Mosley arrives to the place standing in a roofless conveyance and hailing his enthusiastic and disciplined followers. This scene resembles Hitler's typical entrées. Mosley suited in the new breeches and the 1936 designed uniform walks along the rows of Blackshirts and examines whether everything is in the right order. At the end of the inspection scene Mosley bids farewell to his men in black and shakes their hands in a symbolic and friendly way. The next scene shows Mosley accompanied by the group of Mosleyites on the motorbikes riding through the streets. Great number of Blackshirts are standing along and on the road saluting the Leader and he is reciprocating their greetings. In the following scene hundreds (or even thousands) of the uniformed Mosleyites are marching through the street. There are party members in the new uniforms from 1936 as well as members wearing the original tunics from 1932. The BUF drum corps, flag bearers and members of women section are also marching in the parade. Attention is paid to the BUF's opponents as well. As mentioned in ...., propaganda is defined as the spreading of rumours in order to injure an institution. In this case, the communist meeting preceding the BUF's arrival is integrated in the film. The textual slide says: 'The Communist meeting prior to our arrival'. The slide is followed by a very short scene depicting a Communist speaker and his audience and consequently it is given a comment: 'But when Mosley arrives the Reds are forgotten'. That is illustrated by the crowds of people leaving the stage of the Communist orator and heading towards Mosley and by the comment 'See how they run'. The crowd is

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25 This is another parallel with the BUF's Italian and German counterparts. *Leader* is the British version of the salutations *Duce* (Mussolini) and *Fuhrer* (Hitler). Notice the intentional capitalization of the initial letter (in case of *Fuhrer* it is affected by the spelling typical of German language where all substantives are capitalized).



running to join the audience of approximately 100,000 people in order to watch Mosley speak. During the speech, the camera is focusing the excited audience very often. At the end there is an animation that repeats 'We want Mosley. We want M O S L E Y' and at the very end, the BUF publications are advertised.

The videoclip shows the BUF as the highly disciplined movement and attempts to persuade the public that it would be beneficial for Britain to have a dictator of Mosley's qualities. It also expresses the BUF's attitude towards the Communist Party which was indubitably attacked and lampooned in the film. The party uses the film to promote its own publications.

### 3.2.3 Public appearances

The BUF spent enormous amounts of money on their public activities. They organized many marches and rallies that were money consuming. Such spending had to be somehow compensated as it exceeded the party's budget. The income from the street sales and party's publications could hardly meet all the expenses. Mosley himself rendered £100,000 to the party's treasury but it still was not enough. The BUF was dependent on various donations as well as on the generous contributions from Mussolini. However, there is no evidence that would prove that the party was funded by Hitler (Keeley, 1998, pp. 13-14). But the donations could not meet the increasing expenses either, and thus Mosley launched a company. It was called *New Epoch Products* and it specialized in the household products and book publishing. One of its factories was purchased to manufacture tobacco products. These spendings gave the BUF the label of a sort of spendthrift movement as the money they had given to their propaganda would have been beneficial elsewhere. If they had focused on charity, which is without any doubt also a form of propaganda, it would have been beneficial for the BUF as well because it would have been a good way how to gain voters, especially from the lower classes, and the money would have helped the needy and the unwell.

### 3.2.3.1 Public speaking

The BUF had a great number of brilliant orators. Names including William Joyce<sup>26</sup> and last but not least Oswald Mosley are undoubtedly worth mentioning. However the BUF had hired many brilliant speakers, this part deals with rhetorical art and abilities of Sir Mosley as he was, similarly to Hitler, the party's most visible and somehow iconic rhetorician. Since his early attempts in politics, Mosley had been a talented rhetorician. Soon after entering the House of Commons, he was admired for his unique oratorical style. This part reveals his manners on the stage and ability to deliver the information to his audience. The attention is paid to the behaviour of the Blackshirts and their opponents within the public speeches and the impact of Mosley's rallies on the party's image.

The BUF's first meetings were held at Trafalgar Square. At such meetings, Mosley used the so called 'Black Maria' vans<sup>27</sup>. Those vans were of various usage, for example the police used them. For Mosley it was a sort of mobile stage for he was standing on its roof when delivering speeches to his audience. Throughout the time Mosley obviously adopted different manners and preferred rather flashily stages designed specially for him and his speakers. This resembled Hitler's quite theatrically designed rallies.

Since his early years in politics, both his colleagues and opponents were aware of his great rhetorical talents. A.J.P. Taylor described Mosley as an 'orator of the highest rank' (Oswald Mosley 1) and for Colin Welch he was a 'spell-binding' speaker (Oswald Mosley 1). The preserved video recordings (see video 2) from the 1930s show Mosley as a lively man of a lower baritone pitch who was speaking or more like shouting very emphatically and dramatically. In the full rhetorical mood, his body language was evidently more percussive than the Hitler's one. While speaking (see Appendix 25), he was walking forward to the audience, to the left, to the right. Even his arms could not

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26 Later known as Lord Haw Haw. Joyce resigned from the BUF and moved to Germany, where he worked as one of the English language speakers for a German radio station. The station's programme *Germany Calling* was introduced on September 18 1939 and was intended to discourage the Allies troops' and British population's push in the warfare.

27 Originally used by the police to transport prisoners.

stay still. He was moving it up and down and to the sides while his fingers were in a spasmodical position. As an educated aristocrat, his vocabulary was rich and his orations were always sophisticated and well-prepared. What's more, even unprepared, he was one of the few individuals who are capable of speaking extempore brilliantly and without mistakes.

### **3.2.3.2 Major public appearances**

The BUF organized many public meetings and marches. The most remarkable ones include the rallies in Olympia, Alberhall and the peace rally in Earl's court, the biggest meeting under one roof. The most popular march developed in the infamous Battle of Cable Street.

The rally at Olympia was a milestone in the party's history. It was held in 1934, the year when the BUF reached its peak. During the first half of 1934, many great meetings were organized and Mosley was speaking to larger and larger audiences. The Olympia Hall was booked for June 7<sup>th</sup>, 1934 (Oswald Mosley 2). Months before the rally took place, it had already received wide publicity. For example, the *Daily Mail* offered free tickets to those who wrote the best letters on the topic 'Why I like the Blackshirts' (Dorril, p. 295). This, of course, did not underwhelm the BUF's opponents who were ready to disrupt the oncoming meeting. The rally became widely known not because of the Mosley's speech but because of the violent attacks. The groups of Reds and people from the Jewish organizations thronged the hall and attempted to prevent Mosley from being heard. The Blackshirt defence force intervened and a great number of the BUF opponents, specially the Jewish ones, were assaulted and beaten. It is said, that they also wanted to create a myth that it is Mosley who is responsible for the violence. However, this was apparently far from the truth as it was revealed that the interrupters were armed while the Blackshirts were not (Oswald Mosley 2). This fact shows that Mosleyites only defended their colleagues. Though, the BUF gained negative publicity in media. Unfortunately, the rally took place shortly after the infamous and brutal *Night of the Long Knives* and it was often compared to it in the media. Those negative articles undermined the party's position and most likely caused

the BUF's decline. Only a few of the newspapers did not blame the party for the violent behaviour (see Appendices). The Olympia events caused Rothermere's withdrawal of support for the BUF as well.

The march through the streets of East London was planned for October 4<sup>th</sup>, 1936. It was one of the 2,000 propagandistic activities targeted on the area, as Mosley enjoyed a great support among East Londoners then. <sup>28</sup>On the other hand, many anti-fascist organizations had grown in East London as well. Members of the Communist Party were supported by the East End Jews and both groups were in readiness to work together in order to destroy the BUF (Kushner and Lunn, p. 61). Similarly to the Olympia Rally, this meeting was properly promoted in the BUF's publications and thus the party's opponents were informed about it well. The march actually did not happen because the Blackshirts were stopped by the protesters at the beginning. The preserved shots show that Mosleyites arrived in a full uniform. Some of them wore the original fencing tunic, some of them wore the brand new Nazi style uniform. Everything was well prepared including the drum corps and flag bearers. Though, it was unimportant because protesters were yet waiting for them. The roads were blocked by inverted vans and other barriers (see Appendix 28). Aggressive crowds of communists and Jews began attacking the Blackshirts who naturally reciprocated their assaults (see video 1). The rather peaceful 'march' developed into bruising riots that had to be fought by the police. Over 6,000 of policemen arrived at the place to intervene (see Appendix 27). Maroons and petards were flying in the air and banging, people were brutally fighting each other and the policemen on horses were beating them with rods and truncheons (see video). The police were not able to keep the anti-fascists and the Blackshirts apart, thus it was decided to forbade the march. Consequently, the BUF members were allowed to march through the western part of the area (Oswald Mosley 1).

This unsuccessful march was later titled the Battle of Cable Street and up to this date, it is considered to be one of the most violent meetings in the history of Great Britain. For the British Union of Fascist and National Socialists it was another violent

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28 2,000 meetings were held in East London. Such meetings were accompanied by the huge propaganda, specially targeted on the Jews living in East End. It was no secret that members of the BUF, for example, wrote the anti-Semitic letterings on the East End's pavements. Letterings like 'All Out Aug 16<sup>th</sup> for Pogrom' or 'Kill the Jews' were chalked on the pavements.

incident that undermined the party's position and damaged its credit for good. Although it was more the battle between the police and anti-fascists, it was BUF that was blamed for being violent (Levy, p. 87). Articles published in the newspapers the following days were not favourable at all. Moreover, the riots in East End were the reason for enacting the Public Order Act later in 1936 that made it illegal to organize political meetings without permission (Gostin, p. 59).

The meeting at Earl's Court is considered to be the biggest gathering under one roof in the history (Oswald Mosley 2). Over 30,000 people attended the rally to hear Mosley speak (Oswald Mosley 1). The Earl's Court Rally was a part of the BUF's 1939 peace campaign (see Appendices 33 and 34). Although Mosley was later imprisoned<sup>29</sup> for being anti-British and for supporting the war, the reality was obviously different (Oswald Mosley 1).

The meeting was preceded by the huge campaign in the BUF's media. The colourful posters (see Appendix 1) with flawless design were posted everywhere. Also the special pamphlet titled *Earl's Court Souvenir Programme* (Oswald Mosley 1) was published. It consisted of an outlined programme of the rally, photographs from various meetings, the BUF objectives and short essays. The programme shows the BUF's culture. Although the circumstances did not allowed the rally to follow the prepared programme, this part supplies the reader with the course that the rally would have taken in case it was not disrupted by the BUF's opponents.

The meeting starts<sup>30</sup> at 6.45 and the selections by the BUF's band are played. The second half of this part is dedicated to community singing. At 7.30 the whole ceremony starts with the entry of stewards, headed by drum and pipe bands. The stewards are marching along, bearing the flags and standards of London districts of British Union. At the head of the parade, the Standard of Honour is borne. When the last flag comes to the stage, the trumpeters begin to play the fanfare to herald Mosley's entry. There are no introductory speakers. Mosley takes the microphone and starts his long awaited speech.

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29 According to the so called Regulation 18b, almost 800 Blackshirts, including Mosley and his wife, were imprisoned and sentenced without any charge or trial. Later, it was revealed that Mosley was imprisoned because he was against Britain's involvement in the war. And Churchill who sent British soldiers on front wanted to silence him (Oswald Mosley 1).

30 The use of present tense is intentional in order to give a vivid depiction of the events.

At the end of his speech the song *Britain Awake* is sung. The British national anthem follows. Then, the BUF flags leave the platform and are carried through the hall. After Mosley passed from the hall, the earnest announcement is made through the loud speakers.

As many other BUF meetings, the Earl's Court Rally was disrupted by the party's opponents. During the event, it was difficult for Mosley to speak without being interrupted, however, he delivered rather long speech to his audience. The motto of the rally was 'Britain first'. That meant that people living in Britain were required to put the interests of Britain on the first place (Mosley, 1936, p. 36). In other words, British Jews should prefer the interests of the British nation to the interests of the Jewish one. Mosley's speech included many strictures targeted on Jews. He blamed them for causing the Second World War. The motto also expressed the BUF's attitude to the war as Mosley was convinced that Britain should not involve in the war because the German interests were not Britain's business.

## 4. Conclusion

In the first part of the paper, the reader was informed about the roots of fascism in Britain. Attention was paid to the reasons leading to the formation of radical right-wing and fascist parties in Britain. Further in the text, political career of Oswald Mosley up to the launch of BUF was mentioned. The rise of BUF along with the background, objectives and attitude towards Jews were discussed as well.

The analysis supplied the reader with the specifics of the BUF's symbols. Distinctions between the original and the BUF's variations of the symbols are revealed. The research shows that at the beginning, the party took its inspiration mainly from Mussolini's offshoot of fascism. This fact is illustrated by the adoption of the emblem (fasci) and the so called Blackshirt uniform. After 1936, the shift from Italian fascism to German nazism was noticed. The black colour of the uniform preserved, however the design resembled the NSDAP uniform a lot. It was difficult to distinguish these two uniforms at the first sight. BUF's marching songs were inspired by the Italian model of fascism, though the music itself was inspired more by the Nazi movement. This is illustrated by the usage of the same tune for both German and British fascist anthems.

In the second part of the analysis the specifics of the BUF's propaganda were revealed. The BUF's propaganda before 1934 attempted to show Mosleyites as a young movement capable of dealing with the economic crisis. It was based on the criticism of the 'old gang'. The support in the *Daily Mail* proved itself to be efficient and beneficial. It is believed that thanks to the support, the BUF membership increased from 32 people up to 50,000. The reader was informed about the publications and periodicals that were produced by the party. The BUF newspapers were obviously in a great demand because the party was publishing more and more periodicals at once. The demand for *The Greater Britain*, for example, shows that the books were successful too.

The party organized a great number of marches and meetings. Mosley was a brilliant orator who delivered quality speeches to his audience. Every meeting was attended by thousands of people. Nonetheless, after the events that took place during the Olympia Rally, the party's image was damaged. Although it was revealed that the Blackshirts were the victims of the violent attacks, it was widely believed that they were

responsible for the assaults. The shift to the anti-Jewish propaganda injured the party's reputation as well. The party tried to gain voters by organizing a huge peace campaign in 1939. However, the campaign was soon aborted and Mosley was imprisoned paradoxically for supporting the war.

BUF produced a few propagandistic films presenting Mosley as a sort of redeemer of the British Empire and BUF as a disciplined movement encouraging public to practise sports. These films seemed rather ridiculous. The paper also shows that BUF was, contrary to NSDAP, not interested in the radio propaganda.

In conclusion, it was disproved that the BUF's propaganda was not successful at all. The research shows that the initial propaganda was very successful. However, violent attacks during the BUF meetings in 1934 onwards damaged the party's image to the extent that it lost many of its members and supporters. The work also revealed that BUF might have been seen as an extravagant movement with a lack of original ideas that spent enormous amounts of money on their propaganda.



## 5. Resumé

Cílem této práce je uvést čtenáře do problematiky britského fašismu (konkrétně v podání Britské unie fašistů), jenž se do povědomí a paměti veřejnosti nevryl tak zásadně, jako tomu bylo v případě fašismu italského, německého (nacismu) či potažmo španělského. Tato absence v historickém povědomí ovšem fašistickému hnutí Oswalda Mosleye neubírá na zajímavosti, ač spíše v negativním slova smyslu. Naopak, zájem o osobu sira Mosleye a jeho Bristkou unii fašistů (a národních socialistů) v poslední době narůstá. Podíl na tom mohou mít mimo jiné i skandální odhalení spojená s osobou Mosleyho syna Maxe, která pomáhají zvyšovat publicitu někdejší politické strany jeho otce. Hlavním posláním této práce je jednak zmapování symbolů, které strana převzala od svých zahraničních protějšků a které později přizpůsobila specifikům britské společnosti a jejímu vnímání, a dále rozbor propagace strany a její image. Image je zde pojata jednak jako charakter strany a dále jako public image, tedy jak mohla být strana vnímána veřejností.

V úvodu je čtenář seznámen s formováním krajní pravice ve Velké Británii. Je známo, že koncem 19. století Británie zažívala jakousi vnitřní krizi. Ač je doba viktoriánská považována za dobu zrození britské demokracie, zdálo se, že o skutečné demokracii nemohla být ani řeč. To lze soudit například ze skutečnosti, že jen omezená část Britů měla možnost volit. Také sjednocení Německa v 70. letech 19. století přineslo dosavadní velmocí velké obavy, neboť najednou před ní stála nově zformovaná země se silným průmyslem, jemuž Británie ani její koloniální impérium nemohly konkurovat. Velkým nepřítelem britské prosperity se stal i volný trh, který byl v Británii tehdy realizován. Tyto skutečnosti spoluzapříčinily vznik radikálních skupin a mimo jiné i krajně pravicových stran, k nimž patřily i fašistická hnutí. Vzniklo mnoho více či méně zásadních hnutí. Jmenujme například Tariff Reform League (Ligu za reformu tarifního systému) či stranu Britští fašisté, vedenou, v té době nezvykle, ženou jménem Rotha Lintorn Orman.

Dále je zmíněna politická kariéra Oswalda Mosleye, kterou započal coby člen Konzervativní strany. Již od počátku bylo zřejmé, že Mosley byl výjimečný řečník a debatér, jenž umí prosadit své názory. Mnozí mu předpovídali zářnou politickou kariéru

a někteří dokonce nabyli přesvědčení, že by se mohl v budoucnu stát britským premiérem. Po neshodách ve straně, která neměla pochopení pro jeho řešení ekonomických otázek, konzervativce opustil a upsal se labouristům. Ani zde však nenalézal pochopení, a tak i tuto stranu záhy opustil. Roku 1931 založil vlastní organizaci s názvem Nová strana. Mělo se jednat o sociální stranu, která si kladla za cíl vypořádat se s vysokou nezaměstnaností, která zemi sužovala, avšak Nová strana byla spíše fašistického charakteru. Krátce po neúspěšných volbách, které se konaly téhož roku, byla strana rozpuštěna a místo ní vznikla Britská unie fašismů (1932). Hlavním cílem této strany bylo ustavení tzv. Korporativního státu, jehož podstatou byla jakási centralizace moci. Nově vzniklá strana čítala zpočátku něco málo přes třicet členů, avšak během dvou let dokázala získat více než 50 000 členů, a to především díky podpoře deníku *Daily Mail*. Strana byla silně antikomunistická a později se objevily i jisté aspekty vedoucí historiky k přesvědčení, že byla i antisemitistická. Právě protižidovské tendence zapříčinily úpadek strany po roce 1934. Rok 1934 se stal jakýmsi mezníkem, díky němuž se dala historie strany rozdělit na úspěšnou, tedy do roku 1934, a na tu neúspěšnou, jež následovala po zmíněném roce. Významným byl i rok 1936, kdy proběhla nechvalně známá bitva v Cable Street, jež si vyžádala mnoho zraněných. Za zmínku stojí i rok 1939, který se zapsal do dějin dnes již legendárním mírovým sjezdem v Earl's Court. Strana zanikla společně s uvězněním jejího lídra roku 1940, kdy byl Mosley obviněn z adorace Hitlera a podpory války.

Řešena je i otázka postojů strany k židovské otázce. Dle slov Mosleye nebyla strana nijak motivovaná proti Židům. Útoky na tuto komunitu mosleyovci ospravedlňovali tím, že se pouze bránili agresí Židů.

Další část je věnována symbolům strany. Mezi ně se řadí pozdrav známý jako „heilování“, znak hnutí (zprvu téměř identický se symbolem používaným v Itálii), tzv. Blackshirt uniforma a v neposlední řadě také písně v rytmu vojenských pochodů. Fašistický pozdrav se stal společným pro všechny odnože fašismu v Evropě. Většinou byl spojen se slovním provoláním slávy ideovému či faktickému vůdci hnutí. V případě BUF se jednalo o pozdrav „Sláva Mosleymu“. Slovní část byla doplněna i fyzickým vyjádřením pozdravu, který spočíval ve snožení a pozvednutí pravé paže, to celé v poněkud strnulém držení těla. Takto se fašisté zdravili při nejrůznějších setkáních, ať už

veřejných či privátních. Ač se vznik pozdravu často připisuje Hitlerovi, znovuzavedl ho Mussolini po vzoru starých Římanů, a to mimo území novodobého Německa.

Britská unie fašistů (a národních socialistů) za dob své existence používala hned dva znaky. Tím úplně prvním se stal znak téměř identický se znakem Italské fašistické strany. Jednalo se o *fasci*, svazek prutů, do něhož je vetknuta sekyra, vyjadřující sílu. Od původní italské předlohy se lišila jen minimálně. Roku 1936 si strana změnila název na Britskou unii fašistů a národních socialistů, čímž vyjádřila svůj přechod k ideálům nacistického Německa. Společně s názvem se změnilo i logo strany. Fasci nahradil blesk v kruhu, který měl značit „akci v kruhu jednoty“. Oba znaky se objevovaly v rámci veškerých akcí, pořádaných BUF. Objevily se dokonce i na nejrůznějších předmětech a také v publikacích.

Asi nejpůvodnějším symbolem strany byla její uniforma. Její název *Blackshirt*, tedy Černá košile, má své kořeny ve fašistické Itálii, ač vzhledově mají obě verze jen pramálo společného. První uniforma britského fašistického hnutí byla navržena podle šermířské tuniky, neboť lídr strany byl vášnivým šermířem a také si byl vědom praktičnosti takového střihu. Uniforma měla sloužit k prezentaci strany a také k snadnému odlišení od členů jiných stran v průběhu různých potyček, kterých se strana účastnila. V roce 1936 přišel Mosley s novým typem uniformy, připomínající uniformy NSDAP, čímž naznačil náklonnost k Hitlerovu hnutí. Uniforma se ovšem netěšila dlouhé existenci, neboť roku 1936 bylo nošení politických uniforem zakázáno zákonem o veřejném pořádku.

Písňe, které zaznívaly nejen při stranických pochodech a sjezdech, ale i v rámci soukromých setkání členů BUF, se dají vnímat jako další ze symbolů strany, stejně tak jako jedna z dalších forem sebepropagace strany. Nejznámější z těchto písní je bezesporu *Comrades, the Voices of the Dead Battalions*, jenž se stala hymnou strany. Další velmi populární písní byla *Britain Awake*. Tématicky by se daly písňe BUF rozdělit na takové, jež měly za cíl přilákat nové členy, případně voliče, dále takové, jež velebily osobu Oswalda Mosleye či na takové, jež měly stávající členy utvrdit v jejich ideálech a povzbudit v činnosti. Některé pochody také vyzývaly Británii, aby se probudila (*Britain Awake*) a byla otevřenější k fašistické ideologii.

Následující část práce se zabývá propagací strany a jejími výstupy a chováním na

veřejnosti.

Mosley si byl jako zkušený politik vědom toho, že nově vzniklá strana potřebuje být propagována, aby přilákala nové členy a voliče. Na svou stranu se mu poměrně záhy podařilo získat Lorda Rothermera, vlastníka populárního deníku *Daily Mail*. Díky podpoře deníku vzrostly řady BUF z původních 32 členů na více než 40 000. Nejslavnějším článkem, který o BUF vyšel nesl titulek *Hurrah for the Blackshirts*, který více než velebil Mosleyho hnutí. Nicméně, události spojené s mítinkem v Olympia Hall, v rámci něhož bylo pobito a násilně zpacifikováno mnoho Židů, vedly k tomu, že Rothermere, na základě tlaku ze strany židovských mecenášů, odmítl BUF dále podporovat. To mělo s velkou pravděpodobností vliv na následný úpadek strany.

Mosleyovci ovšem nespolehali pouze na podporu *Daily Mailu*, nýbrž vydávali svá vlastní periodika. Mezi nejvýznamnější a dlouhodobě vydávané patřily *Blackshirt*, *Action*, *Fascist Week* a čtvrtletník *Fascist Quarterly*. Prostřednictvím těchto novin BUF informovala o novinkách ve straně, plánovaných akcích. Součástí periodik byly také nejrozličnější politické úvahy a kritika namířená proti oponentům strany a židovské menšině. Kromě novin vydala strana i mnoho vlastních knih, z nichž jmenujme například Mosleyho *The Greater Britain* či Thomsonův *The Coming Corporate State*.

Strana se také po vzoru Hitlera angažovala v natáčení propagandistických filmů, které straníky vyobrazovaly při nejrozličnějších činnostech, ať už při práci, výcviku, či mítincích. Některé mírně kýchovité filmy vyzývaly britskou veřejnost ke zdravějšímu stylu života a pěstování sportu. V některých snímcích také BUF napadala své odpůrce, především komunisty. Cílem těchto projektů bylo získat si na svou stranu voliče a přesvědčit lid, že jakási novodobá forma diktátorství by Británii prospěla. Ve sféře rozhlasu se strana nijak výrazně neangažovala.

V práci jsou dále zmíněna veřejná vystoupení strany. Pozornost je věnována řečnickému umění Oswalda Mosleye a třem stěžejním událostem v historii BUF, k nimž patří tzv. Olympia Rally z roku 1934, bitva v Cable Street z roku 1936 a mírový sjezd ve výstavní hale Earl's Court. Olympia Rally společně s bitvou v Cable Street byly zřejmě vůbec nejkrvavějšími mítinky strany. V rámci první jmenované události došlo ke střetu mosleyovců s Židy, jež se dostali do prostor, kde Mosley a jeho lidé řečnili, a kteří svým chováním narušovali klidný průběh akce. Mosleyovci na to reagovali násilím a

mnoho židovských oponentů bylo napadeno a zraněno. To vyvolalo kritiku v řadách britské společnosti. Bitva v Cable Street vypukla na základě nevole obyvatel East Endu vůči plánovanému pochodu BUF. Aktivisté společně s „černokošiláči“ a policií rozpoutali krutou bitvu přímo v ulicích. Ani tato akce popularitě strany příliš nepomohla. Mírový sjezd v Earl's Courtu, který se věnoval problematice vstupu Británie do války, byl veden v podobném duchu. Odpůrci strany opět narušovali průběh sjezdu a dalo by se říci, že Mosley se za celou dobu jeho trvání nedostal ke slovu. Mítink v Earl's Court je však i přesto označován za největší akci pod jednou střechou v historii.

V závěru práce jsou shrnuta všechna zjištění a autor dochází k názoru, že strana si svým chováním a veřejným vystupováním, jakož i nejrůznějšími články, vysloužila obrázek marnotratné strany, jež k prosazení svých názorů a umlčení svých odpůrců neváhala použít násilí. Ač bylo zjevné, že Mosleyovci byli spíše oběťmi násilných útoků, pověst strany tím byla významně pošramocena. Práce také vyvrací prvotní hypotézu, že propagandistické aktivity BUF byly neúspěšné.

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## **Appendices**

Appendix 1



**WORLD'S  
LARGEST  
INDOOR  
MEETING**

**EARLS  
COURT**

**COLOSSAL  
BRITAIN  
FIRST  
RALLY**

**SUNDAY  
JULY 16  
1939  
AT 7.30 P.M.  
DOORS  
OPEN 6.30 P.M.**

**MOSLEY  
SPEAKS**

**TICKETS · 1' · 2'6 · 3' · 5' · 7'6 · 10'6**

**BRITISH UNION — 16, GREAT SMITH ST. S.W. 1.  
95, FETTER LANE, E.C. 4.**




"Blackshirt," October 17, 1936.

**BRITISH UNION'S BIGGEST WEEK: RED FLAG JEERED OUT OF EAST LONDON  
THE BLACKSHIRTS COME TO STAY : EAST LONDON SAYS BRITAIN FIRST !**

MOSLEY SPEAKS  
NEXT WEDNESDAY  
HOXTON HOUSE  
SCHOOLS 8 O'CLOCK

AN  
OPEN AIR MEETING  
ASK STREET,  
SHOREDITCH  
at 9 O'CLOCK  
MOSLEY will speak  
at both

**BLACKSHIRT**  
THE PATRIOTIC WORKER'S PAPER



Registered as G.P.O.  
as a Newspaper

No. 182. Oct. 17 1936

Price 1d.

**BRITAIN  
IS  
AWAKE!**

**EAST LONDON FOR MOSLEY**

**"THEY SHALL PASS"  
IS THE CRY OF THE WORKERS**

**UNBELIEVABLE SCENES OF ENTHUSIASM**

**SAYS GEOFFREY DORMAN**

THE Jews and Reds of East London, in their supreme folly, had tried to untame mob law against the British of East London on October 4. The rumour spread like wildfire that Mosley had sworn within a fortnight that he would march at the head of the Blackshirts through East London. Ten days later on the night of Wednesday, October 14, East London turned out in its swarming thousands to witness the greatest Blackshirt march yet seen, and East London that night rang with the name of Mosley.

The Reds, with brazen arrogance, had said: "They shall not pass," pronouncing the great phrase of the French armies before Verdun in 1916.

On Wednesday night their boastful words were flung back in their teeth as a host of members and supporters of the British Union swept its way in triumph from Bethnal Green to Limchouse.

**But they did Pass**

I went to Victoria Park Square in one of the famous Blackshirt loudspeaker vans which must by now be among the best known vehicles in London. As we passed down Bethnal Green Road interest was aflame. We were received with cheers from the stallholders, and on the pavements men, women and children shouted: "Here come the Blackshirts! Good old Blackshirts!" and greeted us with a forest of arms in the salute.

We went on to the famous headquarters of the Bethnal Green district in Green Street, and there a column of Blackshirts formed up behind the band and marched up Green Street towards Victoria Park Square.

**LIKE A DREAM**  
Before starting I had just read a story in this week's "Action" of how a man goes to sleep and dreams that Fascism has come to power in England. To



TO A MAN, WOMAN AND CHILD EAST LONDON WELCOMES MOSLEY.

me that dream was true as I marched through Bethnal Green. Windows were flying up, people appeared out of their houses shouting: "Hail, Mosley!" and giving the Fascist salute. As we turned out of the brightly lit Green Street into the darkness of Victoria Park Square—frenzied cheering—and a forest of raised hands greeted us as the Colours came into the Square and we took position.

As soon as S.O. "Mick" Clarke climbed on to the van he was greeted with tremendous cheers and he spoke to the crowd who know him and love him as one of their own, and they cheered him to the echo. Presently there was a movement in the crowd and a car with headlights came round the corner, and the car went up: "Mosley is here!"

**MOSLEY SPEAKS**  
The Leader of the British Union walked down the middle of a double line of Blackshirts, the crowd cheering frantically all the while. When he climbed on top of the van he was cheered to the echo for what seemed like five minutes before he could begin his speech.

Halfway through his speech I climbed upon to the van and looked at the crowd. Both ends of the Square were packed solid with people as far as I could see. There must have been twelve to fifteen thousand people there, and every one of them was cheering Mosley as never before.

Mosley dealt briefly with the situation that had arisen when, on October 4, the Government had allowed an imported Red mob to terrorise the streets of East London and, by violence and attacks on the police, had dared to block the roads of London to Englishmen.

"They tried to stop us," he said. "They said that we shall not pass, but you are seeing to it tonight that we shall pass. The little men of the Government laughed at us at first and thought that we were finished and now they see us coming back as it were, from the grave. They tried in their folly to stop us, they are even trying to ban our uniforms now, as though that could possibly stop us and prevent our final and inevitable triumph."

**"BRITAIN BELONGS TO US"**  
"Britain," he said, "belongs to us Britons and we are going to see that we get it back again."

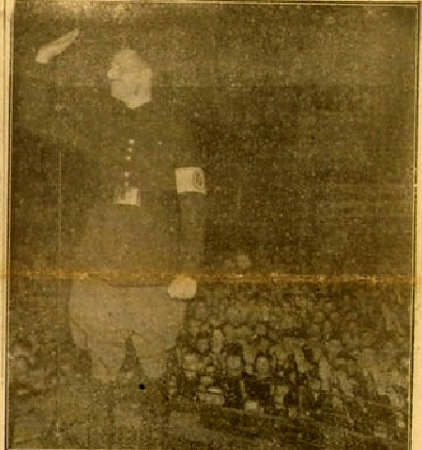
As he finished his great speech the crowd cheered and cheered again, and the applause was as the roar of the ocean. "The crowd was so vast that he had great difficulty in getting down from the van and forcing his way to the head of the column."

The police had informed Capt. Donovan at the beginning that the march to Salmon Lane must not take place. When they learned that the whole of this great crowd would be following Mosley, who intended to go on foot, they withdrew their baton and the march took place.

There were relatively few Blackshirts present. The crowd was composed almost entirely of the residents of East London and they flocked round him, shouting out: "Good old Mosley!"

I heard a man in the crowd loudly say to his friend: "Who are they cheering?"

Continued on page 2, col. 2.



A Briton's salute to Britons. The British Union Leader at the conclusion of the meeting.



The Press made great play of the number of police present. We have deliberately selected this picture showing many more police than in other photographs at our disposal. Close attention to the photograph will show that these police are surrounded by an entirely good-natured crowd of people prepared to listen quietly to Mosley's message.

**No Exaggeration**

Many people may think that this account of the proceedings is an exaggeration due to the enthusiasm of the writer. I can assure them that this is not so.

If they are unwilling to believe it, I would ask them to reserve their judgment and go for themselves to East London any night of the week and see for themselves.—G. D.



"Blackshirt," October 31, 1936.

U.S. 154

# WHY ARE JEWS DISLIKED?

IMPORTANT ELECTION ANNOUNCEMENT  
**SEE BELOW**


## BLACKSHIRT

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Mosley's Banned Film Interview  
See page 5



### THEY CAN'T FOOL THE PEOPLE ALL THE TIME

THESE are hard times for some people. The Cut Price expert, the Big Finance Boss, the Communist, all gather round the new walling wall. The walling wall of Fleet Street.

All the newspapers wall in unison. From the left to the right. From the Millionaire "Mermaid" to the Millionaire "Express."

They're not walling because the Jews are ill-treated, because the Jews aren't being ill-treated.

They're not walling because we are going to destroy liberty, because we can't destroy that which doesn't exist.

They are walling because we've found them out.

They thought they owned the country. They used to tell us so. "Your King and our country" they used to say.

And now the British people are rising against them. These men, Bosses of Finance, Bosses of the Press, are whining with fear.

## BIG NEWS

Next Week's "Action" will contain the list of the first 100 constituencies to be fought by British Union Parliamentary Candidates at the next General Election

FIRST PUBLICATION EXCLUSIVE TO "ACTION"

## GENTILE OR JEW:—

# WHO IS TO BLAME FOR 'ANTI-SEMITISM'?

SOME STRAIGHT TALKING BY A. K. CHESTERTON

THE Jewish Press at the present time is profoundly illuminating, because it reveals the spirit of Jewry in a more devastatingly cruel light than could be thrown upon it by any Blackshirt writer or speaker.

Setting to work with cautious care it garners every weak and from every part of the world aspects of anti-Semitism which show how universally disliked the Jews appear to be. These news-items appear under whimpering headlines, whereas official Jewry could surely act to better advantage if it were to spend its time investigating the reason why Jews of every land and in every age have brought upon themselves the marked opprobrium of the other races of mankind.

### Fantastic Lies About Fascism

Needless to say that when propaganda of such dubious value is being "put over" for the Jewish Press what has been called the "East End Terror" comes in for more than its due share of attention.

"Jewish Chronicle" takes up a sustained shriek against the Blackshirt Movement throughout the bulk of each issue, and there is scarcely a page of this stuff which does not directly aid the Fascist case.

Thus, at the very time when hundreds of thousands and even millions of Britons are discovering that "democracy" is a pleasant-sounding word which conceals the reality that it is a corrupt and degraded system whereby the nation is bluffed, exploited and betrayed, the "Chronicle" has the incredible folly to associate the name of Jewry with that of democracy, suggesting that the two causes are identical.

"Jewish Defence—Safeguarding Democracy" are consecutive headlines.

### The "Jewish Chronicle"

Well, if the Jews care to confess their own adherence to the abominable racket of democracy, the Blackshirts clearly have no reason to complain about what has always seemed to them a patent truth.

Again, the "Jewish Chronicle" announces in its leading article that it is "almost tired of advocating" that the Blackshirt uniform should be banned. Could sheer stupidity go further? The Jews, apparently, are so steeped in their own vanity that they cannot conceive the effect such a remark must have upon any Briton not entirely run to seed.

The healthy Briton, even if he understands nothing about Fascism, inevitably exclaims:—"Who the devil are the Jews to try and dictate to Englishmen what manner of dress they are to wear? Do they think they own the country?"

In the same leading article the "Jewish Chronicle" quotes with approval a letter sent to the "Manchester Guardian" by Dr. J. J. Mallon, in the course of which he states:—

"The object of the [Fascist] denunciation of the Jews is more subtle. It is to bring them into such unpopularity and

derision that physical violence will be applied by the local population."

good business, and 'big business' to start an anti-Jewish commotion in East London, and force the attention of Parliament and the Press until Fascism becomes a fashionable story again."

The lie about Fascism "dying" is exposed by the fact that, during the growth of the Movement in the East End, over three hundred new branches were formed in the rest of the country. But it is not the lie that matters. What matters is that these Jews, unable to understand the forthright English quality of Mosley's mind, find it necessary to invent for him his own motives, and show he possesses none of the low, cunning or suicidal folly attributed to him, it stands to reason that the Jews reveal in themselves precisely these hideous qualities which they try to fasten upon a man cleaner and greater than they can comprehend.

There are other instances in this line of sheer, ludicrous outbursts. Thus the description of Mosley's huge meeting at Hoxton as being "as hot as a parable." It seems that the vanity of the reporter was outraged because the Leader dealt with the Fascist economic policy and ignored the Jewish question. Clearly the Jews would rather be discussed to their own disadvantage than suffer the ignominy of being dismissed from the mind in the belief that there are more interesting things to talk about. Exhibitionism gone mad is essentially a Jewlike malady.

### Frankel Again

Similar is the quotation of the following utterance by an obscure M.P. known as Dan Frankel:—

"They [the Fascists] have no programme, no policy, no political philosophy—except that of dictation."

Continued on page 2

### SUPPRESSION OF THE INNOCENTS?

Anti-British Rioters Being Led Away From Cable Street On October 4





# Murrah for the Blackshirts

By  
**VISCOUNT  
ROTHERMERE**

**BECAUSE** Fascism comes from Italy, shortsighted people in this country think they show a sturdy national spirit by deriding it.

If their ancestors had been equally stupid, Britain would have had no banking system, no Roman law, nor even any football, since all of these are of Italian invention.

THE Socialists, especially, who jeer at the principles and uniform of the Blackshirts as being of foreign origin, forget that the founder and High Priest of their own creed was the German Jew Karl Marx.

Though the name and form of Fascism originated in Italy, that movement is not now peculiar to any nation. It stands in every country for the Party of Youth.

It represents the effort of the young generation to put new life into out-of-date political systems.

That alone is enough to make it a factor of immense value in our national affairs.

Youth is a force that for generations has been allowed to run to waste in Britain. This country has been governed since far back in Victorian times by men in the middle sixties. When prosperity was general and the international horizon calm, that mattered little, but to cope with the grim problems of the present day the energy and vigour of younger men are needed. Being myself in the middle sixties I know how stealthy the seventh decade stiffens one's prejudices. Under the pretext of these old British Government real popularity abroad. In the vital matter of air-defence this country has been allowed to sink from the foremost to the lowest position among nations.

While the leader reorganising their break the crush crisis, our own and dawdle. They are preparing British and Ceylon by the Southern Ireland

THE Blackshirts organised effort generation to bring which semile pool maintained on its organisation, is purely British, with Italian Fascist Navy has to do with. Such an effort a nation's realisation shown by the past Blackshirts are the big industrial. Reach me from the substantiate their largest active me try. A crusading to British politics who would be a similar movement in France or the United States have so far failed to realise the profound importance of the new national activity which is stirring all around them.

and disgusted by the incompetence of their elders in dealing with the depression that has followed on it. The other is made up of men too young to remember the war but ready to put all their ardour and energy at the service of a cause which offers them a vigorous constructive policy in place of the drift and indecision of the old political parties.

Blackshirts proclaim a fact which politicians dating from pre-war days will never face—that the new age requires new methods and new men. They base their contention on the simple truth that parliamentary gov-

views were an effective substitute in human affairs for action, the National Government would be the best that Britain has ever had. But the experience of the past two-years has proved that these futile and time-wasting devices are no more than a screen for inertia and indecision.

THE huge majority obtained by the present Government at the general election of 1931 was the last vote of confidence that the nation will ever give to Old Gang politicians. Two years from now another general election will be almost due. The whole future of Britain will depend upon its issue.

A prolongation of the present régime may be regarded, in the country's present mood, as out of the question. There will be a pronounced swing either to Right or Left.

If the inflated, impulsive, and largely

## Crazy News Reel

Presented by  
**D. B. WYNDHAM LEW**

OLD soldiers will note, with a flicker of recognition, one of the Morning Post's "Soldier's Return," a group, at the British Art Exhibition. The handsome, even foppish, soldier, wearing an expensive shirt and a natty velvet neckband, and looking like Squire Thorburn, is evidently his humble and astonished relative who became quartermaster-sergeant, and he is now going to buy the village. His father, possibly, holds out to him a mug of rum. He ignores it. Rum is him henceforth only in bulk.

gain for the company of the "Farewell," depicting a man, possibly owing to his, credit.

THROUGH THE AGE an burst into tears as she could not find whisky.

New York (The daughter of Tom o much after a similar treatment—in her case—that the gods lay to stone.

Return, 30s. 9d. that a woman's mother thirty.

News-Bazaar further, describe his woman character and strange, called Lancashire, it follows there must be a girl in 1904 and living in the my enigmatic, more my Mavee of Ireland. id. "Yeast of Britain ramonade of the M. woman, Hilsenburgh's. Heine Pétasque of the only a dream of dust had webbed feet, like a never in Lancashire.

Dept. Freud, son of the is a "psychological" his clients under the hood mind and elegant modern architecture.

—Gossip W. All things they discover believe. Any disciple of Uncle Libido will tell you: Archibald just a wild, tangled nightmare of sex explains that he is a remark by Charles list. Over and above it, terrible Oedipus-yobby else, architect's father-in-law published nursery libido—flat me encoloured brick on I hardly dare discuss this to you, though Freudian patter is boys. It is quite app-

risky, driven by the happy modern architect most inhibitions. ng by results? pedle... red weekly: hinkers of the Middle or time debating the duty on the point-

colisions on above: kneared; (the simple on having been used in Scholman, to impress at, spirits have no exte- rence between a certa of the duck-billed plat- lled platypus lays it

Precedent to Precedent. Apropos Byron's recent anniversary was interested to read that the great Byron is a Derbyshire clergyman.



At this next vital election Britain's survival as a Great Power will depend on the outcome of a well-organized



national affairs. But which of our older politicians, looking back on their own record, dare assert that they are on the wrong lines? Government by one or other of the

principles into our country. THEY will find the loyalties and aims of the Blackshirts as British as



Appendix 5

**LIST OF THE BOOKS AND BOOKLETS PUBLISHED BY THE BRITISH  
UNION OF FASCISTS BETWEEN 1932 AND 1940**

- Tomorrow We Live* – Oswald Mosley, 1938
- The Inward Strength of a National Socialist* – Captain Robert Gordon-Canning, year n/a
- Our Financial Masters* – Alexander Raven Thomson, year n/a
- March To Sanity* – Major General J.F.C. Fuller, year n/a
- The Greater Britain* – Oswald Mosley, 1932
- The British Peace – How to Get It* – Oswald Mosley, 1939
- British Union and Social Credit* – W. Chambers-Hunter, year n/a
- British Union and the Jews* – Mick Clarke, year n/a
- British Union Medical Policy* – author and year n/a
- The Coming Corporate State* – Alexander Raven Thomson, 1937
- The Economics of Fascism* – Alexander Raven Thomson, year n/a
- Fascism Explained – 10 Points of Fascist Policy* – Oswald Mosley, 1933
- Taxation and the People* – Oswald Mosley, 1933
- Fascism: 100 Questions Asked and Answered* – Oswald Mosley, 1936
- British Fascism and Douglas Social Credit* – Alexander Raven Thomson, 1934
- Fascism and War* – Major General J.F.C. Fuller, year n/a
- Fascism in Relation to British Character* – W.E.D. Allen, year n/a
- Financiers, Enemies of Fascism, Secret Dictators of Foreign Policy* – E.G. Mandeville-Roe, year n/a
- Labours Peace Policy Through British Union Eyes* – Michael Goulding, year n/a
- The Land and the People* – Jorian Jenks, year n/a
- Mind Britain's Business* – Captain Robert Gordon-Canning, year n/a
- Arab or Jew* - Captain Robert Gordon-Canning, year n/a
- The Spirit of Fascism* - Captain Robert Gordon-Canning, year n/a
- Motor Ways for Britain* – Alexander Raven Thomson, year n/a
- Taxation and the People* – Oswald Mosley, year n/a



*What Is Money for* – Ezra Pound, year n/a

*Why Mosely Left the Labour Government*– Oswald Mosley, year n/a

*Women and Fascism* – Anne Brock-Gibbs, year n/a

*Analysis of Marxism* – William Joyce, year n/a

*Strike Action or Power Action* – Bill Ridsen, year n/a

*Dictatorship* – William Joyce, year n/a

*Creed of a Fascist Revolutionary* – A.K. Chesterton, year n/a

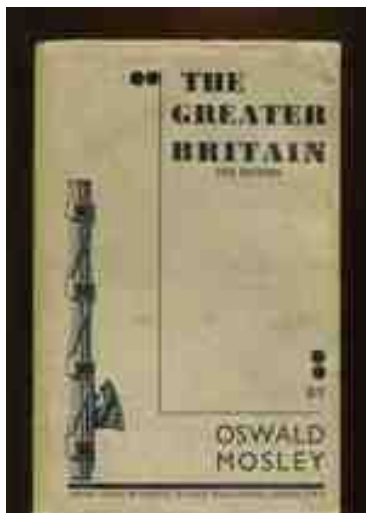
*Olympia and the Jews* – A.K. Chesterton, year n/a

*Shopkeepers at War* – Peter Heyward, year n/a

*Menace of the Chain Stores* – Peter Heyward, year n/a

The author in no way guarantees that the list of the books published by the British Union of Fascists comprises of all the books that were actually published by the party between 1932 and 1940.

Appendix 6a, 6b, 6c



Appendix 7



Appendices 8, 9



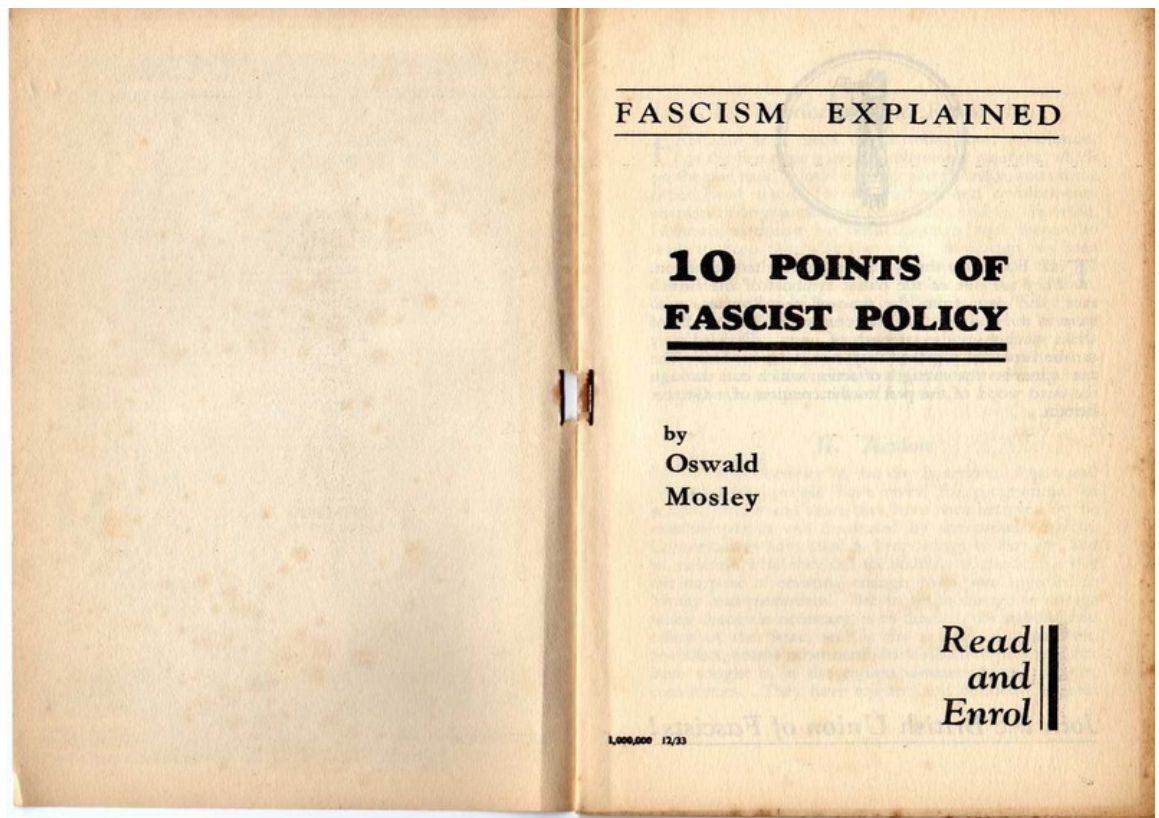
Appendix 10



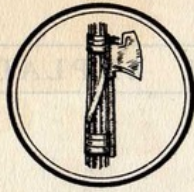
Appendix 11











**T**HE Fasces are the symbol of service to the nation. They are one of the oldest symbols of the British race, and date from the time of the Romans, who were in this country for three centuries. The bundle of sticks symbolises the strength of unity. Divided they can be broken; together they cannot be broken. The axe represents the strength of action which cuts through the dead wood of the past to the creation of a Greater Britain.

*Join the British Union of Fascists!*

### I. Patriotism and Revolution

**F**ASCISM is a creed of patriotism and revolution. For the first time a strong movement emerges, which on the one hand is loyal to King and Country, and on the other hand stands for far-reaching and revolutionary changes in government, in economics, and in life itself. Hitherto, patriotism has been associated with those who wish to keep things as they are; revolution has been associated with a flabby internationalism which sets the interests of foreign countries before those of Britain. The watch-word of Fascism is "Britain First." We love our country, but we are determined to build a country worthy of that love. Things cannot remain as they are: we must have great changes to adapt modern Britain to modern fact. True patriotism finds expression for the first time in the revolution of Fascism.

### II. Action

**T**HE first necessity of the day is action. Again and again, the people have voted for programmes of action. Again and again they have been betrayed by the existing parties and frustrated by the present system. Conservatives have tried to keep things as they are, and to maintain what they call the stability of the State. For the purpose of resisting change, they have appealed to loyalty and patriotism. But to resist change in an age when change is necessary, is to threaten the stability and safety of the State, and is the reverse of patriotism. Socialists, on the other hand, have talked of progress, but have sought it in the endless discussions of talkative committees. They have rejected and derided the great

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instruments of leadership and decision by which alone things can be done and progress can be achieved. So their talk of progress has ended in chaos and in flight from responsibility. Fascism combines progress with the executive instruments of loyalty, decision and voluntary discipline, by which alone things can be done and ordered progress can be secured. The true patriotism of Fascism will carry the changes that are necessary, by principles and by methods which bring change with order and efficiency.

### III. Fascist Organisation

**F**ASCISTS bind themselves together to serve their country in a voluntary discipline, because without discipline they realise that nothing can be done. The black shirts which they wear symbolise their determination to save the nation. They are not afraid to stand out from their fellows as men dedicated to the service and revival of their country. The wearing of the black shirt by our more active members breaks down all barriers of class within our ranks, for all are dressed alike.\* The salute is the recognition of a brother Fascist who is inspired by the same passionate ideal of national service. Fascism, like every political creed this country has ever known, is common to all great countries, but Fascism is more in keeping with the British character than any other political faith. For the essence of Fascism is team-work, the power to pull together and to sink individual interests in the service of the nation. This we claim has been the leading characteristic of the British people at every great moment of our history.

\*The wearing of the Blackshirt is not compulsory.

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### IV. Unemployment and the Modern Problem

**F**ASCISM believes that the cause of the present world trouble of unemployment is the inability of the people to buy and to consume the goods which industry produces. Every day rationalisation and new scientific development enable industry to produce more goods with less labour. The power to produce increases, but the power to consume does not increase. In addition, Britain is faced with a particular problem because she is the greatest exporting nation in the world. Foreign markets are continually closing against us for the simple reason that other nations are now determined themselves to produce the goods which they consume.

### V. Fascist Policy: The Corporate State

**F**ASCISM solves the problem of unemployment and poverty by establishing the Corporate State. Industry will be divided into National Corporations governed by representatives of employers, workers and consumers, operating under Fascist government. The State will not attempt to conduct industry as it would under Socialism. Instead, the State will lay down the limits within which industry may operate, and those limits will be the national welfare. Private ownership will be permitted and encouraged, provided such activity enriches the nation as well as the individual. All interests which operate against the nation will be rigorously suppressed. *The function of the Corporations will be to raise wages and salaries over the whole field of industry as science, rationalisation and*

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*industrial technique increase the power to produce. Consumption will be adjusted to production, and a Home Market will be provided by the higher purchasing power of our own people.*

#### VI. The Export Trade

THE export trade will be supported by the Corporate system in the unification of our buying and selling arrangements abroad, which will enable industry to speak with one voice, and government for the first time to support our export trade. *Our trade motto will be "Britain Buys from Those who Buy from Britain."* We shall transfer elsewhere our purchases of foodstuffs and raw materials if those from whom we buy will not buy from us in return. By these means we will force the entry of our goods into markets now closed against us, until we have built a self-contained Empire which makes us independent of foreign markets.

#### VII. Fascist Empire

WE seek to build a Britain as far as possible self contained, and an Empire completely self-contained. We seek to create a great area of the earth with a far higher standard of civilisation than prevails elsewhere, which is immune from the chaos of world struggle and collapse. For this purpose, Fascism will exclude foreign goods. Tariffs are useless, because they tax the consumer without keeping out foreign goods which are the product of cheap slave labour in foreign countries. Within the Empire we can produce all manufactured goods, foodstuffs and raw materials which we require. Modern

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science enables us to do it in abundance, for we have passed from the economics of poverty to the economics of plenty, and great nations can be self-contained once they are organised and scientifically protected from the shocks and dislocations of world chaos. Such organisation will help to preserve the peace of this country and the world, for the prime cause of war is the international struggle for markets and raw materials supported by international finance. A self-contained Empire will be withdrawn from that struggle, and the risks of war will be diminished. Britons will not fight again except in defence of their own homes and Empire. Fascist movements now make rapid progress in all the great Dominions, and are federated with the British Union of Fascists in the New Empire Union.

#### VIII. Agriculture: A Fascist Three-Year Plan

FASCISM stresses the importance of reviving the great agricultural industry, which has been betrayed by all parties. At present we produce £280,000,000 per annum of our total food supplies in this country, and we import £220,000,000 worth from foreign countries, and £140,000,000 worth from the Dominions. Under a three-year plan, Fascism will nearly double the production of British agriculture by the total exclusion of foreign goods. We can raise home production to £500,000,000 a year, and yet give the Dominions under Fascist government a better market than they enjoy to-day. The prices of farming produce must be fixed in advance, and the

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profiteering middleman ruthlessly suppressed. The higher purchasing power of the industrial worker under Fascism will afford the farmer an economic price for his product and a living wage for his worker. The higher purchasing power of the farming population when agricultural production is increased will take the place of our vanishing foreign markets in buying many of the products of our present export trade. The countryside shall be restored to prosperity, and shall contribute a healthy, virile manhood to build the Greater Britain of the future.

#### IX. Aliens and International Finance

FASCISM alone will deal with the alien menace, because Fascism alone puts "Britain First." Under Fascism, no alien shall enter this country to take the jobs of Britons, and aliens already here who have abused the hospitality of this nation will be sent back whence they came. Fascism will deal, not only with the poor aliens who are here seeking jobs; Fascism will deal also with the great alien financiers of the City of London who use the financial power of Britain in the interests, not of this country, but of foreign countries. These men are the real alien menace, for by their foreign investments they are using British money to finance our competitors against us all over the world. The interest on the loans they have made to foreign countries come back to them in the shape of cheap goods which undercut our standard of life and deprive our people of employment. Fascism alone will deal faithfully with the alien menace, in whatever quarter it rears its head.

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#### X. Leadership—Parliament—Liberty

FASCISM is a leadership of the nation. It is not dictatorship in the old sense of the word, which implies government against the will of the people. It is dictatorship in the modern sense of that word, which implies government armed by the people with complete power of action to overcome problems which must be solved if the nation is to live. We seek to achieve our aims by peaceful, legal and constitutional means with the willing consent of the nation declared at a General Election. Fascist Government, however, will at once take power to act by securing from the first Fascist Parliament complete power of action for the Government. Without the power to act and the will to act, nothing can be done. Fascist Government will use the power given it by the first Fascist Parliament for the reconstruction of the nation. At the end of the first Fascist Parliament, another election will be held, *on an occupational and not on a geographical franchise.* Men and women will vote within their own industries with a real knowledge of the persons and subjects with which they are dealing. Women who are not in industry will vote as wives and mothers, and will thus be represented for the first time by people competent to speak for the great national interest which they represent. Women will not be compelled to retire from industry, but the high wages of their husbands under the Corporate system will make it possible for them to retire if they wish, and the present competition between men and women in industry will thus be ended. In the new Parliament, every interest and aspect of national life will be represented, but every interest will be subordinate to the welfare of the nation as a whole. Thus a technical

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and not a political Parliament will be elected to assist Government in the problems of a technical age. Thereafter, the policy and personnel of the Government as a whole will be submitted direct to the people to judge by vote. Government will no longer depend on the intrigues and manœuvres of conflicting parties, but on the will of the nation directly expressed. Thus the people will retain full liberty to approve or reject the policy of the Government, but a Government so approved and supported will have power to act and to end economic chaos. Fascism declares that the real liberty is economic liberty, and this cannot come until the end of economic chaos. Government cannot end economic chaos without power to act, and that power to act can only come from Fascism. Good wages, short hours, good houses, opportunities for culture and recreation are the real liberty. The mass of the people are being robbed of that real liberty to-day by the false liberty of a few old men to talk for ever in the present Parliamentary system. Talk and action do not go together, and action is the necessity of to-day. We will end talk with a new system, in which the whole resources of the nation are mobilised for action. The Blackshirts of Fascism, by their struggle and sacrifice, offer the nation a new leadership on a new road of national salvation. We ask you to follow that lead through the ending of class war, reaction and chaos, to the building of a Britain worthy of our pride and of our love.

**FURTHER LITERATURE  
ON  
FASCISM**

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By Oswald Mosley
- "Fascism in Britain", 2jd. "  
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- "Dictatorship", 2jd. "  
By W. Joyce
- "Letters of Lucifer", 7jd. "
- "Fascism in Relation to British  
History & Character", 2jd. "

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33 Kings Road, Chelsea

- "The Fascist Week" Twopence  
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**Fascism is going to do for Britain, TAKE AN ACTIVE PART!**

**FILL IN THIS FORM TO-DAY, and post to nearest branch**

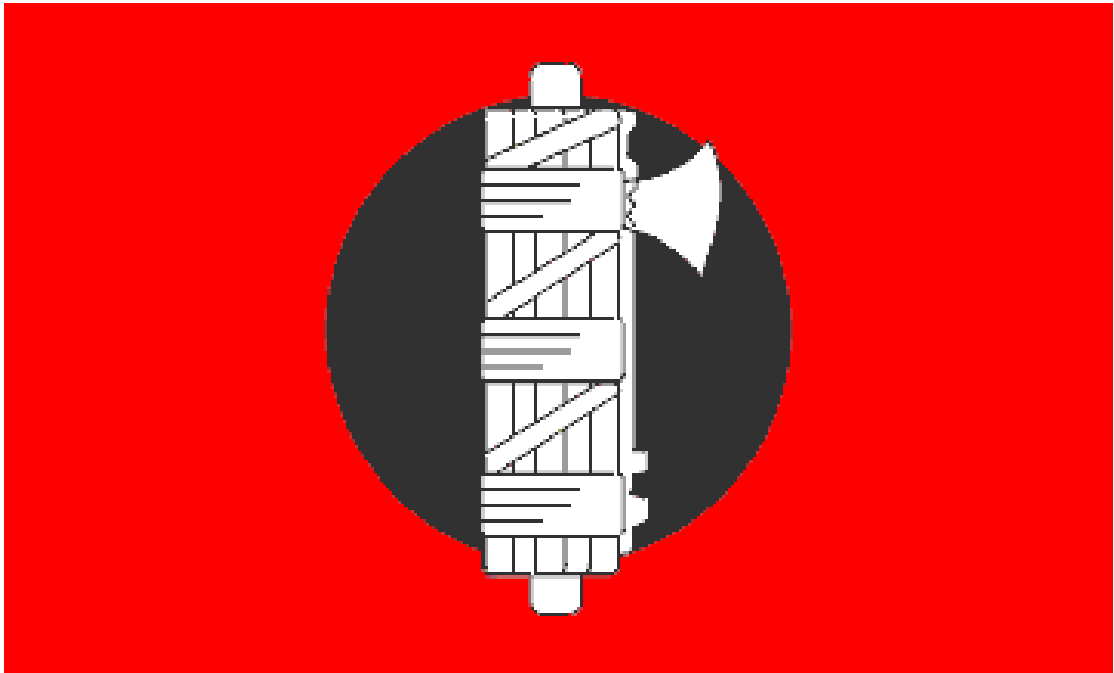
**or to FASCIST HEADQUARTERS, KINGS RD., SLOANE SQ., LONDON, S.W.3**

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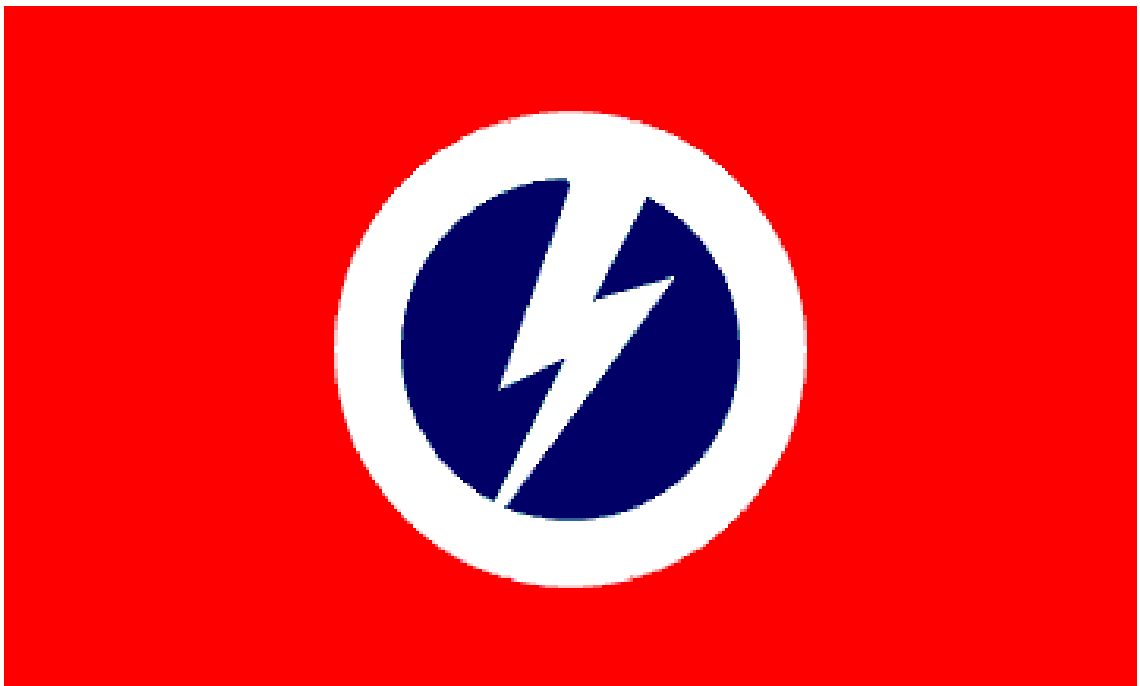
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Appendix 13

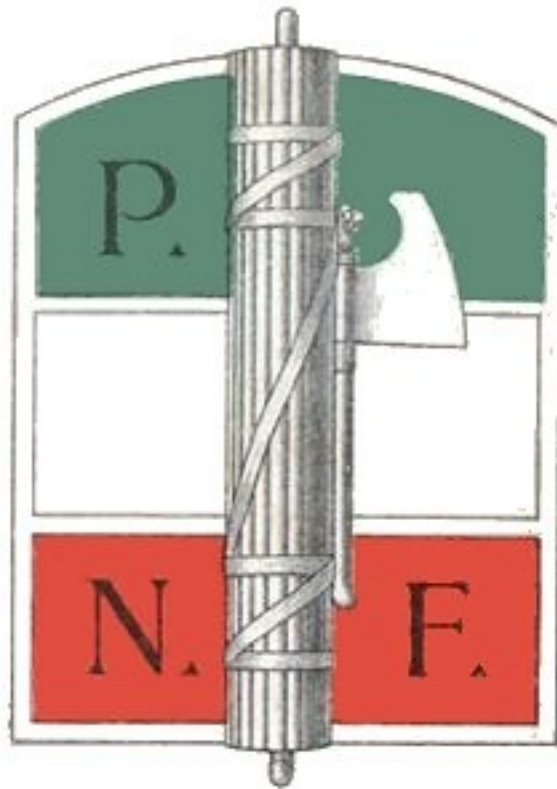


Appendix 14

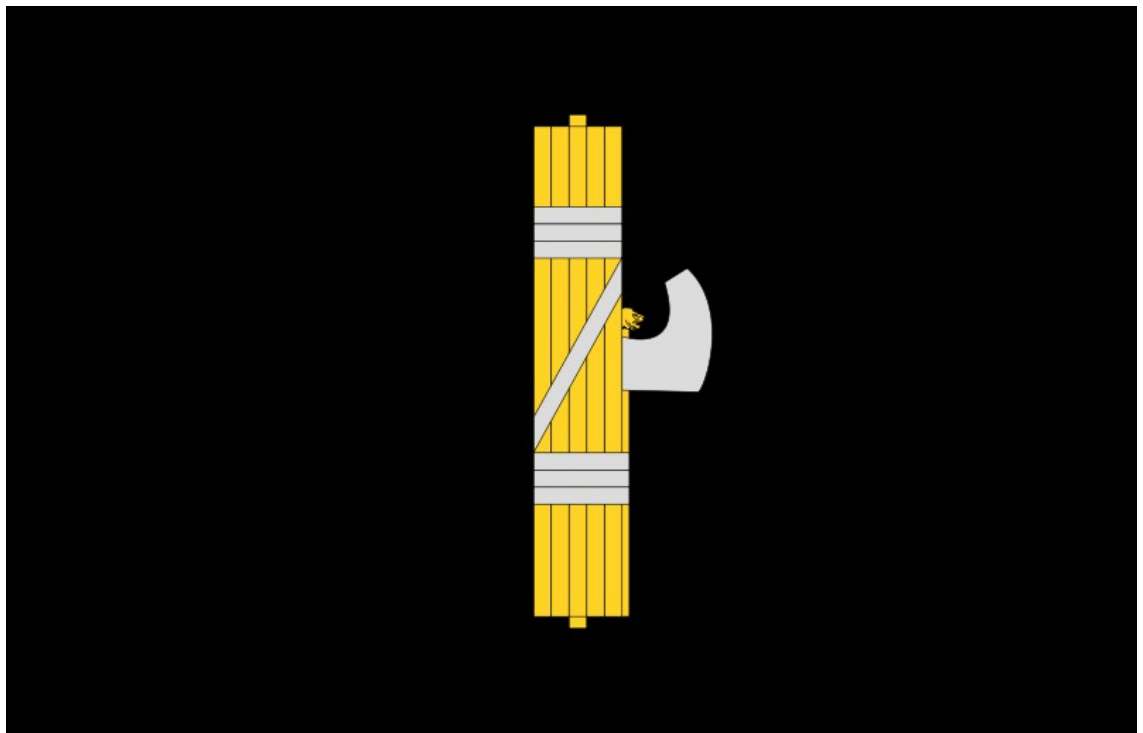




Appendix 15



Appendix 16



Appendix 17



Appendix 18



Appendix 19



Appendix 20



Appendix 21



Appendix 22



Appendix 23



Appendix 24





Appendix 25



Appendix 26



Appendix 27



Appendix 28



Appendix 29



Appendix 30





# ACTION

CONTAINS

SPECIAL FEATURES ON:

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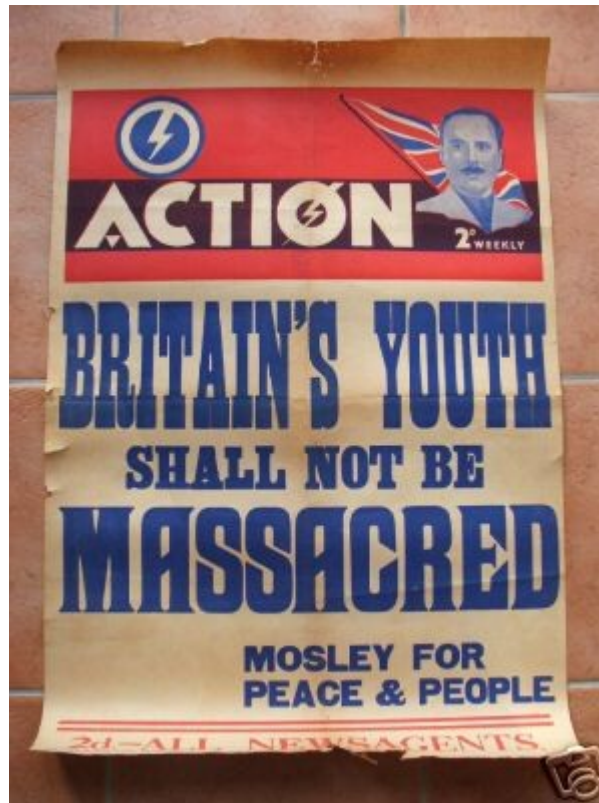
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Appendix 33



Appendix 34



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expressed in this  
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You may join as a Blackshirt  
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in a Blackshirt Unit, or you  
may join as an ordinary  
member with no obligation  
of service.

Northern Headquarters:

**26 Corporation Street, Manchester**

Southern Headquarters :

**Sanctuary Buildings, Gt. Smith Street,  
Westminster**

Or any District Headquarters.