

Who were the British Union of Fascists?

Source A

MONDAY, The Daily Mail JANUARY 15, 1934.

Hurrah 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It represents the effort of the young generation to put new life into out-of-date political systems.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 stealthily and steadily that seventh decade saps one's powers and stiffens one's prejudices.

Under the inert and irresolute control of these elderly statesmen, the British Government is equally without real popularity at home and prestige abroad. In the vital matter of air-defence this country has been allowed to sink from the foremost to the lowest position among the Great Powers. While the leaders of other States are reorganising their national resources to break the crushing grip of the world-crisis, our own are content to drift and dawdle. They are persistent only in preparing British abdication in India and Ceylon by the same methods as lost Southern Ireland to the Empire.

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 government is conducted on the same lines as it was in the eighteenth century, though the conditions with which it deals have altered beyond recognition. They want to bring our national administration up to date.

This purpose does not rest on theory alone. It can be justified by the gigantic revival of national strength and spirit which a similar process of modernisation has brought about in Italy and Germany.

THESE are beyond all doubt the best-governed nations in Europe to-day. From repeated visits to both under their present régime, I can vouch for it that in no other land does the over-

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 LEWIS

OLD soldiers will note, with gratification, one of the Morlancs, "The Soldier's Return," a cottage group, at the British Art Exhibition.

The handsome, even foppish, young soldier, wearing an expensive ruffled shirt and a natty velvet neckband, and looking like Squire Thornhill, is evidently telling his humble and astonished relatives how he became quartermaster-sergeant, and how he is now going to buy the village. His aged father waggishly holds out to him a pint mug of rum. He ignores it. Rum interests him henceforth only in bulk.

I looked in vain for the companion picture, "The Sailor's Farewell," depicting an honest far taking leave of his creditors. It is not on exhibition, possibly owing to the Censor.

WOMAN THROUGH THE AGES
"One woman burst into tears when she was told she could not land five cases of Scotch whisky."
—New York cable.

Like Niobe, daughter of Tantalus, who wept so much after a similarly agonising bereavement—in her case, twelve children—that the gods turned her mercilessly into stone.
A woman's heart?

Week-end Return, 30s. 9d.
"Balzac held that a woman's most fascinating age is thirty."
—News Item.

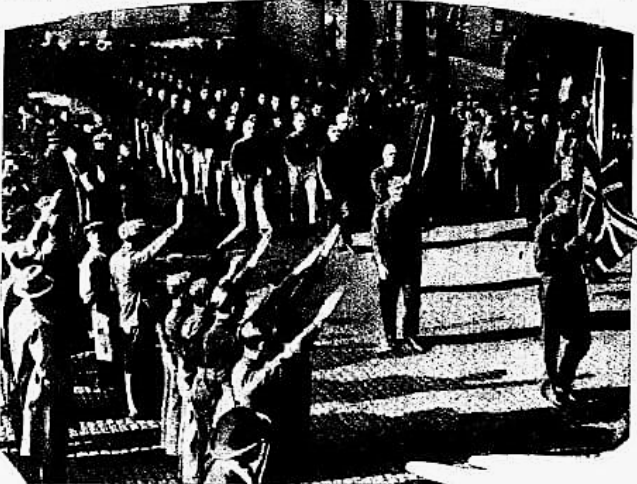
And since Balzac further, desiring to make one of his women characters exquisitely mysterious and strange, caused her to be born dans le Leucheshire, it follows that at this moment there must be a galaxy of women, born in 1904 and living in Manchester, more subtly enigmatic, more mystically alluring than Maevae of Ireland, Etain, Mélisande, Pand, Yveut of Brittany, Morgan le Fay, Bramimonde of the Marais, Nicolette of Provence, Haccemburgis of the Maine, and the Reine Pédaque of Toulouse, who was not only a dream of disturbing loveliness, but had webbed feet like a goose.

Balzac was never in Llanrhysir in his life, incidentally.

Blue-Print Dept.
"Mr. Ernst Freud, one of the eminent psycho-analysts, is a 'psychologist' architect. He puts his clients under the microscope of his trained mind and educates them to appreciate modern architecture."
—Gossip Writer.

And the awful things they discover you wouldn't believe. Any disciple of Little Uncle Libido will tell you. Architecture is just a wild, tangled nightmare of sex.

Freud pere explains that he got his big idea of sex ruling every human action from a chance remark by Charcot, the hysteria specialist. Over and above the ordinary and pretty terrible Oedipus-complex governing everybody else, architects have a specially awful pathographic inhibition derived from a nursery libido—fixation, the urge to place one coloured brick on another, coloured brick. I hardly dare describe the significance of this to you, though I can do



BRITISH BLACKSHIRTS MARCHING IN LONDON.

An article in the Daily Mail newspaper (which sold over 1.6 million copies per day). The article is written by the owner of the Daily Mail, Viscount Rothermere, a supporter of both Mosley and Hitler.

Sources B – F:

A selection of reasons for joining the BUF from ordinary members.

Source B: **Nellie Driver (Nelson BUF organiser)**

“I joined [in 1935] because I believed Mosley had the answer to unemployment and poverty.”

(Taken from: *From the Shadows of Exile* (unpublished autobiography))

Source C: **G. P. Sutherst (BUF member, Bury/Middleton)**

“I always followed Mosley's lead on this antisemitism and this discrimination. He always said that he condemned the Jews, not for what they were, but for what they did.”

(Interviewed by Stuart Rawnsley, c. 1976-1978)

Source D: **Thomas Pickles (Manchester BUF member)**

“Of course you have got to realise that Hitler was making quite a success of things in Germany at that time and naturally you think that if you have got somebody in that area he could probably do the same.”

(Interviewed by Stuart Rawnsley, c. 1976-1978)

Source E: **Arthur Fawcett (Manchester BUF member)**

Reflected on hostility to established politics and the growth of antisemitism among members: “It wasn't a movement against the Jews at the start.”

Fawcett then argues that members became antisemitic later because they believed Jews were opposing the movement.

(Interviewed by Stuart Rawnsley, c. 1976-1978)

Source F: R. R. Bellamy

In his autobiography (1968), *We Marched With Mosley*, R. R. Bellamy writes about the reasons why he joined the “New Party”, which was soon renamed the British Union of Fascist. His reasons for joining were:

- dissatisfaction with existing political parties,
- belief in strong leadership,
- nationalism ("putting Britain first"),
- anti-communism,
- and the conviction that Mosley offered practical solutions to unemployment and economic decline.