

B. U. F.
Oswald Mosley and British Fascism

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CHAPTER IX

MOSLEY AND BRITISH FASCISM

RAPIDLY, during the whole period of the New Party, Oswald Mosley had been moving towards the acceptance of the Fascist interpretation of modern conditions. Nearly a decade had passed since he had abandoned the Conservative Party to their own futile efforts to think in terms of an era that had passed, and it was inconceivable that his realist reaction from Socialism should have the effect of driving him again into the Tory ranks. But his break with Socialism was complete, and his realization of his own *disillusionment* was bitter. He well expressed that bitterness in a speech in Trafalgar Square during September, 1931.

"The element of farce," he said, "in the political tragedy was provided, as usual, by the spokesmen of the late Labour Government, who claimed that the present crisis was that collapse of Capitalism which they had long prophesied with religious fervour.

"When the day arrived which they had awaited ever since Karl Marx put pen to paper, Labour had the unique advantage of being in office. When the great moment came they had the whole resources of the State at their command. The day dawned, but Labour resigned! What were they to think of a Salvation Army which took to its heels on the Day of Judgment?"

Mosley was already pursuing the economic theory of

MOSLEY AND BRITISH FASCISM

Fascism. The political methods of Fascism were soon forced upon him. A "Youth Movement" had been developed within the New Party which was an obvious branch of activity, particularly in view of the fact that that young party was largely recruited from among the younger generation. Party members expected to be organized for party work, and they appreciated also any organization which provided for their athletic recreation. One of the obvious necessities of any modern movement—whether political or cultural—is to get young people out of the streets and into the fields. With this object such entirely innocuous and non-political movements as the Boy Scouts had been formed and had been found to fill a very real need in the life of the youth of the country. The Conservatives, the Liberals and the Socialists had all busied themselves to cater for the needs of the younger members of their respective parties, and they had set an example which any new political organization could not avoid following—even had there been a desire to do so. Yet it was the Youth Movement of the New Party which had originally sent shudders through the ample frames of Mr. John Strachey and others of the Bloomsbury intellectuals who had at first flocked into the New Party—as something really *new*. As harder times came, the harder elements in the New Party Youth Movement showed their desire to act as a body in other than purely intellectual and recreational directions. A corps of stewards was formed to protect the meetings of New Party speakers, which, everywhere, were being subjected to the full blast of organized Socialist barracking and of organized Communist hooliganism.

"When the six resigned," writes the *Clydesider*,

Scanlon, "opposition from the machine, of course, was to be expected, but no professional psychologist could ever hope to explain the actions of the rank and file. In the interval between Sir Oswald's resignation from the Government and his resignation from the party itself he had made an extensive tour of the constituencies, explaining his policy to Labour audiences. Everywhere he went he was received with enthusiasm, but when he went to address meetings after his resignation, although he was preaching precisely the same doctrines, the audiences which had cheered his first campaign broke up the meetings in the second. . . .

"In Birmingham and in Glasgow, where his welcome on joining bordered on hysteria, police protection was required at his exit." (*Decline and Fall of the Labour Party*, pp. 217-8.)

The New Party corps of stewards soon found that they had plenty of work to do. Throughout the tense political campaign of the spring and autumn of 1931 Socialists and Communists made every effort to drive Mosley from the field by the sheer force of their organized violence. Particularly shameful was the effort made to break up the meeting at Dundee in the spring which Lady Cynthia Mosley had to hold instead of her husband, who was at that time lying ill with pneumonia. During the same period a similar attempt to break up one of Lady Cynthia's meetings by hooligan methods was made by the Communists in Hammersmith. When her husband took the field, the action of the "Reds" became even more enterprising. Of one meeting on Glasgow Green, the *Daily Record* reports :

"Sir Oswald Mosley . . . addressed a meeting of over

20,000 people on Glasgow Green, at which there was bitter and constant interruption ; (he) had many duels with hecklers and obstructionists ; was mobbed by a jeering crowd on his way to his car ; was struck by a stone and threatened with a life-preserver ; smiled through it all, and eventually drove away, waving his hat to the crowd, and still smiling." (21st September, 1931.)

At another Glasgow meeting, a month later, in reply to the taunt of the Communists that he was receiving police protection, Mosley left the hall, and, practically unattended, addressed a hostile crowd in the street.

"On a stool in Salamanca Street," writes the correspondent of the *Glasgow News*, "he got a very fair hearing. 'My, he's plucky, that yin,' observed a woman, at her window on the first storey, to her neighbour. 'Aye, he's no' feart,' was the agreement." (20th October, 1931.)

At Birmingham, in October, a meeting was held in the famous Rag Market.

"A large section of the crowd of 15,000," according to the correspondent of the *Birmingham Gazette*, "charged the platform, brandishing chairs and chair-legs, hurling bottles, and swept all before them out of the section of the market in which the meeting was held. . . . Very few of the bodyguard escaped unscathed. An ex-international Rugby player received a wound on the forehead from a chair hurled into the mêlée, and the North-East London Regional Secretary to the New Party was carried partly unconscious from under

the feet of the mob, where he had fallen after being struck in the face with a bottle. Dozens of people received minor injuries in the rush. . . ." (19th October, 1931.)

But gradually the Mosleyites were gaining in experience and organization, and they soon showed themselves to be formidable customers. By the end of the General Election of 1931 the Communists were beginning to whine that the stewards were the aggressors, and after one Birmingham meeting some Communists who had got themselves injured as the result of creating a disturbance at one of Mosley's meetings actually had the assurance to bring an action for assault against the New Party leader. Mosley, as usual, had himself taken the lead in restoring order at the meeting. One man complained that "Sir Oswald struck him and knocked him over." Another, who gave evidence that he had been "thrown in the crush towards Sir Oswald, who, again without warning, punched his eye and kicked his shins," had to admit in cross-examination that "he did not know that Sir Oswald could hardly move his right leg as the result of an aeroplane accident during the war." The summonses were dismissed.

When Mosley, by the autumn of 1932, had finally developed the political and economic aspects of his Fascist policy, and found still that it was impossible to secure the normal facilities for explaining this policy to the people at public meetings, it was natural that he should turn to the consideration of defensive measures which should assure him those elementary rights of free speech which are reputed to be the basis of the existing political system. Mussolini, in Milan and the industrial

cities of the Lombardy Plain, had originally been confronted with the same problem, and in the beginning he had had to wage a desperate struggle to survive the concentration of "Red" terrorism. The remnants of the old New Party corps of stewards, and numbers of the able-bodied recruits who were daily pouring into the ranks of the new Fascist organization, were therefore formed into a Fascist Defence Force. The primary function of this force was defensive, and in no sense aggressive. Its duties were to protect the right of free speech at meetings of the Fascist Party. In a reference to this force, following riotous scenes at a meeting in Stoke in October, 1932, Mosley made himself perfectly clear as to the objects for which the force had been formed. "The Fascists do not want to fight," he declared, "but if violence is organized against us, then we shall organize for violence in reply. We shall have free speech, and we intend to have it."¹

In the meantime the Fascists had been put into black shirts. Mosley arrived at the decision to allow a distinctive uniform, in spite of the advice of some of his closest adherents, who were obsessed with the idea that the Englishman does not like a uniform. Events have proved that the leader was correct in his own appraisal of his countrymen's psychology, for it is unquestionable that the wearing of a distinctive uniform, if it be disagreeable to the shy "bourgeois," makes a very definite appeal to working people. The black shirt has moreover this supreme advantage within the ranks of Fascism,

¹ "When we are confronted by Red terror, we are certainly organized to meet force by force, and will always do our utmost to smash it. The bully of the streets has gone too long unchallenged. We shall continue to exercise our right of free speech, and will do our utmost to defend it." (*Greater Britain*, p. 156.)

in that it does away with all those invidious class distinctions which receive emphasis from the wearing of different types of clothing by different sections of the community. In no respect was Mosley's instinct more correct than in the decision to adopt a significant uniform, which is now worn with pride by men and women of all ages in the streets of the great industrial cities of Britain. The Blackshirts have done more to bring the reality of Fascism in Britain home to the man in the street than all the concentrated propaganda which has been put out by Party Headquarters. In a remarkably short space of time the "Reds" began to realize that a new force had entered on the field. They were no longer able to regard certain areas of the industrial quarters of the big towns as their own preserve, and in streets where the speakers of the orthodox political parties had not been heard for a generation Fascists enforced a hearing for themselves. The I.L.P. proceeded to announce that they were going to put their followers into red shirts, but the uniformed warriors of the Moscow tinge have, so far, been conspicuous for their absence: The razor-lads and the bottle-boys prefer to remain as indistinguishable as possible among the crowd in which they always seek to hide. The rapid development of the Fascist Defence Force has had the effect of making the organized Communist terrorists rather chary of openly attacking Fascist meetings. In March of 1933, when the police thought it necessary to intervene to "protect" Communist hooligans at a Fascist meeting in Manchester, Mosley could write in the *Blackshirt* that "at less than 3 per cent of the British Union of Fascist meetings during the past year has any disorder occurred at all." (*Blackshirt*, 18th March, 1933.) Nevertheless a recrudes-

cence of Communist violence in the great cities may be expected at any moment, particularly as Fascism gains force, and the "Red" elements, inspired alike by "respectable" trade union leaders of the Bromley calibre and by other less reputable interests, renew their efforts to check the growth of a movement which they well fear will ultimately destroy them. Meantime the battle against "Red" anarchy and organized terrorism is being carried into the very strongholds of Communism. Communist centres, like Battersea and Durham, have some of the strongest Fascist sections established in their midst, and no small proportion of the recruiting to the Fascist Party has been from among former supporters of the Communist Party—who have become thoroughly disillusioned with the activities of that alien-infested organization.

A recent communication, published in the *Blackshirt*, from a Fascist in the Midlands, may be quoted as characteristic of the present activities of members of the Fascist Defence Force.

"We had heard with gathering anger of the disgraceful treatment of our principal speaker in the North-East, Capt. Collier, and had followed his plucky fight against overwhelming odds with the utmost admiration of his Fascist spirit. At last our patience was completely exhausted when at a single-handed meeting at Stockton-on-Tees some ten days ago the Reds spat in Capt. Collier's face and threatened to lynch him.

"It was decided to venture to Stockton-on-Tees with a large body of stewards, just to see if the Reds would repeat their insults when they had more than one undefended man to deal with. Picked contingents were

gathered from Manchester, Teesside and Tyneside, and paraded in Middlesbrough on Sunday last. They then marched in their well-known column of threes into Stockton, where they found some sort of meeting going on in the Market Square and a large, angry and hostile crowd of Communists, imported into the district for the occasion, assembled. Nothing daunted, however, our men began a rival meeting on the other side of the square. Amid an appalling din of howls and catcalls several of our speakers attempted to give the policy, but it was obvious that the Reds were determined to prevent any resemblance of free speech, and the atmosphere became more and more threatening from moment to moment. The crisis was reached when one of our members was attacked by a man thrusting his forefingers into his eyes. The man was knocked down immediately and the Blackshirt stewards moved forward like a machine against the Communist section of the crowd. Fighting desperately the Reds were swept back forty yards right across the Market Square, and the platform was left isolated in the centre, surrounded by its small Fascist guard. It was indeed 'a beautiful sight and made one proud to wear a black shirt,' as an eye-witness has said." (*Blackshirt*, 16th September, 1933.)

The fight against "Red" terrorism was long overdue, and it is a fight the benefits of which will be reaped not only by the Fascists. Representatives of other political parties, including, indeed, the Socialists, may well be grateful for the protracted struggle which the Fascists are waging for the restoration of decency in the streets.

The Blackshirts have carried on a long "trench-warfare," the full story of which may one day be told in all the heroism of its unrecorded incidents. It is the unknown Blackshirt—giving his time and his leisure,

his brain and his muscle, to the day-to-day struggle—who has in twelve short months succeeded in building up what is already a formidable and independent movement of the manhood of Britain. The Blackshirts are the heart and backbone of the Fascist movement, but when the vital significance of the "activist" side of the movement is borne in mind, it has to be remembered that Fascism in Britain is essentially an orderly, pacific march to power. Loyalty to the Throne is the first tenet of every Blackshirt, and while the Fascist intent is to revolutionize the existing system of government, there is no body of opinion within the movement which contemplates carrying out the necessary transformation through the use of armed force. The muddled hysteria which passes for thinking among social democrats associates Fascist action with the use of force against the State, but this has never been contemplated by British Fascism, and neither Mosley nor any of his responsible supporters have ever publicly stated that they regard the use of force—even if practicable—as a legitimate means of securing power. Mosley has never gone further than to express the intention of using force to meet force, as has already been done wherever Communist violence has been encountered. Should an occasion arise, as a result of the accentuation of the industrial crisis, where the Government of the day proved incapable of confronting a growing Communist menace, then only, in Fascist theory, would the use of force—to defeat insurgent anarchy—be justified. If a comparison be made with Fascist movements abroad, it will be found that Fascism emerged in Italy as *the only effective force* after the constitutional power of the Government had completely broken down. And in Germany,

the Nazis—after developing for years as the only body which was prepared to offer an active opposition to the growing strength of the Communist Party—were ultimately placed in power as the result of a General Election, after the country had become disillusioned with the weakness and ineptitude of successive “democratic” Governments.

“I could choose,” said Georges Sorel, “other examples to show that the most decisive factor in social politics is the cowardice of the Government.” Fascists, in the event, have no intention of allowing the British people to become the victims of “the cowardice of the Government,” and they have no democratic inhibitions about the use of violence—as they have shown in the protection of their own meetings. They would, if necessary, meet violence against the State by violence on behalf of the nation. But they do not contemplate that such a situation must inevitably arise. Their attitude is merely precautionary, and their “Defence Force” is, as its name implies, solely defensive. They have sufficient confidence in Fascist policy to recognize that that policy will ultimately win through as a result of its acceptance by a majority of the people. Time fights on the side of Fascism, and Fascists have only to wait their time. That time—if they continue to make their present progress and to maintain their present enthusiasm—will not be very long deferred.

The considered policy of the British Union of Fascists was stated by Oswald Mosley in a book, *Greater Britain*, which was published at the time of the inception of the Fascist Party during the autumn of 1932. More recently it has been newly elaborated in a series of four articles, published in the *Blackshirt*

during August, 1933, under the title of “Fascist Policy Re-stated.”¹

In his *Greater Britain* Mosley emphasizes throughout the modern Fascist conception of the Corporate State, and he seeks to stimulate that new nationalism through which alone the corporate spirit can be developed.

“Our main policy,” he writes, “quite frankly is a policy of ‘Britain First,’ but our very preoccupation with internal reconstruction is some guarantee that at least we shall never pursue the folly of an aggressive Imperialism. It will never be necessary to stimulate the steady temper of Britain in the task of rebuilding our own country by appeals to flamboyant national sentiment in foreign affairs. We shall mind our own business, but we will help in the organization of world-peace as part of that business.”

Mosley bases his approach to all problems of national reconstruction on the assumption that the existing world-crisis is a crisis of the capitalist system, and no mere cyclical “slump.” He also accepts the fact that the old “export” basis of British trade is gone for ever, and that if Britain is to maintain her existing population on a standard of living even equal to that formerly enjoyed, the whole basis of the economic life of the country must be transformed. In addition to the general world-problem of the crisis in Capitalism, Britain is confronted

¹ NOTE.—It is not our purpose, in the present work which is written primarily for Fascists and for those interested in Fascism, to summarize the contents of Mosley’s *Greater Britain*, which all who take a serious interest in the subject will have already read. In general, we shall consider those particular aspects of policy, in which the leader has gone beyond the particular limits which he laid down a year ago. A vital policy must be adapted to rapidly changing world-conditions, and this consideration definitely governs Fascist policy.

by a very vital special problem—that of transformation from a “free trade” mercantile economy to a new economy, the nature of which will require that the country must become increasingly self-supporting and increasingly self-dependent. The country is therefore faced with the necessity of a gigantic economic revolution, the implications of which must be as profound as the parallel but reverse process of a century ago.

“It is now the declared aim of every great nation,” writes Mosley, “to have a favourable balance of trade. *Every nation, in fact, seeks to sell more to others than it buys from them—an achievement which, it is clear, all nations cannot simultaneously attain.* So a dog-fight for foreign markets ensues in which the weaker nations go under, and their collapse in turn reacts upon the victors in the struggle by a further shrinkage of world-markets. A continuation of the present world-struggle for export markets is clearly the road to world-suicide, as well as a deadly threat to the traditional basis of British trade.

“These phenomena appear at first sight to support the Marxian theory. ‘In the decline of Capitalism all nations must strive increasingly to dump abroad their production which is surplus to the power of home consumption. A world-scramble for markets ensues, with competitive industrial rivalries which lead inevitably to collapse and to war.’ Marxians overlook the fact that certain natural tendencies, and even natural laws, can be and have been circumvented by the will and wit of man. The law of gravity, for example, has been flouted by the aeroplane; the Marxian law that, under Capitalism, all wages would be reduced to a subsistence level has been set aside by a variety of artificial means. In just the same way it is fair to suppose a well-governed nation can

avoid the disasters incidental to the world’s present industrial over-capacity.

“What has been done by accident and by a rough and crude method for a period, can be done permanently under scientific planning. But those tendencies will not be defeated by letting things alone; and it is here that Conservatism falls down. Some of the Marxian laws do actually operate if mankind is not organized to defeat them, and they are operating to-day in the inchoate society which they envisage. . . . If we rely on Conservatism to defeat Marxism, we shall be defeated by Marxism.” (*Greater Britain*, pp. 66–7.)

The economic solution—to which Britain is being irresistibly driven by world-tendencies—lies in the “insulation” of the home market, which Mosley had already envisaged as early as his resignation speech in the spring of 1931. But this process of scientific “insulation” is very different from the orthodox Conservative theory of tariffs, which inhibit the rights of the consumer without imposing any sort of control over the capitalist-producer.

“It is known and proved,” writes Mosley, “that modern industry, properly organized and working at full pressure, can both raise wages and reduce costs. But this cannot happen unless the manufacturer is protected from wage-cutting competitors at home as well as abroad. Hence the necessity for corporate organization, which will regulate wages and prices by permanent machinery. *Protection must protect organization, and not chaos.* Behind the protective barrier the home market must be stabilized and enlarged, and the consumer must be safeguarded. These results can only be achieved within the structure of the organized system which is the Corporate State.

"Protection without Corporate organization is no bulwark against unemployment. In countries long protected, such as Germany and the United States, we have witnessed the finest result of a Protective system followed by the inevitable collapse resulting from a lack of corporate organization. In defiance of all Marxian laws wages rose under Capitalism to heights dizzily above the subsistence level. By happy accident, America achieved for a time the fruits of planning. Protective duties afforded comparative immunity from the competition of foreign low-paid labour. At the same time, stringent immigration laws created a shortage of labour in relation to demand, and afforded labour a strong bargaining position on the market. That strong position, even more, perhaps, than the enlightenment of American employers, led to a steady rise in wages and consequently to a steadily increasing demand for goods in a home market rapidly expanding.

"The whole expanding system was supported by the policy of the Federal Reserve Board, and yet further extended by the hire-purchase system, which turned every trader into a banker. Even so, it is interesting to note that, even at the height of the boom, competent authorities considered that the market 'was insufficient to absorb the potential production of American industry.' It is a grave mistake to point to the high wage and expansionist system of America as responsible for the evils which it served for a time to stave off. The crash came because that great system was unsupported by national organization and regulation of a corporate character.

"The 'philosophy of high wages' succumbed to the first serious test.

"It failed chiefly because it was never a philosophy, nor yet a conscious policy. Under the pressure of credit restriction designed to check Wall Street speculation, one manufacturer after another began to curtail his

wages, and competitors were compelled to follow suit. There was no industrial planning: the system was unsupported by corporate organization. Its success had been adventitious; it had no resources to withstand a strain. Added to this the credit which should have been used for industrial development and the financing of reasonable consumption was devoted to the uses of Wall Street, where shares were bid up out of all relation to any conceivable real value. The Federal Reserve Board, within the limits of their system, were able only to check credit expansion in a *quantitative rather than a qualitative manner*. . . .

"In an effort to check the frenzy of a few irresponsible individuals, the whole great structure of American industry was shaken to foundations which did not rest on the reality of corporate organization. Had private enterprise been acting in accordance with a reasoned national policy, the trouble might well have been avoided. . . . Never was more notable the absence of a coherent national plan designed to check forces inimical to the stability of the State, and to encourage the genuine forces of production and exchange in which national welfare must rest. America made a god of unregulated anarchy in private enterprise. This, she falsely believed, was the only alternative to Socialism. Both in her success and in her failure, in her dizzy prosperity and in her cataclysmic depression, there is an instructive lesson. Throughout the boom she achieved, on a basis purely temporary, what organized planning and corporate institutions can set on a permanent footing. The very energy of American libertarianism is the best argument for Fascist institutions."

(*Greater Britain*, pp. 92-5.)

Mosley goes on to quote the words of Sir Arthur Salter as "the finest description yet produced in general terms of the structure of the Fascist State."

"The task is not to find a middle way, but a new way, to fashion a system in which competition and individual enterprise on the one hand, and regulation and general planning on the other, will be so adjusted that the abuses of each will be avoided and the benefits of each retained. We need to construct such a framework of law, custom and institutions and planned guidance and direction that the thrust of individual effort and ambition can only operate to the general advantage. We may find a simile for our task in the arch of a great bridge, so designed that the stresses and strains of the separate blocks which constitute it—each pushing and thrusting against the other—support the whole structure by the interaction of their reciprocal pressure."

The economic policy of British Fascism is, in essence a policy of controlling and subordinating capital to the purposes of the nation. The old individualist-capitalist system, based on the theory of the "Freedom of the Market," has completely broken down, and the capitalist class, through its political organ—the Conservative Party—has for long been maintaining that the State should intervene to modify that "Freedom of the Market" in the interests of private capitalism. But if the nation, through the mechanism of the State, intervenes in the interest of one small section of the community to interfere with the rights and benefits which the entire community have considered themselves as enjoying under the present system, then the very upholders of the existing system have admitted that the State is entitled to intervene over the whole field of national economics.

The extent to which Fascist policy envisages a funda-

mental modification in the whole system of individualistic capitalism has been underlined in the recent series, "Fascist Policy Re-stated."

"The trade unions," Mosley writes, "are supposed to maintain wage standards and to unify labour conditions; in practice . . . the unions have proved quite unable to maintain wages, let alone raise them. . . ."

"As a result, at the very moment when a larger market is essential to industry, wages and salaries are crashing down, purchasing power is being reduced, and the market is ever diminishing."

"Fascism meets this problem by the machinery of the Corporate State. It is useless to issue vague appeals to employers to maintain wages. This is not a matter for sentiment, but for organization. The Corporate State of Fascism sets up corporations for the appropriate areas of industry which will be governed by representatives of employers, workers and consumers, operating under a ministry of corporations, presided over by a Fascist minister."

"These corporations will be charged, not only with the task of preventing class war by forbidding either lock-outs or strikes, but the corporations will be charged with the constructive task of raising wages and salaries over the whole area of industry as science, rationalization, etc., increase the power to produce."

"Related to the corporations will be the instruments of finance and credit, which will supply fresh credit, not for the purpose of speculation, but for financing increased production and consumption. Thus for the first time demand will be adjusted to supply. When more goods can be produced wages and salaries will be raised to provide a purchasing power for the consumer. This process will not result in inflation or price rise, because the higher purchasing power will be balanced by a higher production. Instead of the new credit going

to speculators who force up prices, the new credit will go to industry for the legitimate purposes of production and consumption.

"It is argued by our opponents that the higher wages paid in industry will result in higher costs, and thus will jeopardize our export trade. This argument is fallacious, because the cost of production in modern mass-producing industry is determined, not by the rate of wage, but by the rate of production. The rate of production will be increased to serve a larger home market, and in spite of the rise in wages, prices can actually be reduced if the rate of production is sufficient. . . .

"In fact, by reason of the greater rate of production for a larger home market, industry will be able to lower its cost in the export trade."

Mosley then turns to the problem of the export market, which—although he sees that it can no longer continue to constitute *the basis* of British economy—he is by no means prepared to ignore.

"In addition to this advantage to our export trade," he continues, "the corporate system will provide another advantage. The effect of organization in the corporations will be to unify and to consolidate industry, and to enable the British export trade to speak for the first time with a united voice. Then the power of government can be organized behind our export industries to secure their entry into foreign markets: we can use, for the first time, *our power as a buyer to support our position as a seller.*"

After examining the existing system, whereby the chaotic capitalist struggle for markets and the struggle of the private financial houses for foreign loans and their

accompanying "influence" leads to international war, Mosley maintains that "our Fascist national organization detaches Great Britain and the Empire from all the follies and dangers of this struggle."

"The corporate system unifies and consolidates both our buying and selling arrangements abroad. In place of a thousand private interests, struggling for markets and for raw materials, our industries are organized to speak with one voice under the supervision of government.

"Our contacts with the rest of the world are no longer chaotic, but are organized. By withdrawing from the struggle for trade outside our own Empire we automatically diminish the prospects of war arising from that struggle.

"In cases where we deal with foreign governments, such as other Fascist governments which are similarly organized, the prospects of clash are enormously diminished. Two Fascist nations dealing with each other will deal through organized systems under Fascist government. In place of the haphazard struggle of private interests, we can have peaceful discussion and bargaining between powerful organizations.

"*The international school argues, in effect, that organization leads to war: we answer that it is not organization, but chaos, that leads to war.*

"To turn for a moment to an illustration in the domestic field, the prospects of industrial peace are always increased when each side is organized. When we have the corporate organization between all the great countries under Fascist government, it will be possible, for the first time, for nations to discuss rationally and peacefully the allocation of raw materials and markets."

Mosley proceeds then to consider the psychological aspects of Fascist universalism.

"The leaders of those Fascist countries," he continues, "will be men who have struggled through the collapse of their political systems to the achievement of Fascist government. They will all, further, be men who have had the experience of the Great War of 1914. Can anyone seriously believe that these men will plunge the world into war rather than settle international disputes by the peaceful means which the organization of their Corporate States will permit them to employ? Further, they will be aware that world-war will result in world-Communism, which they are sworn to destroy.

"They will have every interest to keep the peace, and through the corporate system, which substitutes organization for chaos, they will have the means to secure peace.

"Those who challenge the national organization of our economic system are in fact arguing that chaos is safer than organization. . . . Let us first set our own house in order, and organize the system of our own nation and Empire. That achievement will lead to other nations following our example, and we can then, for the first time, rationalize the economic system of the world under the guiding hand and inspiring spirit of universal Fascism."

It is to greater economic unity within the Empire that Mosley naturally turns for the solution of the major economic problems, not only of Britain, but also of the Dominions. Independent Fascist movements are already growing up in all the Dominions, and the different bodies have recently been united with the British Union of Fascists within the New Empire Union. The oldest and strongest of these movements is the New Guard in Australia, which under the leadership of Colonel Eric Campbell, D.S.O., has already played an

important role in contemporary Australian politics. Other members of the New Empire Union are the New Guard of New Zealand, the New Guard of South Africa and the Ulster Fascists.* A Fascist movement has recently developed in different parts of Canada, and the Blueshirts in the Irish Free State—although not affiliated to the Union—have shown themselves to be deeply influenced by current Fascist thought. The success of Fascism in Britain could hardly fail to give a great impetus to these Dominion movements. While a British Fascist Government could deal on fair and friendly terms with "democratic" governments in the Dominions, and would certainly refrain from all attempts to influence independent opinion in the Dominions, there can be no doubt that collaboration would be greatly facilitated by the arrival in power of Fascist Parties in the Dominion countries.

Mosley's conceptions with regard to Dominion policy are fundamentally revolutionary in the economic sense, but, at the same time, they do not contemplate in any degree interference with the political status and rights within the Empire of the different Dominion countries, who remain equal and independent partners within the Empire.

"The Liberal and Socialist Parties," writes Mosley,

* "Two or three little societies wearing the label 'Fascist' had previously existed. They did not prosper, because their leaders had not the slightest idea of what Fascism really meant. They erroneously believed it to be a White Guard of reaction. All these societies obtained some membership at the time of the General Strike, but subsequently dwindled owing to the lack of policy and leadership. Three out of four of the male members of the Executive of the principal of these organisations resigned and joined the British Union of Fascists on its formation, and were soon followed by the whole active and effective Fascist elements in the country."

"have always been frankly against an organized Empire ; they embrace the international creed in preference to the idea of developing our own Empire. The Conservatives have always talked a lot about the Empire ; but in reality they have always been in the grip of high finance, which has prevented any effective programme for the Empire being carried through. It is easy to see why it is impossible for Conservatives, whether Baldwin or Beaverbrook, to build a self-contained Empire. To build such an Empire means the exclusion from the Empire of foreign goods which compete with British and Empire products. If those goods are excluded, our international financiers and foreign investors run the risk of losing the interest on the loans they have made to foreign countries. If foreign countries cannot send their goods to this country to pay the interest on the loans they have received, they may default on that interest, and those who have lent their money abroad will lose their money.

"For instance, if Argentine beef is excluded from Great Britain in favour of British beef and Empire beef, it may be impossible for the Argentine to pay interest on the large loans which international financiers have induced a small section of the public to supply to the Argentine. Consequently Conservatives of all brands who are subservient to the financial interests which support the old parties do not propose the exclusion of Argentine beef under the old-fashioned Conservative protection. Consequently the British farmer is still damaged by the competition of foreign products, and the Empire farmer, despite his small preference, is not making much headway in the British market.

"Fascism stands for the definite exclusion of foreign products and the division of Empire markets between the British producer and the Empire producer. We also stand quite definitely for the British producer

being able to sell his maximum production at an economic price without the undercutting even of Dominion competition. Plenty of opportunity will still exist for Dominion products if the foreigner is excluded, even when we have produced all the food-stuffs we can in this country, at a price which yields a fair return to our farmers. . . .

"The Empire to-day imports some £1,420,000,000 worth of goods per annum. £899,000,000 of these come from foreign countries. If those foreign goods are excluded, we can more than make up the loss of our export trade to the rest of the world, because these exports only amount to £240,000,000 per annum. 31

"Here and now it is possible to save the British Empire from the chaos of the backward nations of the world, by building an Empire which is self-contained and holds within its borders the highest civilization the world has ever known."

In his Empire policy Mosley has advanced considerably beyond the position which he adopted a year ago in *Greater Britain*—a position which was in itself a development of the analysis of the economic future which he made at the time when he started to advocate a policy of "scientific insulation." To such a conclusion the logic of the continuing crisis, and particularly the utter failure of the World Economic Conference to achieve any degree of international co-operation, has inevitably driven him.

"I believe," said Mussolini, "that for the benefit of the moral and political prestige of nations it would be advisable to place an embargo on conferences." President Roosevelt has scarcely troubled to veil his contempt for the late Conference, and the Government of Soviet Russia has adopted a very cynical attitude

towards all the conferences of the last decade. Great areas of the world's surface, controlled by competent and determined forces, are becoming—or have already become—the scenes of grave new experiments in economic organization, and the peoples of the British Empire—whether they may desire to take the initiative or not—are now finding themselves compelled to organize for corporate life within the boundaries which history has assigned to them.

Mr. Keynes, in a series of articles in *The New Statesman and Nation*, entitled "National Self-sufficiency," has stated the case with all the authority to which his great reputation entitles him.

"It is a long business," he admits, "to shuffle out of the mental habits of the pre-war nineteenth century world, but to-day, at least one-third of the way through the twentieth century, we are most of us escaping from the nineteenth."

Mr. Keynes proceeds to deny that "a close dependence of our economic life on the fluctuating economic policies of foreign countries is a safeguard and assurance of international peace. It is easier, in the light of experience and foresight, to argue quite the contrary. . . . I sympathize, therefore, with those who would minimize rather than with those who would maximize economic entanglement between nations.

"For these strong reasons, therefore, I am inclined to the belief that after the transition is accomplished a greater measure of national self-sufficiency and economic isolation between countries than existed prior to 1914 may tend to serve the cause of peace rather than otherwise."

The Conservatives, however, still adhere to the internationalist theory with which their share of Whig traditions and their numerous Liberal recruits have imbued them.

"We, ourselves," said Mr. Neville Chamberlain recently in the House of Commons, "still remain of the opinion which we have held all along, and that is that the chief troubles from which the world is suffering to-day are international in their origin, and that they can only be solved by international action and agreement."

"Middle-class cowardice," Georges Sorel wrote twenty-five years ago, "very much resembles the cowardice of the English Liberal Party, which constantly proclaims its absolute confidence in arbitration between nations: arbitration nearly always gives disastrous results for England. . . . Sumner Maine observed a long while ago that it was England's fate to have advocates who aroused very little sympathy. Many Englishmen believe that by humiliating their country they will rouse more sympathy towards themselves; but this supposition is not borne out by the facts." (*Reflections on Violence*, p. 72.)

While the gigantic process of national reconstruction is in process, Fascism proposes to relieve the immediate crisis of unemployment by the programme of productive public works which has already been so well justified in Italy. To this purpose the financial resources and existing organization of the country will be directed. Although Fascist policy does not propose that nationalization of the banks which is a prominent part of the declared programme of the Socialist Party, banking

resources will be diverted to the service of the national interest, on somewhat the same lines which Mussolini has so successfully secured in Italy. Fascism does not propose bureaucratic meddling with existing institutions where the technical management is capable of efficiently exercising its functions, but all institutions—whether capitalistic or not in character—will be expected to collaborate whole-heartedly in the plans for national reconstruction, and no obstructive opposition will be tolerated. It is not intended to elaborate here the details of the national policy set out in *Greater Britain*, but a summary of the methods proposed to deal with the slum-clearance problem, recently described in “Fascist Policy Re-stated,” may be regarded as characteristic of the practical intentions of Fascism in power.

“Fascism,” it is stated, “would make the slum-clearance problem a national task in the following manner: We would formulate our programme for clearing the slums and rebuilding over a period of, say, three years. For this period, we would give guaranteed employment in the building trade at good rates of wages, which would absorb the labour of the 295,000 now unemployed in that trade. We would divide the slums of each of the great cities into sections to be gutted and rebuilt over the specified period. Outside the city we would erect temporary bungalows to house the inhabitants of Section 1, while the slum was being pulled down and rebuilt. We would also provide a State transport service to carry them to and from their work.

“They would thus live, during the rebuilding of their houses, with the people among whom they were accustomed to live, and the problem of carrying them

to their work during the period would be solved by direct State action. When No. 1 section was completed the inhabitants would vacate their bungalows and go back to their new houses.

“The inhabitants of No. 2 section would then vacate their houses and would go to the bungalows and would use the new transport system. When their houses were completed No. 3 section would take over the bungalows and use the transport system, until their houses were complete; and so on, until the gutting and rebuilding of the slums had been completed.

“To do this would amount to a national mobilization of the building trade, and the problem would be treated in much the same way as the problem of providing shells in the war. We know from actual experience that these methods enormously reduce the cost of production. We shall be producing for a demand which is known and can be calculated precisely in advance. A costing system can therefore be developed which will reduce the costs of production to the utmost limit. Once the problem is taken as a national problem, it can be organized on the grand scale and every principle of modern organization and of mass production can be employed.

“By these means we could carry through the destruction and rebuilding of the slums at a far lower cost and at far greater speed than the present political system conceives to be possible. The cost of production would further be lowered by the application of the Fascist principle that no landlord who has not properly maintained his property as a trustee to the State will be permitted to retain that property.

“In the clearance of slum property under Fascism, therefore, no question of compensation will arise. As the result of treating the matter as a national problem, and in all these ways reducing the cost of production,

the cost of clearing and rebuilding our slums can be reduced to a very low point. In fact, it is almost certain that under such a system the new houses could be re-let to the tenants at an economic rent which was no higher than the rent they had previously paid. If there was any difference between the new economic rent and the rent which they had previously paid, it should fall upon the State as a national contribution to national health. Few things are more foolish under the present system than the method of pouring out millions to cure disease rather than of spending money to prevent disease by such measures as slum clearance.

"The State must be prepared to organize and to finance the maintenance of national health. Foremost among these measures to rebuild the physique of the nation will be the rebuilding of the slums."

To implement a national policy of industrial reconstruction, Fascism maintains that the whole system of government requires to be entirely reconditioned. In evidence submitted to the Select Committee on Procedure on Public Business, during the summer of 1931, Mosley outlined his views on the immediate reforms necessary in the mechanism of government.

"It is only necessary here to observe," he said, "that at most two or three main measures can be passed through Parliament in the course of a session under the present procedure, and that consequently such procedure must be utterly inadequate to the necessities of an emergency situation. No other proposals have yet been advanced by which that situation can be materially altered. In fact, the view is often expressed that the present delay and check upon

legislation and the action of the Government is in itself desirable. . . .

"We start from the premise that action is desirable; our opponents start from the premise that action is undesirable. There can be no reconciliation between those two opinions. All who believe that rapid and drastic action by Government is necessary must first face the necessity for a fundamental revision of Parliament, whatever their opinions about the nature of the action to be taken.

"Only those can reject the principle of profound changes in the Parliamentary structure who believe that no necessity exists for such action in the present situation. The onus rests upon those who reject those proposals of showing either that alternative and preferable plans for securing rapid action by Government can be adduced, or that no necessity for such action exists."

Mosley then proceeded to make the following definite proposals:

1. *General Powers Bill.*

The first act of a government of action should be the presentation of a General Powers Bill to Parliament. That Bill would confer on the Government of the day wide powers of action by order in relation to the economic problem. Orders under the Act would be laid on the table of the House for a period of ten Parliamentary days. If unchallenged during that period by a substantial body of members, they would have the force of law. If challenged, any orders would be discussed in a brief debate, and a "yes" or "no" decision would be given by Parliament. The House would have the power to accept or to reject an order, but not to amend it.

2. *Government.*

The power of government by order would be vested in an Emergency Cabinet of not more than five ministers, without portfolio, who would be charged with the unemployment and general economic problem. The normal Cabinet would be retained for less frequent meetings in order to ensure proper co-ordination and consultations between the departments of Government. . . .

3. *Budget and Supply.*

The main powers of legislation required by modern Government would be vested in it under the foregoing proposals of a General Powers Bill. The problem of Budget and supply still remain. It is recognized that the power to refuse supply and to reject taxation is one of the oldest of Parliamentary rights, and constitutes a considerable power of Parliament over the Executive. These rights would be retained by the allocation of supply days as at present, and by the preservation of Parliament's rights to discuss and to vote on the details of a Budget.

The power to abuse the latter right would, however, be removed, and every Budget would be introduced under a strict guillotine procedure.

The general tenor of these proposals subsequently proved to have influenced certain elements in the Socialist Party, and borrowings from them have recently been advocated as part of the official programme of the Socialist Party, but the controversy on "dictatorship" within that party, and the resultant oscillations of Sir Stafford Cripps, make it difficult to comprehend to what extent the Labour Parliamen-

tarians are prepared to venture away from that democratic procedure which suits so well the temper and inclinations of their component units.

"The procedure which the Socialist League has copied from the New Party policy," comments the *Blackshirt* (14th October, 1933), "is that of an Emergency Powers Act under which a Government can proceed by Orders, any one of which can be challenged for discussion and decision by a Parliamentary Opposition. The original procedure suggested has been watered down with various obstructive devices at the hands of Lawyer Cripps, but it would, of course, still speed up present Parliamentary procedure. . . .

"At present the big bosses of the T.U.C. reject this effort to imitate the first pale shadow of Fascist policy which attempted to make more workable the procedure of a decadent Parliament. Even if it is accepted next year, the effort is entirely destroyed by the provisions which the Conference have adopted this year. . . . These provisions insist on discussion of every big item of Labour Party policy within the Party caucus. On the one hand Sir Stafford Cripps proposes to curtail discussion in Parliament; on the other hand the Conference has decided to increase discussion in the caucus.

"If both proposals are adopted, the net effect of Labour Party policy will be to transfer discussion and power from Parliament to the party caucus. Instead of the nation's business being obstructed by men whom the nation has elected, as at present, the nation's business, under Labour, will be obstructed by men selected by a vicious Party caucus. Such a policy will complete the ruin of democratic government.

"Sir Stafford Cripps has already stated that his course would lead 'to an immediate conflict not only

with the Crown . . .’ Cripps further admits that the application of his policy ‘will lead almost inevitably to revolution and violence, with what results it is impossible to foretell.’”

“We can inform the little lawyer,” replies the writer in the *Blackshirt*, “that the results are not at all ‘impossible to foretell.’ They are writ large in the recent history of Europe for all to read. These posturing Kerenskis of Socialism precipitate a revolution by a policy drafted in their endless mothers’ meetings at the hands of slick little lawyers. They precipitate that situation, but the Communists take advantage of it ; that is the historic and inevitable function of social democracy.

“Socialists create revolution, but do not create revolutionary instruments. No organization of disciplined manhood is behind them. They have nothing to call upon in the hour of crisis but the frightened yatter of a startled sewing party. For they abhor discipline, leadership, responsibility and every executive instrument of life by which alone crisis can be met and results can be achieved.”

Fascists now intend that a constitutionally elected Fascist majority in the House of Commons would place complete power in the hands of an executive Government selected from among members of the Fascist Party. Following on, or parallel with, the implementing of the Fascist industrial policy, measures would be introduced to adjust the whole system of national representation to the conditions of a modern Fascist State. A similar process has been carried through in Italy without difficulty and without embarrassment, and in Italy it is generally recognized to have proved

an unmitigated success. “The political apparatus,” says Paul Einzig, of the Italian Corporative State, “has come to work so smoothly that it ceases to present any vital problems. The leaders can afford to forget about it and to devote themselves entirely to their social and economic task.”

In Britain the House of Lords would be replaced by a National Corporation which would function as the effectual Parliament of industry.

“Thus,” writes Mosley, “we should abolish one form of legislative obstruction, and replace it with a pool of the country’s industrial and commercial experience.”

So far as direct representation of the people in the House of Commons is concerned, an occupational would be substituted for a regional franchise. While this measure would tend to eliminate the professional political class—so widely recruited from the legal profession—it would ensure that the worker would be represented by men who really understood the problems of the particular section of the community—whether bricklayers or accountants, doctors or fishermen—who had sent them to Parliament. “By such a system as we advocate,” writes Mosley, “the technician, who is the architect of our industrial future, is freed for his task. He is given the mandate for that task by the informed franchise of his colleagues in his own industry. A vote so cast will be the result of experience and information.”

“The function of M.P.s,” comments the *Blackshirt* (14th October, 1933), “would not be to remain at Westminster gossiping and intriguing in the lobbies

and obstructing in the Chamber, as they do at present and would continue to do under the Cripps proposals. The function of M.P.s would be to act as leaders in their own localities in carrying through the executive work of Fascist government. When Parliament was called together at intervals to review the work of Fascist government, they could then advance constructive criticism based on practical experience, which would take the place of the uninformed and partisan opposition of the present party system.

"The Government would have complete power of action subject to periodic review by an informed and instructed Parliamentary opinion. . . . That technical assembly, by its very nature, would for ever abolish party politics and would give stability to a new and revolutionary conception of government. Continuity of government and system would be assured by the fact that a government would no longer be attacked on party grounds, but only on grounds of inefficiency or gross abuse. With the technical assistance available in such a Parliament, Fascist government could complete the transformation of our national life. *Revolution will be stabilized, and when we stabilize revolution we create a new civilization.*"

The object of the Fascist state-organization is, of course, to place all power in the hands of the producer, whose interests have been so consistently flouted and ignored under the "democratic" dispensation. "The producer, whether by hand or brain or capital, will," says Mosley, "be the basis of the nation. The forces which assist him in his work of rebuilding the nation will be encouraged; the forces which thwart and destroy productive enterprise will be met with the force of national authority." The immense advantages

which will accrue to farmers, agricultural labourers, merchant marine officers, fishermen, building operatives and other categories of those who do the national work, through direct representation of their interests, instead of through mere scattered representation of their individual members by the puppets of the democratic parties, can easily be envisaged. Parliament will become the living organ which will respond to the movements of all the functional parts of the nation.

The conception that Fascist government constitutes a modern form of personal dictatorship has been widely propagated, and requires examination. Mosley has taken up this challenge and compared the rival merits of Fascist and "democratic" theory in a recent article on "Leadership and Dictatorship" in the *Blackshirt*.

"In fact," he writes, "in modern conditions the men who are denounced as dictators are not dictators, but leaders. Hitler polled more than seventeen million votes at an election. Is it suggested that all these people voted for him against their will? It is admitted, even by his opponents, that at an election to-day he would poll an overwhelming majority of the German people. In fact, he is not a dictator, but a leader of enthusiastic and determined masses of men and women bound together by a voluntary discipline to secure the regeneration of their country.

"Mussolini was long represented as a man governing against the will of the Italian people, with the aid of a few armed bands who had seized power by a mixture of force and cunning. Yet in his recent tour of Italy during the tenth anniversary celebrations of Fascist

rule, he was given a popular reception probably exceeding in enthusiasm any reception given to an individual in the history of the world."

"... All this, of course, is anathema to the old men and the old parties. They fear responsibility and they shrink from it. They shelter behind anonymous committees and the indecision of talkative Parliaments. They hate leadership because they are incapable of exercising it, and they fear it because they know it will sweep them and their system away. Every system in its degeneration finally produces its own caricature.

"Socialism has reached its final reduction to absurdity in the resolutions on this subject which the National Executive of the Labour Party will submit to their forthcoming Party Conference.

"These resolutions are designed to procure but one thing: that no man nor men within the ranks of Labour shall ever shoulder responsibility or come to a decision. The Prime Minister must refer everything to the Cabinet, the Cabinet must refer everything to the Parliamentary Party, the Parliamentary Party must refer everything to the Trade Union Congress and the Labour Party Conference, and so on *ad infinitum* in the happy paths of bletcher and indecision." (*Blackshirt*, 23rd September, 1933.)

"The conception of dictatorship," said Mosley, writing in the Italian review *Ottobre* on "Modern Dictatorship and British History," "as a popular but disciplined movement, which is the only possibility of dictatorship in the modern world, is rapidly gaining ground. To represent a Fascist leader as a tyrant of the ancient world, governing in defiance of the whole population, was a conception so childish that it could not long endure. It is particularly curious that this superstition should have had any roots

in Great Britain, for we can claim that the first emergence of dictatorship in modern form was in Great Britain.

"... In fact, the forms of modern dictatorship are a familiar and eternally recurrent phenomenon of British history, which invariably coincide with our great periods of dynamic achievement. The forms of dictatorship have recurred beneath many diverse characteristics. They have varied from the bright, gay virility of that highly popular movement, the Tudor dictatorship, to the cold, religious repressions of the Puritans. They emerge again in the inscrutable, romantic and 'so un-English' personality of the yet so English Chatham, who founded the British Empire by overawing a nominal and corrupt Parliament with the power of his popular support. . . .

"The forms of dictatorship in Great Britain have varied vastly in the character which they have assumed and in the personalities which they have evoked. . . .

"Fascism has introduced a new phenomenon into history, related like all great events to the past, but independent of its forms, and reaching forward in its revolution to a civilization fundamentally new. Fascism is not only natural to Great Britain, but it is in tune with every great note of British history."

Fascism, in Italy, in Germany and in Britain was conceived in crisis to meet the emergent realities of the immediate situation. In little more than a decade it has been developed into a great revolutionary movement which challenges all the old conceptions. Temporary fluctuations within the capitalist world cannot resist its impetus, nor deflect its course. The present passing boom (1933), largely stimulated by protection and inflation in Britain, and by inflation in America, is significant only of the straits to which the capitalist

world is reduced, and emphasizes only more the need for Fascist forms of control within the great capitalist countries.

“A rise in prices,” wrote Mosley during the recent World Economic Conference, “without a rise in wages and salaries will inflict great hardship on everyone who works for a living, and will cause great injury to industry. Yet every party in the State to-day advocates a rise in prices without suggesting any system of government for raising wages and salaries. Not only the politicians of this country, but also the politicians of nearly every country represented at the World Economic Conference, whether Conservative, Liberal or Socialist, have at least agreed on this one point—that prices should be raised. Indeed, Mr. MacDonald said at the outset that they could not even ‘touch upon hours of labour and rates of wages.’”

During the Conference, the Italian Fascist Government, through its representative, Professor Alberto Beneduce, opposed Mr. Neville Chamberlain’s proposal that the banks should be prevailed upon to raise commodity prices by advancing cheap money. Professor Beneduce’s argument was that sales prices were influenced by consumers’ incomes. His attitude was a realist sequel to the effort made by the Italian Government during the previous year to secure international agreement on a forty-hour week. Dr. Vocke, the representative of the German National Socialist Government, also objected that an artificial raising of prices would mean new debts and new insolvencies. At the same time a former member of

the British Socialist Government, Mr. Lees Smith, was stating that Labour “would make it its policy to raise prices nearer the level of 1929,” in which view he was supported by no less authorities than Mr. Ernest Bevin and Sir Stafford Cripps.

“Let us,” continued Mosley, “examine this policy, which Fascism challenges root and branch. Prices are to rise without any rise in wages or salaries. *This means that existing wages and salaries will buy less, because prices are higher.* As a result the purchasing power of the people will be lower, and the market for which industry produces will be less.

“Consequently fewer goods will be produced, and less labour will be employed to make the goods.”

“In this country,” Mosley wrote on a further occasion, “prices are now rising while even present money wages are being further reduced in many industries. On the other hand, in America wages are rising as well as prices, but wages have only risen about one-quarter of the extent of the rise in prices. Clearly, therefore, the real purchasing power of the people, even in America, is at present being reduced.

“The unreality and danger of the present boom is further proved by figures published by the Government of America, which show that production in that country has increased by 30 per cent (thus reducing unemployment), while wages have only risen by 7 per cent. Industry, in fact, is producing speculatively for a market which cannot exist until wages and salaries have been raised.

“Unless wages and general purchasing power increase, the inevitable result will be a new glut and a new collapse.”

“These facts are recognized to some extent by

President Roosevelt, who is trying desperately through his National Recovery Bill to raise wages and to shorten hours. Already there are signs that he will fail through the obstruction of the great interests, because he lacks the support of a Fascist movement to carry through the economic revolution which is necessary. . . . For some little time therefore we may expect a speculative boom which will temporarily reduce unemployment by the simple process of reducing real wages." (*Blackshirt*, 15th July, 1933.)

Within a year of its inception the British Union of Fascists has constituted itself into a national force whose growing power is recognized on all sides—not least by its opponents. The fact that the T.U.C. and the Labour Party have seen fit, during the present autumn, to concentrate the full force of their organizations and propaganda against Oswald Mosley and his Fascists is, perhaps, the best evidence of the misgivings which are disturbing the peace of the democratic parties.

Mosley's personal success is only indicative of the latent strength of Fascist opinion in Britain, and it was his special function to give that opinion the proper channel for its expression. An individual—however gifted—cannot create a national movement, unless the material and the feeling is there which awaits only the necessary stimulus. But where all credit is due to Oswald Mosley himself is in the judgment and the initiative, the courage and the determination, which inspired him to embark, a year ago, upon what appeared to be a desperate—and to many a hopeless—venture, against the heartfelt advice of his closest friends, and in spite of the ridicule and incredulity

of the political world. It is ridicule that kills, and it is by ridicule that the upper class in England endeavours always to impose a class discipline upon its members. That self-consciousness which is so characteristic of the nerveless apathy of a class which has lost all confidence in its own ability to confront the changing conditions of modern life is generally effective in inhibiting the Englishman from all initiative and from all originality of thought. The dread of ridicule may yet bring England down, and a sense of humour may grin the Empire into dissolution. A sense of humour—so much valued in this comfortable and easy-going land—is after all the expression of "a sense of proportion," and a "sense of proportion" can sometimes imply merely an abysmal lack of any standards and of any values. The purpose of British Fascism is to recall to British men and women those fundamental standards upon which the British people have built their national life during two thousand years of history, and to proclaim those human values which, for men and women, are eternal.

In a recent address on "The Philosophy of Fascism" Oswald Mosley has thought out the ultimate implications of the Fascist faith.

"I believe," he said, "that a Fascist philosophy can be expressed in clear terms, and while making an entirely novel contribution to the thought of this age, it can yet be shown to derive both its origin and its historic support from the established thought of the past.

"I want to put it to you, in the first instance, that most philosophies of action are derived from a synthesis of cultural conflicts in a previous period.

Where, in an age of culture, of thought, of abstract speculation, you find two great cultures in sharp antithesis, you usually find, in the following age of action, some synthesis in practice between those two sharp antitheses which leads to a practical creed of action. . . .

"You will think that my suggestion of the marriage of seemingly antithetical cultures leading in the following age to the production of a philosophic child of the period, which is expressed in action, has some derivative from Spenglerian thought. And it is quite true that to some extent it has. But I think I can show you how in actual practice that thesis works out in the Fascist case. I would suggest to you that in the last century the major intellectual struggle arose from the tremendous impact of Nietzschean thought on the Christian civilization of two thousand years. That impact was only very slowly realized. Its full implications are only to-day working themselves out. But turn where you will in modern thought, you find the results of that colossal struggle for mastery of the mind and of the spirit of man. You had a religion which, so far as the West was concerned, had broadly dominated human thought for many centuries. And suddenly, for the first time, that religion and that thought was effectively challenged, and its foundations, for the moment, at any rate, were shaken. It was denounced with furious energy and with extraordinary genius—fundamentally denounced.

"I am not—as you will see later—myself stating the case against Christianity, because I am going to show you how I believe the Nietzschean and the Christian doctrines each synthesize. But at this point it is necessary for me to examine the essential differences in these two creeds, and to see where the differences have accumulated and where the resemblances emerge. Nietzsche challenged, as you are aware, the whole

foundations of Christian thought. He said, in effect: 'This is the religion of the slave and the weakling. This is the faith of the people who are in flight from life, who will not face reality, who look for salvation in some dreamy hereafter—the salvation which they have not the vitality nor the manhood to seize for themselves here on earth. It is derived from a spirit of weakness and surrender.' He denounced it in a great phrase, if I remember rightly, as 'the religion which has enchained and enfeebled mankind.'

"And in place of this faith he created the conception of the superman, the man who faces difficulty, danger, goes forward through material things and through the difficulties of environment, to achieve, to win and to create, here on earth, a world of his own. It was a challenge to the whole basis, not only of thought, but of life. And it rocked to its foundations the thought of the world. It must have appeared to those who were seriously concerned with that controversy at that time that one or other of those creeds must emerge victorious, and one or other must die; that any combination, any synthesis of those conflicting doctrines was entirely out of the question.

"Now I believe, as it so often happens in daily life, that creeds which appear to be dissimilar are in fact susceptible of some reconciliation when examined more closely, and indeed of a certain synthesis; and I think I can show you actually that in the Fascist doctrine to-day you find a complete wedding of the great characteristics of both creeds. On the one hand, you find in Fascism, taken from Christianity, taken directly from the Christian conception, the immense vision of service, of self-abnegation, even of self-sacrifice in the cause of others, in the cause of the world, in the cause of your country; not the elimination of the individual so much as the fusion of the individual in something

far greater than himself: and you have that basic doctrine of Fascism—service, self-surrender—to what the Fascist must conceive to be the greatest cause and the greatest impulse in the world. On the other hand, you find, taken from Nietzschean thought, the virility, the challenge to all existing things which impede the march of mankind, the absolute abnegation of the doctrine of surrender: the firm ability to grapple with and to overcome all obstructions. You have, in fact, the creation of a doctrine of men of vigour and of self-help which is the other outstanding characteristic of Fascism.

“Therefore we find—I think I can claim—some wedding of those two great doctrines expressing itself in the practical creed of Fascism to-day. And that, in fact, works itself out in our whole attitude to life. We can bring it down to the smallest details of general existence. From the widest and most abstract conception we can come down to the most detailed things of daily life. We demand from all our people an overriding conception of public service, but we also concede to them in return, and believe that in the Fascist conception the State should concede, absolute freedom. In his public life a man must behave himself as a fit member of the State; in his every action he must conform to the welfare of the nation. On the other hand, he receives from the State in return a complete liberty to live and to develop as an individual. And in our morality—and I think possibly I can claim that it is the only public morality in which private practice altogether coincides with public protestation—in our morality the one single test of any moral question is whether it impedes or destroys in any way the power of the individual to serve the State. He must answer the questions: ‘Does this action injure the nation? Does it injure other members of the nation? Does it injure my ability to serve the nation?’ And if the

answer is clear on all those questions, the individual has absolute liberty to do as he will; and that confers upon the individual by far the greatest measure of freedom under the State which any system under the State, or any religious authority, has ever conferred upon the individual.

“The nearest approach to that moral test was probably the approach of the Greek civilization, which in their organization had, of course, a lesser conception of the State than we have to-day. . . .

“The Fascist principle is private freedom and public service.”

Turning to the criticism of the historical role of Fascism, Mosley continued:

“It is true that Fascism has an historic relationship to Cæsarism, but the modern world differs profoundly from the forms and conditions of the ancient world. Modern organization is too vast and too complex to rest on any individual however gifted. Modern Cæsarism, like all things modern, is collective. The will and talent of an individual is replaced by the will and ability of the disciplined thousands who comprise a Fascist movement. Every Blackshirt is an individual cell of a collective Cæsarism. The organized will of devoted masses, subject to a voluntary discipline, and inspired by the passionate ideal of national survival, replaces the will to power and a higher order of the individual superman. Nevertheless, this collective Cæsarism, armed with the weapons of modern science, stands in the same historic relationship as ancient Cæsarism to reaction on the one hand and anarchy on the other.

“Cæsarism stood against Spartacus on the one hand and the Patrician Senate on the other. That position is as old as the history of the last two thousand years.

But they lacked, in those days, the opportunities for constructive achievement which are present to-day, and the only lesson that we can derive from the previous evidence of this doctrine is simply this—that whenever the world, under the influence of Spartacus, drifted to complete collapse and chaos, it was always what Spengler called ‘the great fact-men’ who extracted the world from the resultant chaos and gave mankind very often centuries of peace and order in a new system and a new stability.

“ . . . And it has been done by modern Fascist movements, by recognizing certain fundamental facts of politics and of philosophy. Again you have a certain wedding of two seemingly conflicting doctrines. We are often accused of taking something from the Right and something from the Left. It is a very sensible thing to borrow from other faiths ; to discard what is bad and keep what is good ; directly you get away from the old Parliamentary mind you see the wisdom of any such course. Fascism does, of course, take something from the Right and something from the Left, and it adds new facts to meet the modern age.

“ In this new synthesis of Fascism, coming rather nearer to our immediate situation, we find that we take the great principle of stability supported by authority, by order, by discipline, which has been the attribute of the Right, and we marry it to the principle of progress, of dynamic change, which we take from the Left. Conservatism—to call it by the name by which it is known in this country—believes in stability and supports it by its belief in order ; but where Conservatism has always failed in the modern world is in its inability to perceive that stability can only be achieved through progress ; that a stand-pat resistance to change precipitates the revolutionary situation which Conservatism most fears. On the other hand, the Left has

always failed to realize, thanks to their Rousseau complex, that the only way to get progress is to adopt the executive instruments by which alone change is made possible.

“ We have therefore come to this conclusion : that you can only have stability if you are prepared to carry through orderly changes, because to remain stable you must adapt yourselves to the new facts of a new age. On the other hand, you can only have the progress which the Left desire if you adopt the executive instruments of progress, namely, authority, discipline and loyalty, which have always been regarded as belonging always to the Right. By uniting these two principles we achieve the basis of Fascist faith and Fascist organization.”

Mosley then proceeds to face the argument that neo-Cæsarism carries within itself the seeds of its own decay.

“ I believe,” he said, “ the answer to that case, which is the only really valid case, is that always before the factor of modern science was lacking. You have now got a completely new factor. If you can introduce into your system of government a new efficiency (and everyone admits that such movements, when they come to power, are at least efficient)—if you can bring to government only for a few years an executive power and an efficiency which gets things done, you can release—and you will release—the imprisoned genius of science to perform the task which it has to perform in the modern world. Whatever our divergent views on the structure of the State and economics may be, I think we must all agree that it would be possible, by sane organization of the world, with the power of modern science and of industry to produce, to solve once and for all the poverty problem, and to abolish

once and for all poverty and the worst attributes of disease and suffering from the world.

"Therefore, if it is possible to have an efficient form of government, you have available for such a system, for the first time in history, an instrument by which the face of the earth might be changed for all time. Once the essential has been done, once modern science and technique have been released and have performed their task, once you have changed your political and philosophic system from a transitory and political to a permanent and technical basis, there will be no more need of the politics and of the controversies which distract the world to-day. The problem of poverty will be solved, the major problems will be banished, as they can be, and as everybody knows they can be, if modern science is properly mobilized. Then mankind will be liberated for the things in life which really matter.

"Therefore, while it is perhaps true that certain of these phenomena in the eternal recurrences of history have been seen in the world before, and seen with great benefit to mankind, yet never before have the great executive movements possessed the opportunity to complete their task which modern science and invention now confer upon them.

"At a moment of great world-crisis, a crisis which in the end will inevitably deepen, a movement emerges from an historic background which makes such emergence inevitable, carrying certain traditional attributes derived from a glorious past, but facing the facts of to-day armed with the instruments which only this age has ever conferred upon mankind. By this new and wonderful coincidence of instrument and event the problems of this age can be overcome, and the future can be assured in a progressive stability. Possibly this is the last great world-wave of the immortal, and eternally recurring, Caesarian movement; but with the

aid of science and with the inspiration of the modern mind, this wave shall carry humanity to the farther shore.

"Then, at long last, Caesarism, the mightiest emanation of the human spirit in high endeavour towards enduring achievement, will have performed its world mission, will have expiated its sacrifice in the struggle of the ages, and will have fulfilled its historic destiny. A humanity released from poverty, and from many of the horrors and afflictions of disease, to the enjoyment of a world re-born through science will still need a Fascist movement transformed to the purpose of a new and nobler order of mankind; but you will need no more the strange and disturbing men who, in days of struggle and of danger, and in nights of darkness and of labour, have forged the instrument of steel by which the world shall pass to higher things."

In little more than a decade Fascism has emerged as the great fighting creed of the twentieth century. However antipathetic its tenets may appear to the older schools of thought, it cannot be denied that Fascism—as the modern movement—represents a great challenge and a great awakening, and its influence, for good or for evil, will be felt everywhere throughout the modern world.

It is idle also to deny that Fascism can find no spontaneous response from the British character, and that its creed is irrelevant to the conditions and needs of the British people. The influence of Whig historians on the political outlook of succeeding generations of Englishmen has lent the stability of fact to the popular delusion that Parliamentary institutions are the peculiar product of the Nordic Protestant mind, and that these

institutions are particularly adapted to the English genius. In actual historic fact it can be shown that the origin of representative institutions cannot be located in any one country and that, like feudalism, Parliamentarism had its beginnings in the special social and economic conditions of a certain period of European history. The earliest development of democratic institutions over the field of European culture was in those areas where the "bourgeois" class, as the result of special trading conditions, first attained a weight in politics. Democratic institutions are, in fact, the political expression of the phase of capitalist economics. This is clear enough in the history of the Greek and Italian trading cities of the earlier Classical culture, and parallels can be established further back in phases of the Ægean and Egyptian cultures. In the history of modern European civilization democratic institutions first assumed importance in just those areas where feudalism had given place to a capitalist system of society—in the Italian cities and in Catalonia, and in the Flemish and Hanseatic towns. As the economic importance of the Italian and Catalonian trading areas declined, the power of the "bourgeois"-capitalist class—and with it their political institutions—also fell into decay. These areas passed under the control of neighbouring feudal-imperialist monarchies. At the same time, with the expansion of trans-oceanic trade, a tremendous impetus was given to the capitalist communities in England and Holland, with the result that they ultimately perverted the national development of the feudal-agricultural states in which they were situated, and the political institutions, suitable to the expression of the power of their special economic class,

became the dominant and permanent institutions for all classes in their respective countries. It follows that Parliamentary institutions—far from being the expression of the natural political genius of the Englishman—are the expression of the natural political genius of the "bourgeois" class, which has evolved through these organs of virtually fictitious representation a perfect mechanism for the perpetuation of the dominance of the interests of particular sections of the community as against those of the nation as a whole.

Parliamentary institutions were no more original to Britain than were any of the other movements and institutions which have affected or directed the course of European history. Roman law, on which our legislation is based, had been subject to ancient Oriental influences. Pan-European Catholicism was a strange amalgam of Asiatic dogma, Mediterranean vision and organizing power, Germanic emotion, and Celtic mysticism. Protestantism, which came into England out of Germany and Bohemia, had its many obscure and diverse origins among the odd religious sects of the Byzantine Empire, where the radical sophistication of a dying world-city had mingled with the crude puritanism of untutored barbarian peoples coming from the Balkans and Asia Minor and beyond. The Rationalism of the eighteenth century was essentially the creation of the new city mind of all Europe. Englishmen, Germans, Scotsmen, Frenchmen and Czechs were its prophets, but even here the earlier Rationalists were influenced by the State-Socialism of the Peruvian Incas, and others, such as Voltaire, by the passivistic thought of India and China. It follows, then, that Fascism is a movement no more foreign to

the British genius than was Dutch Parliamentarism, French Republicanism or German Socialism, and it is in far greater degree a movement expressive of the European political mind than is the Asiatic Communism of the Russians, which has borrowed from Europe only a Jewish Messiah. Nor have the British failed to make a major contribution to that development of modern thought which is now being interpreted in Fascist theory and Fascist action. The historical origins of Fascist ideology have never yet been scientifically collated, for in the surge of a decade of action the Fascist leaders have had neither the leisure nor the inclination to catalogue their inspirations. The sources of Fascist theory are indeed diverse, for the movement combines the intense and earnest fire of revolution with the cold serenity of historical philosophy and the proud consciousness of the unique destiny of Europe. Macchiavelli and the Cecils, Strafford and Bolingbroke, Burke, Cobbett, Schopenhauer, Disraeli, Nietzsche, Carlyle and Renan may each and all be shown to have contributed to that stream of realist thought and action which has at last found expression in the dynamic flood of the modern Fascist movement. The diversity of the Fascist inspiration is extreme, but everywhere is noticeable the effective contribution of the British mind towards the final formulation of all these searching ideas in contemporary Fascist action.

"There is no special originality in his ideas," writes the biographer of Mussolini, "as to the practical realization of Socialism, except perhaps in their detachment from Marxism; he did not accept the Marxian

view of materialism nor of anti-capitalist economics, and he recognized the fallacy of Lassalle's 'bronze law.' What interested him as a Latin was the moral and ethical side of the ideal society of the future. He therefore drew nearer to the apostles of Latin Communism, of the Italian Philip Buonarroti, of the French terrorist Babeuf, of Blanqui and the great Proudhon, and the brief experiment of the Paris Commune—nearer, above all, to Georges Sorel. His vision of the future derives much from Wild's *Soul of Man under Socialism*, with echoes of Ruskin and Morris; perhaps their influence on him was more æsthetic than that of real personal conviction. At bottom their particular vision of the future probably had as little appeal for his temperament as a paradise without houris would have for a Mussulman." (Margherita Sarfatti, *Life of Mussolini*, pp. 166-7.)

Of the moderns, both Shaw and Bergson have had their influence on the development of the Fascist conception, and the former—in spite of his long traditional association with Socialism in England—has shown in his more recent writings that he has both sympathy for Fascist action and belief in the Fascist future.

Fascism, far from being alien to the British character, is the modern expression of a very strong and definite tendency in the history of British thought. The authoritarian Bolingbroke and the revolutionary William Cobbett, the emotional Burke and the misanthropic Carlyle, the visionary Disraeli and the chuckling Shaw, have all in their different ways sought after those conceptions which the young Blackshirts of our industrial cities now proclaim from street to street. Nor is Parliamentary democracy so firmly established in the hearts of the British people as its sycophants on

Party platforms and in the Press-lords' offices profess to believe. Just before the last war the widespread movement directed against Parliament, in sympathy with the Ulster loyalists, assumed formidable proportions within two years of its inception. That movement, psychologically restricted as it was, and directed only to the safeguarding of certain relatively limited objectives, would have developed—had not the war intervened—into a definite revolt against the whole theory and system of democracy in Britain. The Ulster movement was, in fact, the first Fascist movement in Europe—a movement far more threatening to “the King's peace” than is the modern Fascist movement, for while Oswald Mosley and his Fascists seek only to secure power by normal constitutional means, the Tory leaders, during the Ulster crisis, were preparing to oppose an elected Parliamentary majority with armed force. In spite, however, of the difference in scope and character of the two movements—the Tory-Ulster movement openly seditious, the modern Fascist movement entirely peaceful and “legalist”—certain parallel conclusions may be drawn from them. First, the British people are by no means devoted to the Parliamentary system, the alleged advantages of which are so constantly thrust down their throats, and they are by no means inhibited either by their respect for the past or by the massed hypocrisy of propaganda, from rallying to a reasonable and moderate movement which seeks to change the fundamentals of that system. Secondly, the British people have no blind faith in the infallibility of the democratic methodology, and they are never prepared to see the vital interests of the nation—whether those

interests happen to be in Ulster, as in the past, or in England and throughout the Empire, as at present—sacrificed to the pretensions of vicious and corrupt theories.

It is against the upholders and the apologists of these vicious and corrupt theories, supported as they are by all the resources of the existing system, that Oswald Mosley and his Blackshirts are summoning the manhood of Britain to a disciplined and peaceful revolution. The Fascists are undertaking a gigantic and portentous task, and the difficulties involved in its achievement might well appear insuperable to men of lesser faith and meaner mettle. But in this moment, when the Fascists face, in confidence and in constancy, the coming battle for the soul of Britain, they can bear in their hearts those words of an ancient writer which Mussolini, in the hour of his great test, recalled :

“In examining the actions and the lives of these men, we see that they had no great assistance from fortune, save opportunity, which enabled them to shape things as they pleased, without which the force of their spirit would have been spent in vain. . . . While their opportunities made these men fortunate, it was their own merit which made them recognize these opportunities and turn them to the glory of their country.”