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THE BRITISH UNION OF FASCISTS: 1933-1953

BRITISH ONLINE ARCHIVES

Trace the rise and fall of British fascism...

...before, during, and after the Second World War

Reflecting its rise across the European continent, fascism became a part of the British political landscape in the 1930s and 1940s. Founded in 1932 by former Conservative and Labour MP Oswald Mosley, the British Union of Fascists (BUF) increasingly mirrored the racist and antisemitic attitudes of its German and Italian counterparts.

Mosely – an English aristocrat who turned to fascism following his disillusionment with the UK's main political parties – became a highly provocative



The BUF was a far-right political party which openly embraced racism, antisemitism, and xenophobia.

figure and, due to his political agitation, was interned with his wife at Holloway Prison in 1940. The BUF were simultaneously outlawed. This collection charts the trajectory of both Mosley and his party, between 1933 and 1953.

Put Mosley back in Jail? ¹⁹ <u>To the Prime Minister, 10 Downing Street, Whitehall, S.W.1.</u> WE, the undersigned, demand that Mosley be put back in jail immediately. No retearts or excuses can justify his release which we regard as an insult to the men and women in the fighting preces, their relatives and to all, who in any way are			
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This collection contains nearly 8,000 images, charting the trajectory of British fascism between the 1930s and 1950s. Specifically, the collection contains a cross section of personal papers from leading members of the British fascist movement. In addition, it includes documents and surveillance reports from various UK government departments which sought to temper the influence of the BUF.

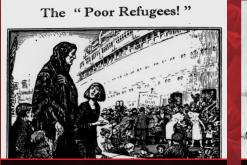
Overall, the collection traces Mosley's determined attempts to bring European-style fascism to the shores of Britain.

It is more important than ever that both historians and students critically reexamine this troubling and often overlooked chapter in modern British history.

Sources include: The National Archives



Mosley's affiliates – known as "blackshirts" – often engaged in violent confrontations with anti-fascist groups, culminating in the Battle of Cable Street in October 1936. This event has since become emblematic of anti-fascist resistance.



The BUF initially garnered considerable support, including from popular periodicals such as the *Daily Mail*.

PF 4890 CROSS REFERENCE SUBJECT: Lady Diana MOSELEY Extract from a report from the DDMI, 5.6.40. "Diana Moseley, wife of Sir Oswald Moseley, is reported on the best authority, that of her family and initumat circle, to be a public danger at the present time. Is said to be far cleverer and more dangerous than her husband and will stick at nothing to achieve hers ambitions - she is wildly ambiticus" The collection includes MI5 surveillance reports on both Oswald Mosely and his wife Diana Mosley (née Mitford).

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