

HE'LL PLAY IF HE'S CAPTAIN



Mosley, ex-Socialist like Mussolini, in a Mussolini-like pose

A rich punk stemming from a line of notorious tyrants, irresponsible Sir Oswald Mosley has a limelight complex and will adopt any cause that promises him prominence. The British fascist leader was the boy Conservative of Parliament in 1918, became a Labourite but bought a castle with a moat to keep vulgar folk away, left the Labourites after throwing a lawn-party for 2,000 of them and wasn't made boss. Then he took over the Duce-Fuehrer agency for Britain.

BY MICHAEL STEBBING

In appearance a cross between a comic-opera colonel and a Monte Carlo gigolo, Sir Oswald Mosley, 42, boss-idol of the British Union of Fascists and National Socialists, has at last achieved the "leadership" he failed to win as a Conservative, an Independent, a Labourite. For he is the name for fascism in Britain—the fascism, that is, which is open and unashamed in contradistinction to the veiled fascism practiced by the National Government.

Hitler and Mussolini, his spiritual masters, came from the people. Not so Sir Oswald. In 1596 a Mr. Oswald Mosley bought the land on which Manchester now stands for £3500.

In 1629—a period by no means hostile to wealthy landowners—the Mosleys were charged in Parliament with "oppression, injustice and vexation." In 1846 the town of Manchester bought itself back from a Sir Oswald Mosley for the sum of £200,000.

As recently as one century ago, when the inhabitants of Manchester were still ruled largely by the private court of this earlier Sir Oswald Mosley, Richard Cobden, the great free-trader and advocate of international co-operation, stood up and said, "Is it that in this great town of Manchester we are still living under the feudal system? . . . Why now, I will put an end to this thing!"

At a time when most landlords were harsh, the Mosleys were harsher; in a period of landgrabbing and profiteering the Sir Oswald of the early 19th century was landgrabber Number One.

The present Sir Oswald was born in 1896 into the midst of wealth. He was educated at Winchester College, whose motto is Manners Makyth Man; there Oswald learned the attitude to be adopted by a member of

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the upper thousand towards his inferiors—i.e. 99% of Englishmen and all foreigners.

His next stop was the Royal Military College at Sandhurst where a classmate described him as "impatient, full of contempt for boys of his own age and a complete hedonist." Oswald's education complete, he became an officer in the aristocratic 16th Lancers.

Meanwhile, Oswald's grandfather had died leaving the boy the sum of £60,000. He also inherited, it is said, the major portion of land, worth £247,000, left by his deceased grandmother. But it was not to be expected that he should live on this pittance. In 1920 he married Lady Cynthia Curzon. Lady Cynthia was the daughter of the late Marquis Curzon of Kedleston. Lady Cynthia was also the granddaughter of the late Levi Zeigler Leiter, the Chicago millionaire. It is permissible to recall these facts since Mosley is today viciously anti-Semitic and also a consistent fulminator against the evils of inherited wealth. Lady Cynthia, who inherited £28,000 a year from her own family, died in 1933.

By special permission of His Majesty King George V the marriage ceremony took place in the Chapel Royal. Before the wedding ceremony the bridegroom had a bachelor's luncheon party at the Ritz. Two kings and two queens were present.

Being a rich and ambitious young man it was natural for Sir Oswald to turn to politics. He joined the Conservative Party in 1918 and became a precocious member of Parliament at the age of 22, his constituency being Harrow wherein is situated another of the three schools in which are taught the obligations of aristocracy.

Four years after his election to Parliament, Oswald's impatience got the better of him. His dislike of discipline caused him to leave his spiritual home among the Tories, and for two years he strutted proudly in splendid isolation as an Independent. In 1924 the Labour Party for the first time gained a large number of Parliamentary seats, and by a remarkable coincidence it was precisely at this time that Oswald grew tired of his own company and began to clamor for the attention of the Labour Party leadership. He pertinaciously wooed Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. And in January, 1924, this gallant young officer, tilting at the opponents of Labour, shrilly cried, "I am determined to see that a Labour Government has fair play." A week later Oswald was again doing his gentlemanly duty—1924 pattern. "The Conservative Minister of Health," he loudly proclaimed, "has been trying to dress up the Red bogey."

Rapidly he became the champion of the poor. "Labour," he said, "by its specific pronouncements, by its proven statesmanship and its great leadership, summons to its standard all who stand for the cause of the underdog." Now his view was "that the spirit of service must be substituted for that of competition." Os-

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wald's application for membership was accepted.

This membership, Mosley said, meant a complete break with family and former associations. Indeed he went so far as to say that he did not think that it would be worth his while to assume the hereditary family title on his father's death. To which his ultra-Tory father replied, in a statement to the press, that "more valuable help would be rendered to the country by my socialist son and daughter-in-law if, instead of achieving cheap publicity about the relinquishing of titles, they would take more material action and relinquish some of their wealth, and so make easier the plight of some of their more unfortunate followers." This paternal advice was superfluous. Oswald relinquished neither title nor wealth.



In 1926 Mosley was given the constituency of Smethwick to fight on the Labour ticket. His father was again disturbed. Calling in the press he reminded them that his son has been born with a gold spoon in his mouth—it had cost £100 to bring him into the world—in doctor's fees alone. "If my son and his wife was to go in for Labour why don't they do a bit of work for themselves, or why doesn't Lady Cynthia sell her pearls for the Smethwick poor."

And indeed Mosley was proving a very odd sort of Socialist, both in his public utterances and in his private life. In one speech, for example, he described the British Navy and the British Army as socialist institutions. As for his private life, in the same year that he was fighting the election at Smethwick, he bought an ancient manor house. "The Savoy," reported a newspaper at the time, "is, fortunately, guarded from vulgar intrusiveness not only by a moat but by 50 acres of thereabouts of pleasant park and meadow." This for Socialist Mosley who loved his fellowmen.

At the same time the Mosleys acquired a new town house—or rather two. Since they could not do with less than 16 rooms they bought two adjoining houses in fashionable Westminster and knocked them into one. This was unquestionably one method of facing the prevailing housing shortage.

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Now the poor of Smethwick disapproved of their candidate's way of living and told him so vociferously. So Mosley moved into a humble boarding house in the town, until the election was over. In addition he hired an old and shabby automobile to drive instead of his own luxurious vehicle. He assured the voters of Smethwick that he preferred beer to any other drink. His tactics succeeded.

Shortly after this, Mosley addressed a meeting at Cambridge. His speech was disturbed by the entrance of a number of undergraduates, members of organizations which have since been swallowed up by Mosley's, carrying Union Jacks and fascist flags. Hurt, Mosley called in the press few days later. "We have lost the good old British spirit," he said. The fascist movement, he declared, slavishly but ineffectually imitated the latest frenzy of Continental hysterics.

In 1929, as a sinecurist, having been given the traditional and obsolescent post of the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster, Mosley turned his attention to the formulation of grandiose schemes for the economic salvation of the British Empire. Unemployment he was going to abolish entirely. The whole of the national economy was to be radically reconstructed. He incorporated his fantastic brain-children in what became known later as the Mosley Memorandum. The Labour Government rejected it. Our hyper-sensitive aristocrat felt slighted. Why wouldn't they let him save the British Empire! Determined to persuade the members of the Labour Party of the transcendental value of his schemes, he invited 2,000 Labourites to a garden-party in the country. For their transport he obligingly provided special trains.

From this start, Mosley went on to attempt to organize a new movement within the Labour Party. Economic Nationalism was to be inscribed on its banners. The State was to assume the ownership of industry but its direction was to be left in the hands of trained business men.

For this activity directed towards splitting the party, Mosley was expelled. And then occurred one of the most rapid turnabouts in political history.

In January of 1931 Mosley had said that the Labour Government had made a much bigger contribution to the solution of the unemployment problem than any other Government had ever done. In March his expulsion took place. In April he said that the Labour Government had done *nothing* towards the solution of the unemployment problem. A week or two later he was making sinister references to the vast secret funds of the Labour Party.

As at previous crises in his life, Mosley found that he needed a change of air. He went to Monaco. As a newspaper put it, referring to him and his wife, "Both of them love the good things of life, town house and country estate, tours to India and Egypt, the expensive places of the Riviera, a 250 h.p. motor car, the

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gourmet's dishes, the Paris gowns." In fact, on this occasion Mosley stayed at Monaco with Captain Molyneux, the Paris dress designer.

In the luxurious Mediterranean villa Mosley worked out the details of a new political party. Soon after his return to the less congenial climes of England, he set the party to work. Entitled the New Party, the cornerstone of its policy was the immediate compulsory reorganization of British industry and the complete protection of the domestic market by the prohibition of the importation of "alien goods." At this time, Mosley acquired as his personal bodyguard Mr. Kid Lewis, distinguished as ex-middle-weight boxing champion of the world.

The few members of the Labour Party whom Mosley had managed to inveigle into his new party resigned immediately they saw whither his policy was leading them. They had not long to wait for the confirmation of their fears. Before the year was out their erstwhile leader paid a visit to Germany where he developed an unhealthy association with various Nazi leaders including Adolf Hitler. Forgetting perhaps his statement some few years earlier that "the greatest danger to peace in Europe is the growth of fascist power in Italy and its alliance with Great Britain," Mosley went to Italy a few months later. The Duce received him. For an hour Mosley was in the delectable company of his spiritual lord and master. He returned to Britain and within a few months the New Party had become the British Union of Fascists. The additional "and National Socialists" was stuck on years later after the success of the other Big Chief.

Unblushingly Mosley called himself the Leader. He got himself a High Priest, one A. K. Chesterton, to write in scarlet letters of the launching of the Movement. Referring to the Leader the High Priest wrote: "Now he moves forward to a still greater destiny, an implacable figure looming ever more immense against the background of his times; through his own eager spirit, so full of aspiration and boldness, symbolizing the immortal spirit of his race."

Because the movement had to have a *Mein Kampf* Mosley set to work and produced a series of fulminations entitled *The Greater Britain*. Between covers were now the germs of the black plague—British variety. "When we are confronted by Red Terror," wrote the Leader, "we are certainly organized to meet force by force and will always do our utmost to smash it." Reds to Mosley, as to his friends on the Continent, include Labourites, Communists, Liberals, most Conservatives and all Jews. And also, depending upon the region where he is speaking, pacifists, Roman Catholics, members of the Church of England, intellectuals, the working class and even Big Business. From under his black shirt he can always be relied upon to produce the appropriate bogey.

"You must tell big lies," said Hitler in *Mein Kampf*, "the people are too used to little ones." Mosley took the hint. He has been doing little else since 1932.

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"Fascism believes in greater freedom," says this disciple of the Duce.

"Only fascism can prevent war," says this friend of the Fuehrer.

"Fascism will defend culture," says this sycophant of Streicher.

"Fascism will further religious tolerance," says this Jew-baiter.

"The will of the people shall prevail," declares the leader who introduced the blackjack into British political life.

His father's comment sums Mosley up admirably. "He has never," wrote that troubled parent, "done an honest day's work in his life." ●