

## The Life and Times of Colin Tigwell (1000 words)

By Michael Percy

The death was announced yesterday of Colin Tigwell best known simply as Colin and renowned as the founder of the Britain – Our Government Our Freedom movement. Colin was an unlikely leader of a national movement coming as he did from a council estate in Slough and originally following the profession of a refuse operative or bin man as he liked to call it.

I was one of the first journalists to interview Colin after he famously chained his wife to railings outside Slough Town Hall and paraded a placard accusing the council of racism. Colin had been made redundant because Slough's refuse services had been taken over by a private company that employed exclusively east European operatives on the minimum wage.

When questioned as to why his wife was chained to the railing instead of himself he replied, "It worked for the Suffragettes and she's a great fan of women's rights. I'm planning a hunger strike for her as the next step in my campaign,"

Not an auspicious start to a political career although later, Gloria (Mrs Tigwell), achieved fame with her book of diet tips entitled *The Suffragettes Guide To Diet and Health*.

Colin never got his job back and he came to the nation's attention as a 'Benefits Scrounger Who Hides Behind a Woman's Chains' as The Daily Mail headline proclaimed. "That's not fair," said Colin.

But the media soon changed their attitude as Colin began to attract more support through a social media campaign run by Colin's son Magnus. He ran a twitter account, a blog and a website in his father's name. "I don't know nothing about these sociable media things," said Colin. "I leave it to my boy."

The working poor of Britain rose up in support of Colin's campaign to be reinstated although the council would not give in. It could be said the campaign grew through the efforts of Magnus and in spite of Colin: "I trust the boy to do what's right," he said. Within days Colin had over two million Twitter followers.

"I didn't know they were doing it," said Colin, "Magnus told me about a meeting in Parliament Square and we should go. So I went."

Some estimates say this Twitter led protest attracted 200,000 and central London ground to a halt. Colin, Magnus and Gloria arrived as part of the crowd but Colin was soon recognised and hauled onto an impromptu stage where he received a five minute ovation. “That was nice,” he said. Colin was identified in the media as the leader of the protest and he began to appear on various TV shows.

It was during one of these appearances that Colin said, “We should name and shame these scumbag employers.” He went on to tell how at an interview for a minimum wage job the employer offered a place on a seminar explaining how to claim housing benefit and working tax credit. “They wanted me to claim benefits so they could sell cheap pizzas.”

After that remark workers on the minimum wage began to wear simple homemade black badges to denote that their employer was, as Colin put it, “a mean bastard getting rich from the misery of the working poor.”

The nation was shocked to see how many lapels sported the simple ‘black badge of shame’ as The Daily Mail named it. Even the middle classes were said to be feeling uncomfortable being served their Lattes by staff wearing the ‘the badge of shame.’ However, the union for shop workers reported that tipping in Hampstead had not increased.

At this point an estimate of Colin’s support based on his Twitter account stood at fifteen million; nothing compared to Katy Perry at over 46 million but higher than David Cameron (one time Prime Minister remembered as the man who lost Scotland after the second referendum) who only had 800,000 followers.

There was pressure to start a political party much as Nigel Farage (156,000 Twitter followers) did with UKIP - although UKIP floundered over the attempted cover up surrounding the death of Farage due to alcoholism and lung cancer.

Spontaneously the Tweets began to talk about a movement called Britain – Our Government, Our Freedom or BOGOF for short. Magnus adopted this as the title of Colin’s web page. Colin was very pleased.

Colin had another impromptu rant on TV: “Citizens of this great nation should be protected from exploitation by banks, insurance companies, utility

companies and anybody else who just wants to rob our money. That's what government should do – not fuck about in Europe and Afghanistan.” It was not uncommon for Colin to be bleeped on TV.

When I heard Colin say this I sensed the cheering of his supporters across the nation. At first Colin touted his support to the two main political parties in return for them implementing the BOGOF agenda of fair pay and protection from economic exploitation. Neither could offer believable guarantees.

In the event, as we all know, Colin offered his fifteen million votes to an alliance made up of the rump of the Liberal Party (12 followers on Twitter) and the tatty remnants of UKIP.

BOGOF then opened its political wing: The British Citizens Reborn Liberal Democratic United Kingdom Independence Freedom Alliance. Labour and Tories fought to cross the floor and join Colin who was persuaded to take the helm and became Prime Minister after the election.

It will be remembered that the UK economy did not collapse as predicted but in fact it flourished as wages and profits were redistributed, tax income rose (because poor people can't avoid it) and benefit costs plummeted. Colin was able to refuse an application from Scotland to re-join the Union.

Sadly, Colin was not universally liked and, while en route to a meeting of the European Union where he planned to withdraw Britain, he was killed in a mysterious car crash in an underpass in Paris. Asked if he would continue his father's struggle Magnus said, “Who me? You must be fucking joking.”

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