



EMPIRE OF THE VANITIES

AN OUTRAGEOUS STORY OF GREED, LUST AND STRUCTURAL ADJUSTMENT

In the run-up to the annual meet and greet by world leaders (and ensuing mass insurrection on the other side of the police lines) at the G8 summit in Hokkaido, Japan, it's time we took another look at the Group of Eight (the USA, UK, Germany, Italy, France, Canada, Japan and Russia).

The G8 has been top of activists' hit lists since the '90s when the leaders of the world lorded it over the planet, playing the world's population like puppets on its strings through the WTO, the IMF and the World Bank, keeping the deck of international power and capital firmly stacked in favour of the rich.

The G8 is sometimes known as the G7 plus Russia - which has been the odd man out since it joined (due more to its ownership of thousands of nuclear weapons than its position on the global rich list). It is the one international forum that brings together the world's trade and financial institutions. Simply put it's the world's biggest cartel.

Throughout the '90s, via innocuous sounding edicts such as the 'Treaty Regarding Property Rights (TRIPS - keeping knowledge locked away amongst a handful of electronics and bio-tech firms) and 'Structural Adjustment Policies' (a euphemism for the looting of entire economies by modern day corporate privateers), the world was fully under the control of USA and its allies. The Soviet Union had been defeated by the power of Democracy Inc. and the US

had no rivals anywhere. It was economic liberalism and US-style democracy all the way, with Slick Willy Clinton at the helm. It was the 'End of History', as triumphantly proclaimed by right wing thinkers.

MISSION ACCOMPLISHED?

But it all turned out to be a little premature. In the twilight months of the Bush administration, the G8 looks more like a global spectator than the sole player. Across the world countries that the West had gotten used to ordering around have begun to dance to their own tune. Even 'reliable' US allies like Saudi Arabia aren't afraid to say 'no' to the US's face (they recently they turned down a request to release more oil into the global markets despite Dubya's personal intervention). Around the world the battle for drug patents has basically been won by the third world drugs produc-

ers (Brazil, Thailand, India) after the G8 realised that neither the western pharma companies or the WTO could stop them.

Latin America has now pretty much thrown out the IMF and their ilk, refusing to sup from the poisoned chalice of Structural Adjustment any more. During the '80s and '90s Argentina followed the dictates of the IMF & World Bank faithfully, only to be rewarded with the total collapse of their country's economy - banks and factories closed overnight, and the Argentinian people responded with massive strikes and worker occupations of bankrupt factories (See SchNEWS 350). The elites of Argentina sensibly saw which way the wind was blowing and stepped aside to make way for the centre-left (and hardly revolutionary) government of Nestor Kirchner, who chucked out the IMF, WB, WTO and

Continued overleaf...

THE LAW IS AN A.S.S.

Protests against the planned open-cast coal mine in Derbyshire (SchNEWS 636) continue after a surprise court victory for the squatters. Activists have taken over a farm house and a row of trees due to be demolished for a proposed coal mine. Taken to court on Monday they were expecting an imminent eviction.

However, due to a timely intervention by the Advisory Service for Squatters and bodged paperwork from the opposition, they've had a stay of execution 'til 18th July. The company had tried to evict under the name Harworth Agricultural Land but the land is actually owned by Harworth Mining International Ltd and thanks to their PR friendly name-change they couldn't prove they were the owners. How's that for greenwash! They also couldn't prove the tenancy of the farm had actually formally ended saying that the farmer had merely 'vacated' the premises. In fact Mr Severnm is an enthusiastic supporter of the campaign.

Despite having to file for an adjournment due to their own legal incompetence, the company went on to exact revenge by knocking down a bungalow on the site.

One tree-dweller told SchNEWS: "They've just demolished the bungalow opposite the house - it was originally scheduled to stay on their maps but they've obviously decided to knock it down rather than risk us squatting it. Two days after we got here it was occupied by security on guard for 24 hours a day, generator, floodlights everything. They just turned up with a JCB to knock it down."

With another two weeks (at least) before they can be evicted - the campaign are calling out for numbers to make this one to remember.

* See www.leaveitintheground.org.uk (Site mob 0750 333 5870)

* For advice on squatting why not contact the sublimely brilliant Advisory Service for Squatters. 020 3216 0099 www.squatter.org.uk

* **JULY 14 - Noise Demo outside UK Coal, Doncaster** - against UK Coal, who are planning to begin the new open-cast coal mine Meet at Doncaster train station at 3:30pm or outside UK Coal at 4pm 07852 460871 derby@earthfirst.org.uk www.leaveitintheground.org.uk

CRAP ARREST OF THE WEEK

For writing a word in the sand...

Last Sunday at a demo outside Sequani, the animal testing lab in Ledbury (See SchNEWS 634), one protester at the peaceful demo wrote the word 'scum' in the sand outside the premises, then rubbed it out.

But amazingly on Wednesday, police visited her house and arrested her for criminal damage for violation of the sand! They didn't have a warrant, so were made to wait while she had a shower, and then took her in. She is now out on bail, but protesters say that the motive to arrest her was to get information about some of the other protesters - but fortunately the arrestee is unlikely to have gone against the grain(s)... For more about the demo see www.sequani.wordpress.com

their advisors and refused to listen to the financial advisors who predicted doom and catastrophe. They were wrong, and since they stopped listening to the globalists both the Argentinean economy and average standard of living (not the same thing by the way) have gone up and up.

Since then two-thirds of Latin America has followed suit, and the hemisphere, once America's back yard, has begun to make faltering steps towards integration - independent of the gringos - via organisations such as MERCOSUR and the (much more ambitious) Bolivarian Alternative for the Americans (ALBA).

But even this is just the tip of the iceberg. The economies of Asia, traditionally heavily dependent on the Americans, still remember the battering they took in the late 90s during the collapse of the 'Asian bubble'. Since then they've made sure that there's plenty of extra dosh in their state coffers, ensuring that no matter how bad things get they don't have to go down the path of short term gain for long term pain of IMF loans.



The lack of customers has effectively ruined the IMF. From a budget of over \$100 billion four years ago, they can now barely scrape together \$10 billion, most of which now goes to just two countries: Turkey and Pakistan. The organisation which once played the role of global loanshark is now feeling itself the pinch. Once Turkey pays off the last of its outstanding loans, the IMF will basically run out of fresh sources of cash from the world's poor.

The net result of the failure of these US created and led institutions is that the G8 has lost control of global policy, in what even people inside the establishment are calling 'a guerilla assault on the Washington Consensus.' There's still plenty of countries that are suffering horrendously from the same privatise-and-be-damned ideology of neoliberalism, but the tide is noticeably turning. States from China to Bolivia are turning state coffers over to internal development and poverty reduction, and in the process creating markets outside of the control of the G8.

Stuggling against the tide the G8 is bringing in some of the larger non-western countries into the fold, intending to co-opt them into selling out the rest of the developing

nations and making it worth their while to play ball according to US/European rules. The so-called 'Outreach Five (not the latest boy-band) consist of Brazil, China, India, Mexico and South Africa. Last year, whilst the black block was busy shutting the city down, the G8 nations were kick-starting the 'Heiligendamm Process' aimed to get these countries on board. The problem (from the G8's perspective), is that these countries aren't likely to leave it at the level of discussion. They're demanding an ever larger slice of the pie.

END OF AN ERROR?

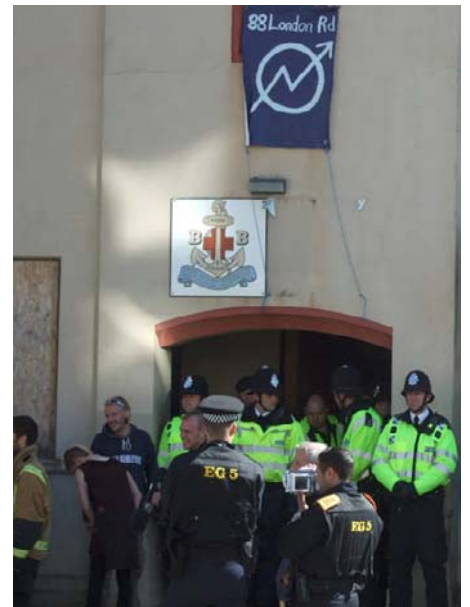
Just about the only place where you can see the aggressive introduction of old-school neoliberal policies on weaker nations is in the countries occupied as part of the 'War on Terror'. In Afghanistan - and especially Iraq - entire state industries were privatised with a stroke of the American Proconsul's pen. Water, health, education, industry were all declared open for the attentions of multinational corporations. The result has been as brutal as it has been predictable.

Iraq's public services (once the best in the Middle East) were destroyed almost overnight, spiralling its population further into poverty and easing Iraq's population into armed resistance that has all but destroyed American plans for Iraq. It is to nobody's surprise that the oil laws being drafted by the 'sovereign' state of Iraq allow for the return of all the major US oil companies, 36 years after they were kicked out by Ba'athist nationalism.

The Iraq war looks more like one last desperate throw of the dice by a visibly weakening empire. Bush's legacy may well be that the United States is now seen as a fundamentally dangerous country that smaller nations can band together against. In the process this has created organisations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan - See SchNEWS 551) which now holds joint military exercises "to fight back against new threats and challenges." They also have an energy policy, the Asian Energy Security Grid, which has the potential to effectively counter US control of the Middle-East's oil.

With this shift in global political power the West is likely to get increasingly desperate as their economies go down the pan and oil resource pressures start to bite. The likely consequences may not be pretty as the US and its allies up their military spending and repression to counter the largely phantom threat of terrorism. But it's reassuring to SchNEWS that there are still those in the beast of the belly willing to counter it.

* More info on G8 in Japan: www.jca.apc.org/alt-g8/en and <http://a.sanpal.co.jp/no-g8>



PEW CREW

Brighton's squatted social centre, the 88 London Road squat, has defied its last court order as police and bailiffs busted through the fortified doors early yesterday morning (3rd July). Occupiers of the abandoned Methodist church had already resisted one eviction attempt on 12th June (SchNEWS 632). They had been holding a regular 'free kaff' on the bustling street outside and had just began reopening its doors for a variety of events. There was, however, the constant realisation that the space was likely to be evicted at any moment.

This nagging fear became a reality when around eight police with a battering ram bust the door down at seven in the morning. All those inside were dragged out of the premises, with the exception of two cheeky chaps who scrambled their way into the cargo net suspended 25 foot high in the main church hall. The police had to bring in equipment to construct a scaffold tower in order to reach the net dwellers.

Police numbers swelled with boys in blue being sent from all over Sussex, as well as two FIT team Stasi members (Police Forward Intelligence Team see www.fitwatch.blogspot.com), in order to deal with a somewhat questionable public order situation. At around 10.30, the two remaining occupants were manhandled into a police van to cheers of support from the crowd that had formed outside, and the forty-strong band of coppers began to disperse. It signalled the death of a thriving space which for the past two months had been a vital hub for a variety of projects and community events in Brighton, and with any luck act it will act as a catalyst for the resurgence of a politicised squatting movement in the city...

* www.myspace.com/88londonroadsquat

ON THE VERGE

The film police tried to ban - the story of the four year campaign in Brighton to close down local bomb parts factory. EDO-MBM.



DVD's are for sale on the web - £6 incl. p&p - buy it through paypal off the website, or send in a cheque written to 'Justice' to our address... www.schnews.org.uk/on-the-verge

SNAP UNHAPPY

In West Sussex, according to hired goon "Town Centre Wardens", it is illegal to have a camera with you if you start snapping away in public!

Last Saturday, on the 12th anniversary of Worthing's first CCTV cameras going up, a small group of Game-for-a-Laugh Worthing locals had a tongue-in-cheek tour of the spies in the sky, taking photographs of these unwelcome landmarks as they went (watching us watching you watching us...)

Dave Phillips from top Worthing newsletter the Porkbolter explained: "It was all very light-hearted and easy-going until we reached Holder's Corner in Montague Street and these wardens came storming over to tell us we weren't allowed to take photos in a public place!" These burgundy-attired security guards (paid for by local businesses), refused to give their names and had no visible ID (unlike police), and (naturally) couldn't quote the non-existent law. An outraged campaigner picked up the megaphone and alerted shoppers to what was going on, and one of the goons grabbed the megaphone and tried to steal it! With a bewildered crowd assembling, the wardens eventually sulked off to their office – but the intimidation tactics may well have worked with less spunky artists. More info: www.eco-action.org/porkbolter/Burgundybullies.html Video of incident: www.youtube.com/watch?v=LeTiv9UkY8c

* In fact, there has been a spate of camera crackdowns going on around the UK recently. From Gloucestershire to Hull to Ipswich to London and beyond, everything from threats of terrorism charges to paedophile paranoia has been used by Police to lean on unsuspecting amateur snappers, forcing them to cease and desist or delete their pictures - despite them being quite within their legal rights.

So, here it is, yer SchNEWS guide to photography:

* Picture taking on private property (except where no pics is a condition of entry) is...LEGAL.

* Taking pictures of people in public, with or without permission is LEGAL, so long as you aren't obstructing the highway (although over-concentrating on young children's changing rooms for sustained periods is likely to make you unpopular).

* Snapping 'prohibited' places like army bases, nuclear sites, courts etc is illegal, but while s.58 of the Terrorism Act 2000 makes it an offence to "possess a document or record containing information ... of a kind likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism", a recent court of appeal decision has narrowed this to require proof of a demonstrable intent to commit terrorist acts as well.

So if you don't own an Al Qaeda manual and shed full of fertiliser, and only intend to blow up an art print to A3, stick up for yerself and expose the authorities' clumsy attempts to intimidate everyone's civil liberties away though illegal bullying - but don't get too flash cos they'll probably give you a bang and a wallop...



ZION TAMING

While Palestinians around the world were commemorating the *Nakba* - (meaning *the catastrophe* - the displacement of over 700 000 Palestinian civilians by zionist militias in 1948), on Sunday 29th June, a few thousand zionists held a 'Salute to Israel' march through central London. The march was intended as a show of support for the state of Israel, a state whose constitution only give rights to one racial group and that reserves over 90% of land for Jews only. As well as illegally occupying the West Bank, Israel has also maintained a siege on Gaza for the past year preventing Gazans from accessing food or getting proper medical care.

And the British government was all too happy to turn out in support of the apartheid state; Ed 'talking' Balls made a speech commemorating Israel's 60th anniversary while Boris 'fucking hell, he's Mayor of London' Johnson finished his speech by saluting the crowd.

Shockingly, the overarching message of the parade was that British Jews should support Israel. A spokesman for the 'Board of Deputies' said, "Let no one ever say again that the British Jewish community is afraid to stand up publicly for what it believes in!" Why should the Jewish community, or anyone else for that matter, support an intrinsically racist state engaged in bloody ethnic cleansing against its non-Jewish

inhabitants simply because that state's political rhetoric claims to speak and act for Jews?

Hundreds of anti-zionist activists, many of them Jewish, showed up to demonstrate that sixty years of apartheid and ethnic cleansing is nothing to celebrate. Both fountains in Trafalgar Square, where the rally was being held, were dyed red to symbolise the blood of the Palestinians killed in the pogroms of 1948, and activists staged a die-in at the centre of the rally. Three double-decker buses draped with Palestinian flags and black balloons were driven around the square and 'Boycott Israel' banners were hung on the steps of the National Portrait Gallery. The zionist hip hop gig was disrupted by Rhythms of Resistance and the video screens had to be turned off after a man climbed on to them.

Counter demos were held by Jews for Justice for Palestinians and Friends of Al Aqsa. The Met's Forward Intelligence Teams were out in force, while the boys in blue took the opportunity to carry out a number of crap arrests including ones for singing a reworked version of happy birthday and 'criminal damage' for getting watered-down red food dye on the pavement. One woman was even given a warning for anti-zionist opera singing.

For more information on the campaign to commemorate the Palestinian Nakba see www.nakba60.org.uk

RIDING FOR THEIR LIVES

Critical Mass had their usual last-Friday-of-the-month cycles to reclaim city streets for bikes last Friday (28th), but several used the day to remember activist Marie Vesco, who was killed on the A23 during the cycle ride from London to Brighton on the way to the 'Carnival Against The Arms Trade' Smash EDO demo on June 4th (See SchNEWS 634).

In London, 600 cyclists including friends from the London activist community which Marie was heavily involved with chose to ride to Brixton, where she was involved in serving free food with Brixton Food Not Bombs. A minutes silence was held for her.

Meanwhile, in Brighton, held their own memorial ride. They were met at the start point in force by vast numbers of Sussex police, not

there to add their condolences, but apparently expecting a full on riot. Van loads of cops, a CCTV unit and a motorbike cavalcade escorted the solemn ride to the Home Farm Rd factory, where another 40 or so cops with dogs were waiting to 'welcome' the mourners.

The cyclists held a minute's silence for Marie and rode off back to town to let the cops pick up their overtime checks and hopefully avoid running anyone down on the drive home...

In Manchester cyclists mourned Marie, as well as Norman Fay, who was hit by a car on June 20th while riding to a York cycle rally.

The next Critical Mass events happen on July 25th across the country see www.schnews.org.uk/pap/guide.php#crit-mass

SchNEWS In Brief

* **Indy is Back and out now** – No not the latest third-rate money spinner for a clapped out Harrison Ford (you have been warned!), but the latest issues of Indymedia's great print newsheet 'Offline', and 'Infousurpa', the fortnightly poster of London events. To read them, and for a list of places where you can get them see <http://infousurpa.co.nr>

* The woman who was **Crap Arrest of the Week for Recycling** (SchNEWS 633) has had her case dropped by the CPS. Originally she was arrested for theft for taking four plastic garden chairs destined for landfill from a privatised Council waste dump. Despite a signed written statement, two video interviews, radio interviews and letters to the press admitting taking chairs from the skip, plus two witness statements, from the skip operative and his supervisor, the CPS has decided there is, er, Not Enough Evidence! Now SchNEWS isn't one to point out when someone is bang to rights but saying there ain't enough evidence is taking the piss, which is what would have happened if ever this came to court...

* **Funny YouTube of the Week:** awarded to an arrest by two coppers of four animal rights protesters at Arrowmigh, Hereford. One was arrested for Section 5 for annoying workers by using a megaphone, then the cops nicked others for Obstructing Police cos they were filming the arrest! All charges have been dropped, watch these two numbskull cops force it up at: www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZVRKvJSTW7c

* **Chicken Liberation 2008:** Brighton Animal Action need volunteers to help them with this year's 'legal liberation' of hens. They will be going into the farm in mid-July to re-home thousands of chickens. They need boxes, tape, hay and money and drivers. Help give these 'end of lay' birds an extended life and contact: info@brightonanimalaction.org

Inside SchNews

Two years for stealing a dog! - That was the vicious sentence handed down to animal activist **Sarah Whitehead** at Canterbury Crown Court on Monday. She was found guilty of removing the beagle from a home in Kent, which accounted for 15 months of her sentence. A previous nine month suspended sentence for rescuing over 100 animals from a pet trade breeder (who later had his licence removed for cruelty) was added. The two other defendants in the same trial, Helen Luff and Michael Greateorex, were found not guilty and discharged from court.

Sarah's heavy sentence is undoubtedly a result of her involvement with Stop Huntingdon Animal Cruelty. According to the anti-activist political police NETCU, the matter came to light as a result of Operation Achilles (see SchNEWS 616), which saw mass arrests of animal rights activists across the country.

Sarah is also awaiting trial on charges of conspiracy to blackmail connected with the SHAC campaign.

Write to her at: Sarah Whitehead VM7684, HMP Bronzefield, Woodthorpe Road, Ashford, Middx TW15 3JZ, United Kingdom

DOCK OF THE BAY

Binyam Mohamed is the last London resident still in Guantanamo. Ethiopian born, he gained asylum to the UK in 1994 and lived here until being arrested in Pakistan in April 2002, after a trip to Afghanistan. He was handed to US authorities after which he was 'extraordinary renditioned', and then spent 18 months being tortured in Morocco, where, after sustained torture, he confessed to a 'dirty bomb' plot against the US. Like many of those who ended up at Guantanamo, the only 'evidence' that US authorities have is a confession extracted under torture – at the point where you'll say anything to stop the pain.

After being moved to the 'Dark Prison' in Kabul, where the torture continued, to Bagram and then ended up in Gitmo in September 2004. This innocent man has suffered unspeakable acts, and in May this year charges were brought against him, and he now faces a military tribunal – without the chance of a fair trial - with a possible death sentence. After the past six years of torture and incarceration Binyam is suffering from severe depression, and has held an ongoing hunger strike.

In August 2007 the British government requested his release, refused by the US, and now Binyam's lawyers have started a lawsuit against the UK govt, demanding that they release evidence to the US which could see him freed.

* **July 24th is Binyam's 30th birthday** – and to mark the day the London Guantanamo Campaign (LGC) invites you to demonstrate opposite Downing St, Westminster, 6-8pm.

* Send Binyam a birthday card to: Binyam Mohamed (1458), Camp Delta, US Naval Base, Guantanamo Bay, Washington DC 20355, USA

* July 4th (today) sees an **Independence Day Picnic** outside the US Embassy in Grosvenor Square, 6pm-8pm, where the rights of freedom enshrined in the Declaration of Independence are compared to the illegal detention of thousands in secret CIA jails. This is just one of London Guantanamo Campaign's weekly vigils outside the US Embassy, every Friday, 6-7pm, Grosvenor Square, Mayfair, WC1 (meet corner of North Audley Street and Upper Brook Street) – tube: Bond Street/Marble Arch

* LGC also hold monthly stalls for Binyam opposite Ladbroke Grove tube station, in the neighbourhood where he lived – next one is July 19th.

* There will be a screening of *Rendition* on July 17th with talk by Andy Worthington from Reprieve, 7pm, Space 2, Upstairs at the Willesden Green Library Centre, 95 High Road, NW10 2SF. Free event. (nearest tube: Willesden Green), organised with Brent Stop the War.

* Read Andy Worthington's book *The Guantanamo Files* – an in depth account of all the Guantanamo inmates' stories, and how they were mostly all arrested in Pakistan by corrupt officials taking bounties from the US, and the shocking treatment they suffered after. www.andyworthington.co.uk

* For more info on LGC email london.gtmo@googlemail.com, tel 07985 382188 web www.guantanamo.org.uk.

PARTY & PROTEST

JULY: 5th - London Fete Against The G8 - The G8 Summit is to be held in Japan, July 7th-9th. In Britain there is a demo at Croydon, targeting Lunar House, the nerve centre of the UK Border Agency where people claim asylum and where their claims are refused, as well as Electric House, an immigration reporting centre. For times and places see <http://londonfete.ucrony.net>. For coverage of anti-G8 protests see www.indymedia.org.uk

* **6th - Cowley Road Carnival, Oxford** - The biggest community event in Oxfordshire. This year's event could be the last before the road is put under the 24 hour gaze of state-run CCTV cameras. No CCTV are looking for volunteers to hand out anti-CCTV material on the day. 12noon – 6pm, free entry www.cowleyroadcarnival.co.uk

* **12th - SHAC National Demo** - Protest against Huntingdon Life Sciences (HLS), the largest contract vivisection laboratory in Europe. Meet 11am at Stanley Recreation Ground, Peterborough for stalls and vegan food, then from 12.30pm a march around town, then 3.30pm-5.30pm, a protest at the gates of HLS, Huntingdon Life Sciences, Woolley Road, Alconbury, Huntingdon, Cambs, Cambs. 0845 458 0630 info@shac.net [www.shac.net](http://www.shac.net/National2008)

* **16th - Demo against E.ON** - Join the Greenwash Guerrillas in a fun, subversive demo, and cordoning off the area to warn summit delegates about the high levels of toxic greenwash leaking from the building. With the Camp for Climate Action, Rising Tide, People and Planet, Earth First! and WDM. E.ON run the Kingsnorth Power Station, the site of this years' Camp For Climate Action (See SchNEWS 623). Meet 8.15am, Business Design Centre, Islington. 52 Upper St, London N1 0QH. Tube: Angel 07961 917 535 info@climatecamp.org.uk www.greenwashguerrillas.org

19th - Bonkersfest - Day festival celebrating being bonkers - with two stages and other entertainment and events. Put on by Mad Pride and others. 12 noon-9pm, at Camberwell Green, London SE5 8TS, <http://madpride.org.uk> <http://bonkersfest.org>

*** For full listings updated weekly see www.schnews.org.uk/pap**

...and finally...

It was a case of sticks and stones won't break our bones but names will hurt us for judges in New Mexico last week (June 28th) - who ruled against one enterprising Albuquerque man changing his name to the hard hitting 'Fuck Censorship' (but you can call me Fuck!). They ignored his plea that not allowing the change was itself improper censorship and ruled it offensive to Common Decency (who's he and why are his sensibilities important anyway?!). In the end allowing it might have made it easier for cops to find the identity-shifter later – his current legal name is 'Variable'.

Disclaimer

SchNEWS warns all readers - don't decide at the last minute to do a double issue and expect to get an early night. Honest!

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