El Palacio de La Paz

The burning down of the Newcomer's bar, La Golondrina Verde was immediately blamed on the more radical elements of the Hill People. The situation looked ugly for a time. A contingent of Newcomer youths threatened to take over the only remaining bar in Alqueria, the Hill People's Bar la Casa Devante. A stand-off in the Plaza was only defused when José Cabrasilbido, the local policeman promised an inquiry.

After an exhaustive examination of the devastated Bar la Golondrina Verde Cabrasilbido made his findings public. Some discarded 'cheese and onion crisps' accidentally mixed with Remitroot Whisky formed a sort of 'guncotton'. The rays of the setting sun focused through the base of a broken bottle of Brainbuster Absinthe caused an incendiary beam which ignited the makeshift 'guncotton'. The resultant explosion, enhanced by the detonation of the remaining full bottles of Absinthe completely destroyed the building. The Hill People were vindicated. Which was fortunate as this happened a mere ten minutes before the explosive that was actually planted by the Hill People was due to go off.

There were a few dissenting voices among the Newcomers. Some suggested that this was the political cause rather than the actual cause of the explosion. However it was sufficient to restore some semblance of law and order. Something had to be done though and quickly. The increasing violence between the two barrios and their increasing ingenuity in producing viable weapons made this apparent. One particular group among the Hill People had actually been awarded an arms contract from a central African country. As this prompted possible UN sanctions they refused to supply their particularly effective Bacalao Catapult.

The answer came in the form of a monument to tolerance. On the waste ground to the east of the Río Verde, where the now defunct holiday park stood a completely non-partisan edifice would be built. Here villagers could spend their time in a non

threatening environment. All the entertainment would be international, there would be nothing home-grown. The theory being that if the opposing groups are exposed to international ideas, thoughts, cuisine and the like it would make them more tolerant of each other.

The building itself was to be financed equally by both barrios but the construction and fitting-out to be put out for foreign tender. This reduced the scope for internal corruption and strife. The well known firm of British architects Fleecem, Skinem and Leggit from East Loonyton won the turnpike project. They in turn commissioned Bodgeit and Son as the project's builders.

What could go wrong?