Smile, your in Alqueria.

The air in the tunnel was dangerously low in oxygen, methane was building up at an alarming rate. At least the removal of excavated earth was progressing well. The final breakthrough was approaching. One last thrust with the improvised shovel, a small avalanche of dry earth and then sunlight, fresh air and freedom. This is how one group of tourists managed to get out of Alqueria with at least some cash still in their possession.

The new tourist initiative by the Alquerian establishment was built on a firm foundation of fantastic fabrications and outright lies. On paper Alqueria appeared to be the French Riviera with free beer and dancing girls, in reality it was Scunthorpe on a wet Sunday.

Holidaymakers were lured to the village republic with false promises and rigged climatic data. Once there the borders were closed, prices trebled and the unfortunate visitors relieved of their cash and all portable wealth.

The system was simple, pick them up from a charter flight at Murcía airport. Drive them into Alqueria. Keep them there until their wallets and tempers had been exhausted. Then drive them back to the airport where the expected return flight never materialises. The Spanish authorities didn't mind Alquerians passing through their country as long as they didn't touch anything on the way.

Keeping the holiday makers occupied while their cash was being surgically removed was simple enough. Remitroot whisky rendered most of them incapable of logical thought while rigged gaming machines accounted for the rest. Manuela was the main attraction as tourist hostess, she was certainly worth a second look. She brought a whole new meaning to the phrase 'package holiday'.

As far as complaints were concerned Loco Paco was given the job of Customer Relations Representative. He refused to answer any query without first consulting his imaginary five foot tall pet rodent, Bert. Complainees went away confused, bewildered and in some cases sorry for Paco, but they went away which was the object of the exercise.

Visitors soon began begging in the streets, some formed escape committees. Tunnels were started. One group was seen using a vaulting horse, but Rodriquez had already seen that film. A glider was found in an attic and one couple tried to cross the border disguised as a female alpaca. Unfortunately a male alpaca in quizzical mood was roaming on the other side. The couple are still receiving counselling. Those that made it out of Alqueria were forced to commit petty crime in order to pay their way home.

The summer tourist season ended with bumper profits for Alqueria. Alqueria now headed the international blacklist for tourist destinations. Some countries were so outraged at the treatment of their nationals they threatened military action.