The Fishermen of Alqueria

The news that Alqueria possesses a fishing fleet may come as a surprise to some especially when one considers that the Village Republic is landlocked. However when one considers the recent compensation package for small fishing fleets it is of no surprise. The 'International Committee for the Perpetuation of Corporate Plundering of the World's Oceans' offers financial incentives to keep small fishing fleets in harbour. This will allow larger and more highly mechanised fleets free reign to remove anything that lives from the seas and so turn our oceans into watery wastelands.

Alqueria began a massive program of boat building. Well, they converted an old bathtub to look something like a small fishing boat, if one uses one's imagination that is. The vessel was christened the 'Fletán Feliz' with Loco Paco its master. Loco Paco, in his strange surreal world of smoke and mirrors believed it to be a real and seaworthy craft. The thinking was that if Paco believed the craft to be real he would sound more convincing if questioned by the Committee.

The Committee did come to Alqueria. The Committee did question Paco but the Committee didn't offer any cash to keep the Alquerian fishing fleet in harbour. The Committee did however give Paco a license to fish and promised to monitor the Alquerian fleet closely. Paco was jubilant but not flavour of the month with other Alquerians. As the Committee was so impressed by Paco it forces one to question the sanity of those that select these Committees in the first place.

So, Alqueria had a license to fish in a non-existent sea while their non-existent fishing fleet was to be monitored by an international agency. Paco had certainly surpassed himself this time.

What to do?

Using cold logic, all that was needed to be done was to 'disappear' the fleet. This would be simple as there is no fleet to actually disappear. With no fleet the license would be negated and with no fleet there would be nothing to monitor. It would be back to square one, but an uncomplicated square one. Alquerians understood 'uncomplicated'. A note was duly sent to the Committee reporting the loss of the fleet.

Aid poured in from western countries eager to be seen to be doing their 'bit' for the unfortunate people of Alqueria. These self-satisfied nations pointed to Alqueria as proof that their foreign policies were working. When it was pointed out by some over enthusiastic bureaucrat that Alqueria is in fact landlocked the funding stopped abruptly.

The donor countries were too embarrassed to admit their mistake and simply forgot that it ever happened. This is a mechanism the richer nations use with some effect to protect them from the spectres of the past.