¡The Sanity Board!

Loco Paco's behaviour had been giving cause for concern. Manuela, Antonio Poyato and Rodriquez, the remaining three incumbents of the Alquerian Government decided to seek professional help. Well Manuela and Poyato were. Rodriquez was all for driving him to a small village just outside Reykjavik, leaving him on the doorstep of the first bar they came to and heading south at great speed.

Poor Loco Paco's grip on reality has always been a trifle tenuous. He once mistook a Benedictine Monk for an itinerant kangaroo and tried to force feed him eucalyptus leaves. Paco's knowledge of the dietary habits of antipodean fauna was sketchy to say the least. On another occasion he hid in the basement of the town hall for three weeks simply because someone told him that Poyato had aimed a kick at his friend Bert. Bert is an imaginary five foot tall rodent with whom Paco converses at depth with on a variety of topical and esoteric subjects.

A psychiatrist was duly commissioned to visit Paco and prepare a report as to his mental state. The interview was an awe inspiring experience for Carmen Daftajobba, never had she met anyone like Paco. She was mesmerised by his ramblings and phobias. She likened being in his presence to being in a cage full of semi-literate monkeys with persecution complexes and 'Walter Mitty' fantasies. Carmen was asked to keep the report simple and to use layman's terms. She was true to her word, it simply read 'As crazy as the maracas of Machin'.

It was decided to test his sanity once and for all in front of a judge from the European Committee for the Terminally Balmy with Alquerian citizens from both barrios invited to give evidence.

What could go wrong?

The hearing started with due formality and reverence, apart from Paco wishing everyone 'Happy first of May' and signing The International, everyone joined in however apart from the judge who took numerous notes.

During the course of the hearing it became apparent that the evidence from each barrio differed. The Hill People were sympathetic to Paco's needs while the Newcomers saw their chance of removing one of the opposition. People began challenging the evidence of others and arguments broke out, the judge made more notes. Fights started and missiles started to fly. The worthy judge took refuge under his desk while frantically making further notes.

The 'courtroom' was total Bedlam with unconscious citizens strewn among the debris. Some semblance of order was eventually restored and the verdict delivered. Loco Paco, who took no part part in the affray was declared sane and issued with a certificate to that effect. The judge implied that it was in fact the remaining dysfunctional inhabitants of Alqueria who needed professional help.

Loco Paco is now the only officially sane person in Alqueria. His certificate hangs proudly over the cage of his pet Saharan Dung Beetle Bengy.