El Día de la Constitución

Defining the fundamental rights of the Alquerian people became the next challenge for the fledgling Republic. After their expulsion from Spain the people of Alqueria began setting up business for themselves. With the two barrios of the village constantly engaged in a state of undeclared warfare the task looked formidable.

The Constitution of the Republic of Alqueria was however drafted with little or no dissent. It is a two page document. One page compiled by the Hill People and the other by the Newcomers. The clauses on page one contradicted those on page two but that didn't seem to matter in fact it was the strength of the document. If something was deemed as unconstitutional on one page, simply referring to the relevant clause on the other made it permissible. Nothing was unconstitutional, it meant all things to all villagers, everything and anything was legal and therefore possible.

A new impetus was given to the Government. Manuela, the Minister of Culture began taking her duties seriously. To assess the cultural needs of her people she personally interviewed a section of the population. This section however turned out to be the younger and fitter men of the village. The consultations took place on her settee, giving the phrase 'reproduction furniture' a whole new meaning.

The people of Alqueria were so pleased with their handiwork they declared a public holiday, 'El Día de la Constitución'. At least one half of the village did. The other half were to have their Día de la Constitución six months hence. They still celebrated the day though, calling it 'No El Día de la Constitución'.

A fiesta was organised with tables laden with food and drink erected in the village plaza. El Enveneno, the town's gourmet chef prepared a pig roast. He could do some surprising things with a pig, at least they surprised the pig. The fiesta soon degenerated into the usual sectarian brawl. The Hill People, defending the Bar La Casa Devante launched fusillades of bread rolls, olives and rocks at the Newcomers

who lay siege to the Plaza. The overturned tables acted as barricades as the alcohol soaked belligerents exchanged volleys.

José Cabrasilbido, who was both the local and national policeman was powerless to act. According to the constitution the fracas was both legal and illegal, depending on which page one referred to. The state of constitutional anarchy offered a degree of freedom unknown in the more traditional democracies.

Is this level of emancipation envied by more conservative peoples? Would they follow the Alquerian example? Are they even remotely interested?