

In Ecuador, cartoonist gets the last laugh

Kim Wilkinson looks at an unusual order to ‘correct’ a cartoon, and the cartoonist’s clever reply.



Xavier Bonilla, an Ecuadorian cartoonist, was [informed by the country’s media oversight agency that he would have to ‘correct’ a cartoon](#), published in a local daily *El Universo*. His cartoon was said to have defamed the Ecuadorian government. Bonilla, who works under the pen name Bonil, offered his tongue-in-cheek reply by penning a ‘correction’ that sarcastically took the government, once again, to task.

The original cartoon showed a raid on investigative journalist Fernando Villavicencio’s home, and the confiscation of computers and documents, which occurred on 26 December 2013. Villavicencio had previously reported on government corruption.

One of our Free Speech Debate translators has translated Bonil’s cartoons so that our readers can understand the punch line. The caption on the original cartoon (included below), published on Saturday 28 December, reads: “Police and District Attorney’s office staff break into Fernando

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Villavicencio's home and make off with documentation of denunciations of corruption”.

Bonil's punchy reply to the ordered correction? This cartoon, published on 5 February 2014.

RECTIFICACIÓN De Miércoles, 5 de febrero



Policía y Fiscalía allanan domicilio de Villavicencio e incautan sus tablets, computadoras, celulares.

The heading at the top reads CORRECTION. The dialogue is as follows:

Mr Villavicencio: "What a pleasure... I was waiting for you."

Police: "Delighted. Mr. Villavicencio, we are coming to confiscate your comp, tablets, etc. Call your lawyer."

Mr. V: "No! Don't worry. I trust you. You are the legitimate authority... just take all the equipment you need."

Police: "But we will make you a list of all we are taking, so you can sign it."

Mr. V: "Don't insist."

Police: "We will keep it in a sealed envelope, so that the chain of custody won't be disrupted. "

Mr. V: "But why do you pay attention to such details!"

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Police: "I'm saying it in case you think that we are going to show this information to somebody in the next few hours."

Mr. V: "Don't worry. I know that being in your hands means that there will be total independence."

Police: "Well, good-bye."

Mr. V: "Greetings to all."

The Ecuadorian government's response clearly backfired, as the incident got international media attention. This time, the joke was on them.

Kim Wilkinson is the Online Editor at Free Speech Debate.

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