

HIDDEN AGENDA - THE DEFINITIVE SOLUTION

This gives three solutions which are optimal from the point of view of the leftist, centrist and rightist ideology and four other variations which illustrate the various possible outcomes of the game.

THE MYSTERY OF ELECTIONS

Elections get put on the agenda when one of the following two conditions is met: the Harvest Season of Year 2 begins, or the Constitution has been written (by consulting a Minister four times on the issue of Nationalism, Popular Organizations and Democracy, beginning with a Christian Reform Minister). This is when your Party affiliation gets decided and it stays fixed for the remainder of the game: the Party whose policies you have supported the most will adopt you and, whatever you do later, that Party will nominate you when you call elections. Your opponents will be two of the three following men: Calderon for National Liberation, Nunez for Christian Reform and Rosario for Popular Stability. The Ministers from the other two Parties put Elections on their Agenda (that's how you know which Party you belong to). IF YOU GET A WEIRD NOMINATION, IT IS DUE TO A BUG IN NEWGAME: TO START A NEW GAME, QUIT THE GAME AND START OVER. The Bishop will propose holding elections no matter which Party you belong to; the USA Ambassador will do so if you belong to National Liberation.

If the Army is still under joint control at the moment you call elections, Ehrlich and Correa will immediately fight for total control; Correa will win if you belong to National Liberation and Ehrlich will win otherwise. If elections are held with Correa in control, National Liberation will win the elections whether you are their candidate or not; if Ehrlich is in control, you will win if you are not with National Liberation, and otherwise Rosario will win for Popular Stability.

THE PINK SOLUTION.

This solution goes as far left as possible without leading Chimerica into bankruptcy. The problem you have to solve is to deter a right-wing insurrection without provoking the USA into cutting off aid.

THE PRESS CONFERENCE

You want to protect the population against violent repression, plan development to redistribute wealth, and raise the living standards of the rural poor.

CONTACTS

Christian Reform for External Affairs and National Liberation for the other 3 Ministers. For the sake of definiteness, Julio Olivares for Agriculture, Manuel Calderon for Defence, Gloria Jimenez for Internal Affairs and Liliana Ortiz for External Affairs. (In general, the 3 junta members in any one party are identical. Although they express their approval and disapproval differently, they give the same advice and put the same items on their agenda. The only significant difference is that if elections are held, the one chosen by his Party to run against you will resign from your Cabinet and you don't want to be without a Minister in case of an Interrupt.)

AGRICULTURE

DISPOSITION OF THE DICTATOR'S ESTATES. You want to turn them into cooperatives, but it takes a year for your minister and the Coffee Worker to realize that state farms don't work, and in the meantime, coffee production is dropping. To speed things up, encounter the Coffee Grower as the first move of the game (before even appointing your Minister, if you want to avoid a sermon) and begin giving the estates to the coffee producers. Then encounter the Coffee Worker and turn the remaining estates into cooperatives. If the item ever comes up again on the Minister's Agenda, follow his advice and keep production at home by supporting the Coops.

SHORTAGES OF FOOD. Encounter the Union Leader in the Dry Season of Year 1 and set price controls. After that, you will need first to subsidize food production and then to introduce rationing as soon as possible. The Campesino will put food shortages on his agenda before your Minister; so encounter him on the first move of the Rainy Season. He will propose eliminating price controls; ask for advice and subsidize food production. Repeat with the Shopkeeper on the last move of the Rainy Season to introduce rationing. After that, take no further action on food shortages. Your Minister will advise you to jail shopkeepers who overcharge, but this antagonizes the Shopkeeper and does nothing to ease the food shortages. To avoid any trouble, do not encounter the Campesino or the Union Leader for the rest of the game: the former will want to eliminate price controls and the latter to jail shopkeepers who overcharge. Sit tight: if you do, and if you deal with land reform cleverly enough, malnutrition will drop to zero within two years.

CREDIT FOR AGRICULTURAL PRODUCERS. Encounter the Campesino in the Dry Season of Year 1; ask for advice and divide credit resources between food production and export crops. For a while, the Banker and the Coffee Grower will want you to shift the

priority back to export crops; so don't encounter them. At the beginning of the Harvest Season of Year 2 (if you choose the right moment to begin Land Reform), your Minister will put this item on his agenda; consult him to give more credit to patriotic producers and less to those who decapitalize. Now it is safe to encounter the Coffee Grower and the Banker, who will propose that you continue that policy.

LAND REFORM. Timing is important here. Announce land reform when interrupted, and begin the actual redistribution near the end of the Rainy Season of Year 1 (after the series of Interrupts). If you do it too soon, cotton production will fall before increased coffee production can compensate, and the Cash Reserves will not increase fast enough; if you wait until you are interrupted and asked to grant land title to the poor immediately, food production will not increase soon enough to eliminate malnutrition within 2 years. If Ehrlich is not dismissed soon, you will eventually see reports of Attacks on Land Reform Beneficiaries. Consult your Minister twice: first to give arms to the farmers and next to put Correa in charge of the countryside. Now you can encounter the Landless Laborer to give technical assistance, and then encounter him again at the beginning of the next season to turn production cooperatives into service cooperatives. If you have dismissed Ehrlich before he can begin attacking land reform beneficiaries, wait until Year 2 before encountering the Landless Laborer; otherwise he may ask you to grant title to the poor immediately, and your refusal will impede food production. If the item comes up again on your Minister's agenda, don't touch it: his advice seems harmless enough, but for some reason, malnutrition drops less rapidly.

CONTROL OF MARKETING OF EXPORTS. Create a voluntary National Marketing Board. Your Agriculture Minister will want to make the Board the only game in town, but this will drive capital out of the country. Consult your External Affairs Minister at the end of the Dry Season of Year 1 on this item and follow her advice.

DEFENSE.

MILITARY AID FROM THE USA. You don't have to consult anyone on this issue, since the USA will cut off military aid once you have dismissed Ehrlich. If you wait too long, Correa will interrupt you and demand that you assert presidential authority over military aid. You have no choice but to agree, but when the USA Ambassador interrupts you and demands that you butt out of military affairs, accept his proposal. There's no need to antagonize the USA over this issue, since you're soon going to dismiss Ehrlich anyway!

CONTROL OF THE ARMY. You don't have to consult anyone on this issue, since you'll dismiss Ehrlich on the issue of Death Squads. If you wait too long, Correa may interrupt you to complain that Ehrlich has dismissed him: agree to his proposal and direct Ehrlich to restore Correa to his position.

DEATH SQUADS AND HUMAN RIGHTS. Encounter the Rights Activist or the Bishop to arrest and then prosecute the Guard members. Ehrlich will interrupt you and demand you declare an amnesty; ask for advice and dismiss Ehrlich. If you do this soon enough, you can avoid attacks on land reform beneficiaries, but you will now have a right-wing insurrection on your hands.

RIGHT-WING INSURRECTION. As soon as Ehrlich has been dismissed, the Guard members will escape and begin the Insurrection. Consult your Minister and begin building up the Army – otherwise casualties will continue to mount. After a while, you will be forced to institute an unpopular draft. If you allow the draft to continue, the U.S. will aid the insurrectionists and persuade the IMF to cut you off; the casualty rate will increase, your country will go bankrupt and all your social programs will be destroyed. If you cancel the

draft each time you are forced to institute it, you can avoid bankruptcy but not the increasing casualties. There is, however, a trick that may not have been intended by the creator of the game: as soon as you have begun the military buildup, halt it. To do so, you must consult your External Affairs Minister on this item as soon as she puts it on her agenda, and you can speed up the process by consulting her on Corruption or International Relations until she does. This brief buildup will be sufficient to keep the Insurrection from getting out of hand, but not sufficient to give the Americans the excuse they need to destroy your country. Too bad they're not so easily fooled in real life, eh Daniel Ortega?

EXTRADITION OF THE DRUG DEALER. If you have waited too long to dismiss Ehrlich, the USA Ambassador will interrupt you on this issue. Go ahead and extradite Mendieta - you'll placate the USA and be rid of one of Ehrlich's supporters, and the Press Report on the consequences of the USA Ambassador's persuasive manner may amuse you.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION. Encounter the Teacher and the Doctor early and often to increase spending on these two items twice and then hold it steady (the Teacher will also propose supporting the League of Chimerican Women, which you can also agree to; if you don't want to, then consult your Minister to implement the second increase). The Press Reports will warm your heart. You can have it all at minimal cost by doing it all in Year 1, but if the Debt is not rising too quickly you may want to buy the approval of some of the Influentials. If the Advising Minister for the Landless Laborer or the Campesino is the Internal Affairs Minister, the former can substitute for the Doctor and the latter for the Teacher. The Landless Laborer has an interesting story to tell; to read it all, ask for advice and then reconsider the Proposal.

IMPROVEMENTS TO INFRASTRUCTURE. Your Internal Affairs Minister wisely waits until late in the game to put this item on her agenda. You be wiser still - wait until the Harvest Season of Year 3 before consulting her about it, and then follow her advice.

CORRUPTION. You will have to deal with this issue four times. National Liberation is not sufficiently concerned with this issue (at least until you have begun spending on the Infrastructure); so if you want to deal with Corruption early you will have to consult your External Affairs Minister four times but review all advice and follow the advice of one of your other ministers, especially on the issue of taxes (both Christian Reform and National Liberation want to make the rich pay their full share, but the former want to give the coffee producers a tax break and the latter want to use the increased revenue to pay for services to the poor). If this item is not on her agenda, keep consulting her on International Relations until Corruption appears on the agenda.

RELATIONS BETWEEN UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS. When the Union Leader interrupts you, give him what he wants (at first the right to strike and organize, and then your continued support for workers' rights). Your Minister would prefer that you institute a National Salary Scale, but that's bad for the economy.

NATIONALISM, POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS AND DEMOCRACY. National Liberation's position on this issue is rather extreme, especially the proposal to support the Barrio Defense Committees, and you already have enough National Liberation brownie points; so don't bother consulting your Minister on this issue.

ELECTIONS. As soon as the Harvest Season of Year 2 begins, consult your External Affairs Minister or encounter the Bishop and call elections. Soon you will get nominated by

National Liberation. Check the reports, and as soon as you read about attacks on opposition rallies, consult one of your National Liberation Ministers about Elections to get Correa to protect these rallies, then encounter first the Bishop and then the USA Ambassador on the same issue. Keep checking the reports and notice how Edition Mondiale and USA Yesterday differ on the legitimacy of the election process. Enjoy your victory.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

ECONOMIC AID FROM THE USA. Don't ask for it! Accepting aid from any source increases the rate at which the debt level rises and appears to have little effect on any of the other parameters of the game, and the Verdict of History will give you credit for having received some USA Aid anyway. If you want to get credit for having received generous instead of limited USA Aid, then during Year 1 you must minimize the number of times you accept the advice of a National Liberation Minister (whenever an Influential or your Christian Reform Minister gives the same advice, accept that instead); in this way you avoid collecting enough National Liberation brownie points to scare off Uncle Sam. But to avoid being cut off by the IMF you must avoid provoking the USA into cutting off the aid you haven't asked for (see Aid from Socialist Countries below).

THE IMF. Encounter the IMF representative every season and ask for advice to renegotiate repayments. This increases your cash reserves but does not affect your level of debt - this is controlled by agricultural earnings, which are at the mercy of cotton and coffee prices. Unless you are extremely lucky with these prices, eventually the banker will send you a message that the international banks are concerned about the rising level of debt. After that, **DO NOT ENCOUNTER THE IMF REPRESENTATIVE EVER AGAIN!** She will insist that you take austerity measures and, unless you do so, the IMF will cut you off. Sit tight, and unless you are extremely unlucky with export crop prices your cash reserves will continue to rise, albeit more slowly, until the end of the game.

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. To put Corruption on your Minister's agenda, you may have to consult her on International Affairs. No matter what position you take, you will get scolded by both El Independiente and Chimerica Ahora for concentrating on international affairs instead of domestic issues!

AID FROM SOCIALIST COUNTRIES. Don't touch it with a 10-foot pole - even the limited economic aid that your Minister initially agrees to. If you are following the Pink Solution, your other policies have strained relations with the USA to the breaking point, and accepting any aid from the Socialist Countries will cause the USA to pressure the IMF to cut you off unless you sacrifice other policies that are far more important than the shoddy goods you can get from those economic basket cases.

FOREIGN REVOLUTIONAIRES ON YOUR SOIL. When the USA ambassador interrupts you to demand you expel them, ask for advice and send them to Mexico.

RIGHT-WING INSURRECTION. Although this is a Defense issue, it is included here to remind you to consult with your External Affairs Minister on this issue as soon as you can get it on her agenda.

THE YELLOW SOLUTION.

This solution goes as far to the centre as possible without compromising the basic needs of the population. The problem you have to solve is to maintain a balanced army.

PRESS CONFERENCE

You want to protect the population against violent repression, put first priority on the growth of the economy, and raise the basic living standard of the rural poor.

CONTACTS

National Liberation for Agriculture Minister (say Julio Olivares) and Christian Reform for the other three (say Oberon for Defense, Ortiz for Internal Affairs and Nunez for External Affairs).

AGRICULTURE

Christian Reform tends to waffle on these issues, and ends up having to resort to repression on the issue of food prices. Follow the Pink Solution except for Disposition of the Dictator's Estates: give them all to the Coffee Producers.

DEFENSE

MILITARY AID FROM THE USA. Follow the advice of your Minister, both when Correa interrupts you and then when the USA Ambassador does. Your Minister's explanation makes interesting reading.

CONTROL OF THE ARMY. Keep ordering Ehrlich to restore Correa to his position whenever Correa interrupts you on this issue. You will have to do so rather often, but you can reduce the frequency by following your Minister's advice on this issue every season and giving Correa enough power that Ehrlich can't dismiss him.

DEATH SQUADS AND HUMAN RIGHTS. Arrest the Farsante Guard whenever the Rights Activist interrupts you and demands that you do so, but do not outlaw LIMPIA. They will kill the Rights Activist and the Union Leader and firebomb El Independiente, but since you have put Correa in charge of the countryside they cannot destroy Land Reform as long as you do not call elections. The payoff: you will not have to go to war.

EXTRADITION OF THE DRUG DEALER. Go ahead and extradite him.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS

HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION. Encounter the teacher and the doctor once - in the Dry Season of Year 1 - and increase funding for these two items. Your minister will oppose any further increases.

IMPROVEMENTS TO INFRASTRUCTURE. In the Harvest Season of Year 3, consult your Minister on this issue, then review all advice and take the advice of your Agriculture Minister to divide spending between export crops and the poor (otherwise the verdict of history will scold you for neglecting the countryside).

CORRUPTION. Consult your Minister four times on this issue, including once after dealing with the infrastructure. If one of these consultations gets Mendieta extradited, do it again.

RELATIONS BETWEEN UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS. Follow your Minister's advice: support a minimum wage and the right to strike, but hold firm against any further demands.

NATIONALISM, POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS AND DEMOCRACY. Consult your Minister four times on this issue to write the constitution.

ELECTIONS. Check your Agriculture Minister's agenda once the constitution has been written. Notice that Elections are on his agenda. As a member of Christian Reform, the only Party that approves of elections even when the Presidente is their candidate, you will be tempted to call them. In the Green Variation below, you will call these elections; in this Solution, sit tight and concentrate on leading your country.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

Follow the same general recipe which was given as part of the Pink Solution, except consult the USA Ambassador in the Dry Season of Years 1 and 2. You will get loads of American aid, and with careful fiscal management you may even be able to pay for it.

THE BLUE SOLUTION.

This solution goes as far right as possible without getting overthrown by National Liberation. Your problem is to keep close enough to the middle of the road to avoid being overthrown until the economy can afford the war that results from calling elections. Soon Ehrlich will drive National Liberation out of the country, allowing you go hard right rudder without fear of a coup.

PRESS CONFERENCE

You want to eliminate government corruption, promote the free movement of goods and capital, and improve the infrastructure.

CONTACTS

Popular Stability for External Affairs (say Alejos), Christian Reform for Defense (say Oberon) and Internal Affairs (say Nunez), and National Liberation (say Calderon) for Agriculture. Once you have called elections, Nunez and Calderon will resign, or you can sack them, and you can replace them with Popular Stability members (say Rosario for Internal Affairs and Whitmyre for Agriculture). You need not replace your Defense Minister - he will be helpless to keep Ehrlich and Padilla from taking over the country.

AGRICULTURE

Follow the Yellow Solution until the change of ministers, except prioritize credit to export producers and delay selling off the Dictator's Estates to the coffee producers for a season. Then, after the change of ministers, you can sell the rest of the estates to the highest bidder, remove controls on food prices (and send in the army to clear the streets), and abolish the Marketing Board. You don't have to repeal Land Reform: Ehrlich has a pleasant surprise in store for the Landless Laborer you've come to know and love!

DEFENSE

Follow the Yellow Solution until the change of ministers, except that you may want to consult your External Affairs Minister on Corruption once the case of the Drug Dealer hits the press. (Are you surprised that Popular Stability is less pro-American than Christian Reform on this issue? You shouldn't be. Mendieta is one of theirs.) Afterwards, all you have to do is to agree to everything Ehrlich proposes - you don't have any choice in the matter anyway! If you really want to have fun, Encounter the Guard Leader and accept his proposal. Even Popular Stability wouldn't be happy with that one!

INTERNAL AFFAIRS.

HEALTH CARE AND EDUCATION. For the time being you will have to follow the Yellow Solution and increase funding for these items. As soon as you have changed Ministers, you can eliminate funding and enjoy reading the press report about the closing of the clinics and watching Infant Mortality begin to rise again.

IMPROVEMENTS TO INFRASTRUCTURE. Once you have changed Ministers, follow his advice on this issue.

CORRUPTION. Once you have changed Ministers, follow his advice on this issue.

RELATIONS BETWEEN UNIONS AND EMPLOYERS. At first you will have to follow the Yellow Solution and accept the minimum wage and the right to strike and organize. As soon as you have changed Ministers, encounter the Industrialist and get this right revoked. The Union Leader may protest, but you can safely ignore him: he won't be around to bother you much longer.

NATIONALISM, POPULAR ORGANIZATIONS AND DEMOCRACY. By letting your Popular Stability External Affairs Minister write the constitution for the first four moves of the game (aside from the Interrupts) you assure Popular Stability nomination whenever you call elections, even though by that time you will have collected enough Christian Reform brownie points to get their nomination instead. If this Minister doesn't have this item on his agenda, consult your Internal Affairs Minister on the issue, then review all advice and accept the advice of your External Affairs Minister.

ELECTIONS. Call elections as the *last* move of some season - say the Dry Season of Year 2. The ensuing repression will come too late to provoke Jimenez or Calderon into a coup attempt at the beginning of the next season, and by the time they get another chance, Ehrlich will have driven them out of the country. Then you can sack your Internal Affairs and Agriculture Ministers, replace them with Popular Stability members and show your true colours. You don't have to worry about Father Julio Olivares attempting a coup: he is too much of a pacifist for that, and LIMPIA will ensure that his pacifism is justly rewarded.

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS.

Since your job here is to curry favour with the USA and the IMF, follow the Yellow Solution, except that after the change of ministers you will want to encounter the TNC representative and accept his proposal to keep Chimerica open for business and follow your Popular Stability Minister's advice on International Affairs whenever you can spare the time from mistreating your own compatriots!

OTHER VARIATIONS.

THE PURPLE VARIATION. Proceed as in the Pink Solution except appoint a Popular Stability Defense Minister and three National Liberation Ministers, and when Ehrlich dismisses Correa, confirm the dismissal (if Ehrlich is scared off by the preponderance of National Liberation Ministers, keep encountering him until he suggests making him the sole Chief of Staff). Call elections at the beginning of the Harvest Season of Year 2. As you read about your successes in the Verdict of History, remember the Blue Solution - this is what Presidente Rosario will implement, except that he will never call another election.

THE RED VARIATION. Proceed as in the Pink Solution but without the tricks which depend upon prior knowledge of what will happen in the model of Central America built into the game. Dismiss Ehrlich early. Wait until the Doctor interrupts you before beginning a military buildup, and then don't repeal it - in real life, the USA would cut off aid from a left-wing government long before its army got strong enough to deter an insurrection. When the IMF cuts you off, do what any Presidente would do if forced to fight a civil war alone and on an empty treasury - encounter the Cuban Consul and accept both economic and military aid. Examine the progress charts before the game ends. Do you think that the poor people of Chimerica are better off for having re-elected you? As a subvariation, as soon as the USA slaps a trade embargo on Chimerica, encounter the USA Ambassador and do his bidding. Bon voyage!

THE GREEN VARIATION. Proceed as in the Yellow Solution except call the elections upon which Father Julio Olivares so graciously insists. The good news is that you will win. The bad news is that - OK, if you haven't read the general blurb on the mystery of elections, I won't spoil the surprise for you. Both you and Father Olivares are about to get a lesson in Central American political reality.

THE ORANGE VARIATION. Follow the Yellow Solution except on Defense: appoint Jimenez to Defense Minister, since Calderon will soon have a more exalted position, and follow the Pink Solution on Defense except delay dismissing Ehrlich until your Internal Affairs Minister has written the Constitution to ensure Christian Reform nomination. Call elections at the beginning of the Harvest Season of Year 2. Make sure you deal with the Infrastructure and Corruption before the election is held: you want to get the credit for it. As you read about your successes in the Verdict of History, remember the Red Variation - this is what Presidente Calderon will implement, except that he will never call another election. As a subvariation, you may decide not to call an election either. This could be called a Solution - the Peach Solution, perhaps?

THINGS TO DO.

Proceed as is the Pink Solution except accept both American and Cuban economic aid near the beginning of the game. Since you have both dismissed Ehrlich and accepted aid from socialist countries, eventually the U.S. will cut off aid and pressure the IMF to do the same. Consult your External Affairs Minister first on U.S. Economic Aid and then on Aid from Socialist Countries. She thinks that it takes a war with the Reactos plus Aid from Socialist Countries to provoke the U.S. to cut off aid, and since there is no war, she doesn't understand why the U.S. has cut off aid. Fire her and replace her with Bernardo Whitmyre Alvarado from Popular Stability. Consult him on Aid from Socialist Countries and follow his advice to refuse all further such aid. As soon as he resigns in disgust from your cabinet, reappoint Liliana Ortiz de Lanza from Christian Reform. Before the season ends, encounter the U.S. Ambassador: he still isn't aware that you have refused further aid from socialist countries. As soon as the season ends, turn to the Progress Charts and look at the chart for Loans and Aid. Apparently you are once more in the good graces of the IMF. Now encounter the U.S. Ambassador again and read his response carefully. No wonder the Americans find it so difficult to make friends in Third World countries!

You can have another laugh at the expense of the U.S. Ambassador by following the Orange Variation and encountering him after the elections have been announced. Notice through whom he intends to send you aid to further your election campaign - via Panama, perhaps? For another laugh, delay calling elections until the last move of the Rainy Season of Year 3 and read the last two paragraphs of the Verdict of History very carefully. It seems as if the Encyclopedia has been written by two different people, of whom one was aware of the transfer of power and the other wasn't! The same confusion can be seen if you follow the Purple Variation, although the circumstances may interfere with your amusement.