HUGO KASTNER RECOMMENDS

JUNTA

Power Struggle, Coup and Corruption

Dear readers! A game of the generally very impressive vintage of 86 had tongues wagging in the true sense of the word during the Nuremberg Toy Fair of that year: „Junta". Published seven years earlier as a prototype by American designer Vincent Tsao Junta now appeared in a new guise. Gone were the military eye-catchers of the original game. They were replaced by a General of a Latin American Banana Republic's army, complete with cute epaulettes and a medal „Honorable Member of CIA" decorating his front. As a tribute to the El Dorado of games, Germany, his uniform hat showed black-red-golden trimmings and the obligatory label of "Made in Germany". At the same time coveted dollars stray from his General's hat and the background is graced by the status symbol, a Mercedes. But the tell-tale question "Who can direct the most money from subsidies to his Swiss bank account – and survive?" and a stamp "approved for ages 18 and up" soon alight the ingenuous buyer that he might be in the act of acquiring a dangerous satire in the guise of an unobtrusive game. Publicity was a given, especially when considering the then common criteria for blacklisting things due to „youth endangering contents". Had the intention been to introduce additional material for discussion? Well, no demand for blacklisting was made – contrary to Risk – , but all the same „Junta" has during all those years found a grateful audience. And this despite a colorless rules booklet of 16 pages in small print. But in this case the mass of information is deceiving. Once grasped, the mechanisms of this game of intrigues are very plausible. You do not believe me? Well, then up and away to the Austrian Games Museum at Leopoldsdorf with the – referring to the rules - technically legitime aim of filling your pockets, provided you survive, that is! Website: www.spielen.at

In the sometimes rather dim and dreary light of my lamp each player in Junta takes over a family clan in a fictitious Banana Republic. The aim of all your labor is to fill your own pockets that is, your Swiss bank account. By exercising political influence on several pluralistic groups, who might be Trade Unionists or Church Loyalists or others, your own intents are achieved, more or less. Nonetheless, this will not work without allies, therefore you must cheerfully bribe, threaten and play up others in those dirty negotiation rounds, In all actions, the president commands extraordinary powers, because he assigns the jobs. Of those you absolutely want the position of Minister of the Interior or one of the three posts of Army Generals as the commanders of the Navy and Air Force seem rather helpless in comparison. After all, the minister also commands the Police Forces and a Death Squad, which celebrates its assassinations in every round. As soon as everyone has a post, the president distributes subsidy monies among his followers, but in a somewhat restrained way, because of course the lion's share is reserved for the presidential pockets. One more reason to dispossess the President, without any warning, in the approved manner of turncoats! In this "political" phase numerous unexpected events disturb even the best laid plans of all involved and the ever-looming coup also threatens. In the "coup" phase the generals deploy their troops on the otherwise unused board representing several boroughs of the capital. Presidential Palace, radio station, parliament or main railway station are coveted targets, because there new presidents take up office. Police and Guards fight alongside the ground troops, sometimes even a popular front. At some point money runs short and at this point the machinations of embezzlements and intrigues end, If you have the most money on Swiss bank accounts you may go into exile happily and enjoy your triumph.

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TIP #63

Designer: Wolfgang Kramer
Price: ca. 40 Euro
Jahr: 1996 (Prototyp) - 1986
Publisher: ASS - Pegasus
www.pegasus.de

PLAYERS: 2-7
AGE: 18+
TIME: 150+

Strategy/Tactic — Info± — Chance

The lack of information on imminent problems and consequences looming on the horizon is omnipresent in „Junta!" – and that is okay, because this element of surprise mirrors the attitude towards life in a banana republic. A little bit of luck is essential to the nastiest president, and even the most malicious secretary of state and the cleverest general sometimes must capitulate to thankless fate. Tactical considerations in Junta lead to psychologically based actions.

Hugos EXPERTTIP
You should strive to play with the full number of players, if possible, especially when you are playing the classic edition of 1986. And do emphasize the atmosphere and create the fitting ambiance by treating yourself to a Tequila. A cigar with the drinks is not deemed to be obligatory in those enlightened times! Should you prefer a faster game you can play with the American rules. Those make each player that has been killed pause for two rounds.

Hugos FLASHLIGHT
The topic of this classic game may be felt to be provocative by purists, especially due to the ruthlessness and avarice of all involved, who do not even stop at assassination attempts. Therefore this game definitely will not be everybody's cup of tea and not reconcilable with everyone's conscience. But despite this the mechanism of permanent interaction, the intrigues on many levels and „the game within the game" introduce enormous stimulus into a group of "honorable" friends. Who has ever before felt the actionism in a banana republic? Viva la revolución!

PREVIEW:
TAROCK
Austrian Flair

IMPRESSUM

Offenlegung nach dem Mediengesetz: Medieninhaber, Eigentümer, Verleger und Hersteller: Verein „Österreichisches Spiele Museum", vertreten durch Obfrau Dipl.Ing. Dagmar de Cassan, Raasdorferstrasse 28, 2285 Leopoldsdorf im Marchfelde, Telefon 02216-7000, Fax 02216-7000-3, mail-to: office@spielen.at, Internet: www.spielejournal.at - www.gamesjournal.at - Chefredakteur: **Dipl.Ing. Dagmar de Cassan**
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